

Headlines Himalaya

May 21 – May 27 (2018)

No. 506

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For the 506th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 22 news from 11 sources and selected 21 happenings from five countries. Khadgawar in Kohalpur, mid-western Nepal, introduced itself as a new tourism destination. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report propel Nijgad airport construction project forward. Bird flu (H5N1 virus) detected in Kathmandu poultry farms. India on alert after Nipah Virus claims victims. Cordyceps Cultural Tourism festival celebrated at the foot of Molan Snow Mountain in Damxung, south western China. In Bhutan, elephant (*Elephas maximus*) encroachment forced the farmers to adopt an alternative source of income.

Headlines Himalaya, a weekly e-News is an attempt to keep our global readers abreast with the happenings in the Himalaya. Please share it with your colleagues and friends. Also, subscription is free. Enjoy!

NEPAL

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CHINA

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Land use right system project to take up farming
Heavy downpour triggered landslide
Elephant encroachment

PAKISTAN

Heritage museum in Chitral

MOTORABLE ROAD REPLACING TREKKING TOURISM

The construction of road along the Annapurna circuit, in western Nepal, has drastically reduced the tourism based on trekking. Recent study reveals that the number of visitors that trek through the circuit has significantly declined which directly hits on tourism entrepreneurs. According to the President of Trekking Agencies Association Nepal, the magnificent mountains are the major factors that attract the visitors but with the construction of motorable roads, tourism business of local people has notably dwindled.

May 21

<https://bit.ly/2kJWdri>

KHADGAWAR: A NEW TOURISM DESTINATION

Khadgawar in Kohalpur mid-western Nepal, is becoming a new eco-tourist hub for domestic as well as foreign visitors. As the locals are working to promote cultural, natural and with recreational activities to influence the touristic activities, increase in visitors have been noticing these days. Location is another factor for catalysing increased visitors' rate as it is located nearby famous Bardiy National Park, mid-western Nepal. According to one of the locals, they have been working to build various infrastructures such as garden, homestay targeted for visitors in recent days.

May 21

<https://bit.ly/2Hki8ya>

BIRD FLU ACCOUNT FOR 7 MILLION LOSS

According to the District Livestock Service Office, Chitwan, south central Nepal, more than NPR 7 billion worth poultry based products have been lost due to bird flu caused by avian influenza at Khairahani municipality. At least 2500 chickens (*Gallus gallus*) has been destroyed after the area was declared as bird flu infected site. They further added that safe management of poultry products in the affected areas has been completed and poultry rearing in such areas has been banned for at least 42 days. The farmers are also alerted about the consequences of bird flu and its preventive measures.

May 22

<http://therisingnepal.org.np/news/23777>

BREAKTHROUGH FOR NIJGADH AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION

The Government of Nepal has approved the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for the construction of Nijgadh International Airport in Bara, south eastern Nepal. Bara, south eastern Nepal. EIA reports claimed that 2.4 million trees have to be cleared for airport construction which cost for around NPR 65 billion. It is claimed to be the biggest airport in the South Asia in terms of area. According to the government, the construction process needs to be started soon as there is no other barrier for further operation.

May 24

<https://bit.ly/2xrhfUM>

SETTLEMENTS AT RISK

Three areas of Lamjung districts, western Nepal, have been exposed to landslide that was triggered by the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. With the risk of landslide in the areas, the District Disaster Management Committee of Lamjung has recommended the National Reconstruction Authority to relocate the settlements before the starting of monsoon. The Chief District Officer notified that if these settlements are not shifted immediately, there could be a great loss of lives and properties. However, the district administration office has formed a committee to act on disaster management.

May 24

<https://bit.ly/2xOILMv>

AVALANCHE EXPERIENCED

An avalanche has been experienced in Mt. Everest regions as informed by the officials of base camp on 23 May. It has been recorded in between Khumbu icefall and Camp I. According to one of the officials, under the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, they were trying to monitor the scene by using a remote controlled drone to get the details.

