

Headlines Himalaya

Aug 20 – Aug 26 (2018)

No. 519

Editorial Team: Indu Pokhrel and Shweta Khadka

For the 519th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 33 news from 18 sources and selected 31 happenings from five countries. Biogas pipeline system is inaugurated in Biratnagar, eastern Nepal. Similarly, rural areas of eastern Nepal, Morang are lighten up through solar energy. In India, ban on imported fish is lifted in Meghalaya, north eastern part of the country. In China, anti-cancer properties are found in Tibetan mushroom (*Ganoderma lucidum*). Endangered Przewalski's gazelle (*Procapra przewalskii*) population has increased in Qinghai, north western China. In north western Pakistan, farmers agitate over levied tax on transportation of potatoes (*Solanum tuberosum*).

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

- One step towards the reduction of social crime*
- Landslide: nightmare for people*
- Reassurance for victims*
- Re-opening of Kalimati fruits and vegetables market*
- Inauguration of biogas pipeline system*
- Never ending natural calamities*
- Blood for life*
- Illuminating rural areas*
- Training on hybrid maize production*
- Smugglers arrested*
- Repair work resumes*
- Initiation of international airport construction*

INDIA

- Heavy rain-induced landslide Jammu and Kashmir*
- State government directs to rationalize the schools*
- Lack of dumping facility*
- Farmers attracted to vegetable cultivation*
- Communication gap hinders animal identification*
- Beel fisheries management training*
- Fortnight long tropical sun affects rice culture*
- Failure in drinking water situation*
- Ban in polythene bags*
- Second highest precipitation in Dharamshala*
- Ban on imported fish lifted*
- Decrease in cattle smuggling*

CHINA

- Anti-cancer properties in Tibetan mushroom*
- Enhanced ecology welcomes Purple Heron*
- Increase in gazelle population*

BHUTAN

- Nanong farmers opted for renewable energy*
- Villagers at the risk of flood*
- Commercial seed production in Lhuentse*

PAKISTAN

- Farmers agitate over levied tax*

ONE STEP TOWARDS THE REDUCTION OF SOCIAL CRIME

People of Achham district, far western Nepal have started anti-liquor campaign which aids to lower the cases of domestic violence and other social crimes. Anti-liquor campaign was originally started by women's group and was later supported by men. The campaign has been a success as it has helped in lowering the number of crimes and domestic violence. Local units, police and the district administration have also supported the campaign.

Aug 21

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

LANDSLIDE: NIGHTMARE FOR PEOPLE

People of Newartole in Dolakha, central Nepal have been spending sleepless nights with the fear of being swept away by landslide. As per the locals, due to the heavy rainfall, land near their homes is continuously sliding. Dozens of houses in the villages are in risk due to landslide. They were alerted to the possible danger by the respective authorities. Similarly, landslide triggered by heavy downpour in two different places of Dhading district, central Nepal, has led to the blockage of highway disrupting the vehicular movement.

Aug 21 & 24

<https://bit.ly/2x0oXBW>

<https://bit.ly/2NzrAF2>

REASSURANCE FOR VICTIMS

The victims reeling under the wild animal terror in the fiscal year 2074/75 B.S have been compensated with the amount of NPR 11.41 million for the fiscal year 2074/75 B.S. Families who had lost their members in animal attacks were provided with NPR 1 million each, injured were given a total of NPR 1.34 million and infrastructures damaged were provided with NPR 1.96 million. Those whose crops were destroyed was provided with total of NPR 3.1 million.

Aug 21

<https://bit.ly/2MYHyt3>

RE-OPENING OF KALIMATI FRUITS AND VEGETABLES MARKET

Kalimati fruits and vegetable market, central Nepal has been re-opened on August 22 after the vegetable traders called off their protests. Vendors of the market had stopped selling fruits and vegetables due to dispute between vegetable traders and monitoring team from the Department of Supplies Management. According to one of the sellers, the vegetable traders had shoved the officials in market inspection for on-going concern over price rise in vegetables. During the inspection, the vegetable traders were found to be charging their consumers four times higher than the actual prices paid to the farmers.