May 24

<http://naturekhabar.com/en/archives/9919>

STRUGGLE FOR WATER

Maranthana Village, Pyuthan, mid western Nepal has only one water resource which was constructed 31 years before. A single tube has been providing water for at least 40 families and a person has to wait at least one hour for water. The rural Municipality is searching for a reliable alternative solution. According to the Ward Chairman of Pyuthan Municipality-9, various plans to build a water pumping station are underway, however, budget has become the major barrier in addressing the problem.

May 25

<https://bit.ly/2JqYQfK>

LACK OF SAFETY EQUIPMENT IN MUSEUMS

The National Museum at Chauni, Kathmandu, central Nepal, along with three museums located in Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur were damaged due to the massive earthquake of 2015. Currently they are on the process of reconstruction under the Department of Archeology. However, no safety equipment has been installed during reconstruction due to which the risk of damage of valuable resources has increased. Many parts are restricted for visitors because of the lack of safety measures. The equipment hiring process has been affected due to budget constraints.

May 25

<https://bit.ly/2kKh4Lh>

BIRD FLU DETECTED IN KATHMANDU

Bird flu (H5N1 virus) has been detected in two different farms of Tarkeshwor municipality, Kathmandu, central Nepal. A total of 5451 ducks (*Anas platyrhynchos*), 180 hens (*Gallus gallus domesticus*), 3,720 duck's eggs along with 250 kilogram feed have been destroyed after the confirmation of bird flu in ducks. According to the World Health Organisation, H5N1 is a type of influenza virus that causes a highly infectious, severe respiratory disease, avian influenza and if it is transmitted to human the mortality rate will be around 60%. The Chief of Epidemiology and Disease Control Division said that they have collected the samples of two people suspected of infection with test results yet to confirm the disease.

May 25

<https://bit.ly/2Jbp4zC>

SCHOOLS CLOSED DURING YARSA PICKING SEASON

Yarshagumba (*Cordyceps sinensis*) picking season has begun in higher regions of western Nepal. Most of the schools have been closed as students as well as teachers ascended higher hills to collect yarshagumba which has affected more than 8000 students. Despite the major income of the people living in these areas is yarsha collection as they sell the collected yarsha to the people who come from Tibet. They need to pay NRS 25,000 as revenue while exporting the yarsha out of the district.

May 25

<https://bit.ly/2Hgn8UL>

HERBS: AN ALTERNATIVE INCOME SOURCE

Scientific collection and processing of herbs can be an alternative source of income for the people living in Martadi of Bajura district north western Nepal. But due to the lack of awareness and knowledge, the people have been collecting the medicinal herbs haphazardly which can lead to the extinction of the herbs. According to locals, proper trainings related to sustainable harvesting of herbs should be given to avoid arbitrary collection of the species, aiding to generate employment.

May 26

<https://bit.ly/2LjdPWg>

MASSIVE GARBAGE COLLECTED IN HANUMANTE

The large mass of the garbage, around 10 tons has been collected from Hanumante River in Bhaktapur central Nepal and its catchment areas, during Hanumante Clean-up Campaign on Saturday. The clean-up was conducted in Brahamayani Area of Changuunayaran, central Nepal in its 13th week of campaign. The river has been polluted due to anthropogenic activities such as the disposal of household and industrial wastes. The campaigners' of clean up event urged everyone to keep the rivers clean.

May 26

<https://bit.ly/2LVghTW>

OVER 400 ASCENDED EVEREST

At the end of the climbing season of the Mt. Everest, Solukhumbu, eastern Nepal, more than 400 summiteers have reached the peak. Through the mountain expedition, the Government of Nepal has collected approximately NPR 361 million royalty revenue from climbers. The climbing season usually begins in mid-May till the end of May every year. However, total of six deaths were recorded during the expedition.