Aug 22

<https://bit.ly/2O9Q312>

INAUGURATION OF BIOGAS PIPELINE SYSTEM

A biogas plant and gas pipeline system has been inaugurated by the Prime Minister on August 21 in Biratnagar, eastern Nepal. The biogas plant was introduced by Shree Krishna Gau Sewa Sadan, an organization that protects and cares cows and has been able to supply biogas to 32 families in the area at NPR 84 per kg by installing a pipeline system. The plant produces 160 Kg of biogas per day that can be distributed to 150 households.

Aug 22

<https://bit.ly/2CCsz3h>

NEVER ENDING NATURAL CALAMITIES

The flooded Karnali River has continued to erode its bank at Kailali, far western Nepal. People of that area had built a bio-embankment to protect their homes and farms only few days ago which was swept by the flood. According to officials of Rani Jamara Kulariya Irrigation Project, permanent embankment would be constructed during the post monsoon period. Project has been launched in May for the construction of 1 km long embankment to control flood.

Aug 22

<https://bit.ly/2x0HcrH>

BLOOD FOR LIFE

With the motive to meet the shortage of blood across the nation, the Armed Police Force (APF) has organized a blood donation programme. APF inspector donated blood at the programme which was held at APF headquarters, Halchowk, Kathmandu, central Nepal. The introduction of Armed Police Act 2058 B.S. was also marked on this day. The Inspector General expressed APF's commitment to work on peace, security, development and prosperity and the belief that the blood donation programme would be a life saviour for the needy ones.

Aug 23

<https://bit.ly/2NxTe5n>

ILLUMINATING RURAL AREAS

Solar Mini-grid Project of 30 KW capacity has been installed in Morang, eastern Nepal, which was inaugurated by the Minister for Energy, Water Source and Irrigation on August 22. The project was financially aided by Asian Development Bank (ADB), Alternative Energy Promotion Center (AEPC) and District Coordination Committee for solar power installation and electrification. On this occasion, the Minister said that this project would be able to benefit electricity-deprived settlements and added that supply of drinking water and irrigation facilities from solar pumping has always been in top priority of the Government of Nepal.

Aug 23

<https://bit.ly/2wZix65>

TRAINING ON HYBRID MAIZE PRODUCTION

With the motive to increase the production and productivity of maize (*Zea mays*) in the country, 46 days long training programme on Hybrid maize Comprehensive Technologies has been organized where the experts, scientists and representatives of the seed companies and stakeholders participated. The training was sponsored by the Government of China through the Ministry of Commerce. With the knowledge and expertise gained from the training, Nepal is expected to produce hybrid seeds of maize on its own. As per experts, such training would lead to the commercialization of maize, as maize is the second most important crop after rice (*Oryza sativa*) in Nepal.

Aug 23

<https://bit.ly/2x52J1U>

SMUGGLERS ARRESTED

People have been arrested with wildlife trophy of Musk deer (*Axis axis*) in Kathmandu, central Nepal on August 23. Similar case appeared on August 26 when two people were arrested leopard's hide from Kathmandu, central Nepal. The criminals will be punished according to National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act 2029.

Aug 23 & 26

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

<https://bit.ly/2Nujv4B>

REPAIR WORK RESUMES

The repair work of trade route of Rasuwagadhi, central Nepal which links Nepal with China has recommenced after obstruction since past month due to landslide. Trade with China has been hindered due to the barrier of road. Rashuwagadhi route has become the only reliable route for trade after Tatopani trade route has closed due to earthquake. As per sources, repair work will be completed within month, for which Ministry of Defence and Road Division Office are working together.

Aug 26

<https://bit.ly/2Qjv9ZN>

INITIATION OF INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION

With the help of Chinese government, construction work of Pokhara International Airport, western Nepal has been commenced. It was inaugurated by the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation in August 22 and assumed that the work will be completed within three years. It has been believed to enhance the tourism industry with its construction.

Aug 26

<https://bit.ly/2Mk3vxs>

India-Himalaya

HEAVY RAIN-INDUCED LANDSLIDE IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Rolling down of boulders and debris from a hillock in Kishtwar-Paddar road of Jammu and Kashmir, northern India led to four spot deaths and nine were injured on Monday. The vehicle trapped by landslide was carrying a group of devotees.

In Ramban district, Jammu and Kashmir, number of vehicles were stranded as overnight rain triggered landslide which resulted in blocked Jammu–Srinagar National Highway. The 270 km highway was cleared and restored as fast as possible as it is the only highway that connects Kashmir with the rest of the states.