May 26

<https://bit.ly/2J7AHvj>

India-Himalaya

CELEBRATING WORLD CULTURE DAY

World Culture Day has been celebrated by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) by casting a film 'Celebrating Diversity' including traditional dance of Jammu and Kashmir, northern India. The program was started with the welcome speech by Regional Director of ICCR. Various traditional dances reflecting different cultures and tradition were displayed in the event.

May 21

<http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/iccr-celebrates-world-culture-day/>

ALERT OF NIPAH VIRUS

Eight bats (*Chiroptera* spp.) were found to be dead inside the school premises of Sirmour district in Himachal Pradesh northern India which produced worries among the people. When the whole country is devastated with the death in Kerala due to Nipah virus, an infection mostly spread through winged mammals. According to the principal of the school, immediate information was given to the authorities about the dead bats. However, it has appeared that bats died due to heat but for precautionary measures, samples of bats have been sent to Pune's National Institute of Virology.

May 25

<https://bit.ly/2Jc1cQf>

China Himalaya

CORDYCEPS CULTURAL TOURISM FESTIVAL CELEBRATED

The third Cordyceps cultural tourism festival has been celebrated at the foot of Molan Snow Mountain in Damxung, south western China. The tourists with the help of local herdsmen were found to be digging and discovering the medicinal herb Cordyceps on the occasion. According to the organizer of the event, the tourists should pay for digging the Cordyceps. Besides, several traditional songs and dances were performed by the locals and tourists.

May 24 & 25

http://eng.tibet.cn/eng/index/focus/201805/t20180524_5878489_2.html

http://eng.tibet.cn/eng/index/focus/201805/t20180525_5883799_2.html

INCREASE OF TOURISTS IN TIBET

The number of tourist visiting Tibet Autonomous Region, south western China, has increased by 50.5 percent compared to the previous year. The increased number of tourist has led to the elevation in revenue collected. The Tibetan government offers various facilities like good roads, infrastructural development, discounts in hotels and air tickets to attract tourist.

May 27

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-05/27/c_137210168.htm

Bhutan-Himalaya

LAND USE RIGHT SYSTEM PROJECT TO TAKE UP FARMING

A national job fair has been held at Thimpu, central Bhutan, with the objective to enhance agro farming and livestock in rural areas. Over 60 youths have registered with the land 'Use Right System' (URS) project to replace traditional farming with mechanised farming. According to the Prime Minister, people interested in farming but having issues with the land will be benefitted from the URS. Agro farming and livestock project started in Kidu, northern Bhutan in 2016 to enhance land productivity, employment and promote commercial farming.

May 21

<https://bit.ly/2Jc1iDv>

HEAVY DOWNPOUR TRIGGERED LANDSLIDE

With the initiation of monsoon, heavy rainfall has triggered a massive landslide in the 19 kilometre to 55 kilometre road section of Manitar-Lhamoizingkha, southern Bhutan. According to the officials of the Department of Roads, no severe problem was observed in the traffic and excavating machines have been deployed in the sites to clear the roads.

May 26

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/landslide-closes-manitar-lhamoizingkha-road/>

ELEPHANT ENCROACHMENT

Most farmers of Singeygang, central Bhutan, had quit farming due to the encroachment of elephant (*Elephas maximus*). According to the locals, the elephants have damaged their crops as two of the stone walls that were built to block elephants were broken down due to heavy rain. They added that elephants and wild boar are the major problematic wildlife. So, to solve the problem the local people are installing an electric fence with the financial aid of the government and also urged the government for concrete walls.

May 26

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/elephants-are-back-at-singeygang-in-sipsu/>

HERITAGE MUSEUM IN CHITRAL

A heritage museum has been established by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Laspur valley of Chitral district, north western Pakistan. The museum has been built with the financial aid of Swiss agency. Items like weaponry, household utensils, traditional dresses, wood work, agricultural tools and antique musical instruments has been placed for exhibition in the museum.

May 25

<https://khybernews.tv/kp-govt-established-heritage-museum-in-chitral/>