Aug 20 & 26

<https://bit.ly/2x1COYQ>

<https://bit.ly/2O5unmH>

STATE GOVERNMENT DIRECTS TO RATIONALIZE THE SCHOOLS

There are about 1,100 primary schools and 900 upper primary schools that have disproportionate student-teacher ratio in Jammu & Kashmir, northern India and thirteen percent of the total government primary schools are run by a single teacher. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has directed the state to rationalize the schools and enhance primary education.

Aug 20

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

LACK OF DUMPING FACILITY

Lack proper of dumping sites has troubled the residents in Palampur, Himachal Pradesh, northern India. As a result, the garbage bins are overflowed which are then scattered by stray dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*) and cattle. According to Panchayat Pradhans, hundreds of bins were distributed in village but without the planning of disposal area.. Residents are distressed of the diseases that open waste disposal could bring and made an appeal to concerned authority for making necessary provision to the problem.

Aug 20

<https://bit.ly/2N50MgH>

FARMERS ATTRACTED TO VEGETABLE CULTIVATION

Farmers in Shimla, northern India are attracted to vegetable cultivation after decline in food grain production. The state produced only 15.93 lakh Metric Tonnes (MT) of food grains when the target was of 16.45 lakh MT. But in case of vegetables, the target was not only achieved but production increased by 1.10 lakh MT. Periodical rain during cultivation and handsome returns after harvesting have benefitted many farm growers.

Aug 20

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

COMMUNICATION GAP HINDERS ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

In a forest of Barpeta district of Assam, north eastern India, a black jackal (*Canis* spp.) was discovered whose identification process through DNA testing was hindered due to poor coordination between Forest Department and Assam State Zoo. According to zoo officials, the black jackal was released into the wild before the blood sample could be collected. While forest authorities blame zoo for their negligence as they had adequate time to collect the sample. According to experts, the animal could either be a melanistic jackal or a different sub-species.

Aug 20

<https://bit.ly/2MhBbf9>

BEEL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Five days training program on beel (lake-like wetland) fisheries management was organized by the Guwahati Regional Centre of the Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI), Assam in north eastern India with an aim of livelihood improvement. The training mainly focused on beel fisheries management and development, soil and water quality management in beels, diseases management, and nutritional aspect along with practical sessions. Altogether 26 participants learned about the management of beels and the need for conservation of wetlands in the state.

Aug 20

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

FORTNIGHT LONG TROPICAL SUN AFFECTS RICE CULTURE

Farmers of Siang valley-Arunachal Pradesh, north eastern India have been distressed due to week long low rainfall and scorching heat this monsoon which has affected their rice (*Oryza sativa*) cultivation. The region experienced the hottest day of the season on Sunday with 40 degree Celsius catalysing all the natural irrigation channels, perennial streams and canals to evaporate. According to Agriculture Department officials, they have already visited the region and are planning to compensate the farmers who depend on agriculture for their subsistence.

Aug 21

<https://bit.ly/2x0KnzD>

FAILURE IN DRINKING WATER SITUATION

Only 60 percent of population in Jammu and Kashmir, northern India has access to tap water while the maximum populations are receiving polluted water. The state government has delayed in collecting the data for further procedure, thereby failing to address the problem. Due to lack of execution of water supply schemes, people are forced to drink impure water which has led to increase in water borne diseases.

Aug 21

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

BAN IN POLYTHENE BAGS

The administration of Dhubri district of Assam, north eastern India has completely banned the manufacture, stock, distribution or sell and use of polythene bags of less than 50 microns. According to the Deputy Commissioner, the use of plastic bags, bottles and containers have polluted the environment and has reduced the natural beauty of the town which calls for the prohibition. The residents seemed equally supportive towards this initiative.

Aug 23

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

SECOND HIGHEST PRECIPITATION IN DHARAMSHALA

Dharamshala in the Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh, northern India has received its second highest rainfall for 24 hours period with 292.4 mm rain at 8:30 am on Friday. The highest precipitation in 24 hours was recorded 60 years ago which was of 316.4 mm. Considering the safety of children, the district administration has closed all the educational institutes.

Aug 24

<https://bit.ly/2CFU4ZE>

BAN ON IMPORTED FISH LIFTED

After a month long ban on imported fish in Meghalaya, north eastern India, the state government has finally lifted the ban. The ban was imposed after the detection of traces of carcinogenic substance called formalin in fish,. Fishmongers have hiked the price by nearly 70 to 100 percent following the reopen of ban As per sources, these imported fish are supplied to the markets without any testing done but the Food Safety Commissioner claimed for the regular testing of fish before its availability in market..

Aug 25

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

DECREASE IN CATTLE SMUGGLING

The dedication of central government to decrease the smuggling of cattle from Assam and Meghalaya, north eastern India, to Bangladesh has resulted in a sharp decline than the previous years. This year 158 cattle heads were seized and 88 smuggling cases were detected which is 97 percent less than last year. According to Border Security Force (BSF) sources, tight security and surveillance by state police and BSF along with Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) have led to reduce in cattle smuggling.

Aug 25

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

China Himalaya

ANTI-CANCER PROPERTIES IN TIBETAN MUSHROOM

Regarded as the “medicine of kings” in China, the white lingzhi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) mushroom’s chemical extract can be used to treat liver cancer. According to researchers at the Chinese Academy of Scientific Institute Of Microbiology, chemical compound called GL22 can inhibit the proliferation of cancer causing cells. This medicinal fungus grows in high altitude area of Tibet, south western China.

Aug 23

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

ENHANCED ECOLOGY WELCOMES PURPLE HERON

With the overall improvement in the ecology of Qinghai Lake National Nature Reserve, north western China, purple heron (*Ardea purpurea*) was seen, which is a new bird species for that place. The sighting of the purple heron of the family Ardeidae is a new record towhole Qinghai province. . About 35 types of birds have been introduced in the Qinghai Lake since 1990’s with total of 224 types at present.

Aug 23

<https://bit.ly/2N4LhoK>

INCREASE IN GAZELLE POPULATION

The population of endangered Przewalski's gazelle (*Procapra przewalskii*) which are exclusively found in Qinghai, north western China has increased this year as the highest recorded number till date. The number of gazelle is 783, more than the previous year with total of 2,793 in the wild at present. According to researchers, this increase in the population of gazelle has been possible after the joint efforts of local government and local herders.

Aug 24

<https://bit.ly/2N2pa2x>

Bhutan-Himalaya

NANONG FARMERS OPTED FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY

Under the Bhutan Biogas Project (2011), the farmers of Nanong village in Pema Gatsel, south eastern Bhutan have been using biogas which is a renewable source of energy. Local farmers are positive about biogas as it is safe and they do not have to collect firewood any longer. With total 266 biogas plants in the village, it is expected to reduce the reliance of farmers in firewood and costly petroleum.

Aug 20

<https://bit.ly/2Qk2KYj>

VILLAGERS AT THE RISK OF FLOOD

About 10 households, a school and a health unit situated along the sides of river bank at Tshangchelu in Gomdar of Samdruvillage of Samdrup Jongkhar, south eastern Bhutan are living a risky life as there is no river protection wall along Nyera Amachhu River in their area. During monsoons, the residents have to spend sleepless nights as the flood can strike the place any time. The Gomdar Village Administration is planning to seek the aid of government as they do not have enough funds for mitigation work.

Aug 23

<https://bit.ly/2x12SEe>

COMMERCIAL SEED PRODUCTION IN LHUENTSE

People in Maenbi, Lhuentse, eastern Bhutan now are independent of the Village Agriculture Extension Office for vegetable seeds after a farmer has taken up the commercial seed production. After attending the training on seed production and packaging, the farmer had started his business. This commercial production has helped village agriculture extension office as they do not have to buy seeds from the National Seed Centre and apart from seed production 40 farmers have been trained on seed production.

Aug 26

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

FARMERS AGITATE OVER LEVIED TAX

Distressed farmers from Garam Chashma, Chitral, north western Pakistan due to imposition of tax on transportation of potatoes (*Solanum tuberosum*) out of valley held a protest against the Tehsil Municipal Administration (TMA). According to protestors, the government has never supported them to construct road and water canals but now has imposed USD 1.3 per bag of potatoes as tax. Considering the tax to be illegal they have given TMA 48 hours ultimatum to withdraw the taxes.

Aug 26

<https://bit.ly/2N65c76>