

# Headlines Himalaya

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Editorial Team: Bhintuna Vaidya and Rashmi Singh

For the 525<sup>th</sup> issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 20 news from 8 sources and selected 20 happenings from five countries. Three staffers of a trekking agency were arrested by Nepal police for their suspected involvement in making fake expedition permission letter. The government has declared Ilam, eastern Nepal as the 'Kiwi Zone'. Northeast India has been reported to receive the driest monsoon in the past five years. Drought forces farmers in Bhutan to leave their fields fallow. Steel mills violating the environmental laws are shut down by the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA).

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!

<b>NEPAL</b>	<i>Polluted water upsurges health issues</i>
	<i>Agricultural knowledge centre founded</i>
	<i>Heritage sites in peril</i>
	<i>Tiger spotted dead</i>
	<i>Final instalment of house grant distributed</i>
	<i>Fake expedition permission</i>
	<i>Expressway study accord signed</i>
	<i>Solar water project benefits locals</i>
	<i>Herb farming fosters prosperity</i>
	<i>CCTV monitoring for garbage collection</i>
	<i>Ilam declared as kiwi zone</i>
	<i>Alternative dumping site offered</i>
	<i>Rhino poacher under control</i>
<b>INDIA</b>	<i>Government approves anti-pollution project</i>
	<i>Low rainfall in the northeast</i>
	<i>Groundwater contamination</i>
<b>BHUTAN</b>	<i>Rescued yaks released</i>
	<i>Lands left fallow</i>
<b>PAKISTAN</b>	<i>CM to stop deforestation</i>
	<i>Pak-EPA to shut down steel mills</i>

### **POLLUTED WATER UPSURGES HEALTH ISSUES**

Polluted water has caused health problems of around 500 families at Hanumannagar of Saptari, eastern Nepal. The shallow tube-well, which is only reliable source of drinking water, was contaminated due to recent floods in the areas of Hanumannagar Kankalani municipality and Tilathi rural municipality. This has led the locals suffer from various water borne diseases.

**Oct 2**

<https://bit.ly/2OH5r4t>

### **AGRICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE CENTRE FOUNDED**

The Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives of Province 2 has established an Agricultural Knowledge Centre in Rajbiraj, south eastern Nepal. The initiation has been taken to provide services to farmers of Saptari and Siraha districts, eastern Nepal. Minister for Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives of the province also inaugurated Livestock Service Experts' Liaison Office in Siraha district which would train farmers for improved agricultural practices and commercialization.

**Oct 4**

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

### **HERITAGE SITES IN PERIL**

Conservationists and craftsmen have presaged the threats of air pollution in well-known heritage sites of the Kathmandu valley, central Nepal. A leading conservationist stated that dust and smoke have deteriorated wooden structures and have blackened the exteriors. Residential homes, patis, falchaas and monuments, most of which are historic and scattered across the valley, also face the same perils.

**Oct 4**

<https://bit.ly/2PsEB5m>

### **TIGER SPOTTED DEAD**

A Royal Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*) was spotted dead in Bardiya National Park (BNP), mid-western Nepal. Assistant Conservation Officer of BNP said that the dead body of tiger was found near Chisapani post inside the park. The cause of death was due to old age as claimed by the officials.

**Oct 4**

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

### **FINAL INSTALLMENT OF HOUSE GRANT DISTRIBUTED**

The third and the final instalment of house grant has been finally distributed by the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) to earthquake victims in Khotang, eastern Nepal. Based on the progress made in their house constructions per government-set standards are only authorized for receiving third installment. Around 13,799 houses were damaged as per the data of the NRA in Khotang district.

**Oct 3**

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

### **FAKE EXPEDITION PERMISSION**

Three staffers of a trekking agency based in Kathmandu, central Nepal were arrested by Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) of Nepal Police for their suspected involvement in Making fake expedition permission letter. The incident was exposed after the letter they produced at Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee Office and the one which they had received from the Tourism Board were found to be different.

**Oct 4**

<https://bit.ly/2Fjp2lg>

### **EXPRESSWAY STUDY ACCORD SIGNED**

Nepal Army which is tasked with building Kathmandu-Terai expressway has signed a deal with a Korean company for the preparation of detailed project report (DPR) for the shortest link between the Kathmandu and the southern plains. The Korean company has consented to prepare the report for NPR 101.5 million. The 76 km expressway, which will have 6.07 kilometres of tunnel, is expected to shorten travel time from Nijgadh in Bara to the Kathmandu Valley to an hour.

**Oct 3**

<https://bit.ly/2OJuML6>

### **SOLAR WATER PROJECT BENEFITS LOCALS**

Around 30 families from Baddi Jyawan in Bajhang district, western Nepal have been benefited from Baddi Jyawan Solar Lifting Drinking Water Project. With the joint effort of locals, Bungal Municipality constructed the project worth around NPR 2.9 million and has been successful for reducing water shortage problem. Such projects are an effective solution to water problems in geographically remote locations as mentioned by the Municipality Engineer.

**Oct 5**

<https://bit.ly/2RMNx23>

### **HERB FARMING FOSTERS PROSPERITY**

A farmer of Chandannath Municipality-1 in Jumla, mid-western Nepal, has ascertained means to earn money through herb farming. Herb farming involves low cost investment and less challenges. There are other varieties of herbs that need to be promoted and exported as said by one of the local. According to an officer at Karnali Herbs Procession Center, many farmers are switching to herb farming and the collection of herbs and transportation to market need to be simplified.

**Oct 6**

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

### **CCTV MONITORING FOR GARBAGE COLLECTION**

Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC), central Nepal has started installing around 1800 CCTV cameras at all main garbage collection centers, road intersections and world heritage sites for an effective monitoring of cleaning workers for the metropolis. The CCTV cameras are also expected to carry out the deadline monitoring more commendably for everyday garbage collection as per the KMC spokesperson. Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) mentioned that they have been currently working with KMC to determine the locations for installing the CCTV cameras.

**Oct 6**

<https://bit.ly/2B04ekR>

### **ILAM DECLARED AS KIWI ZONE**

The government under the Prime Minister Agriculture Modernisation Project, which aims to commercialize and improve agricultural industries, has declared Ilam, eastern Nepal as the 'Kiwi Zone' because of its potential for kiwifruit production. Some 23,000 households in the district are associated with the kiwi farming. Ilam municipality and Sandakpur rural municipality have been specified as areas covered by the zone. The rate of kiwi fruit is around NPR 150-250 per kg and a plant bears at least 200-250 kilos of fruits in a season.

**Oct 6**

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

### **ALTERNATIVE DUMPING SITE OFFERED**

The residents have offered to the civic authority around 25 ha of their land in Chape Kholsa gorge, 50 metres east of Sisdole dump, Nuwakot, central Nepal as an alternative dumping site. The residents made the offer since the current landfill site is full and stint and the residents are exposed to various health risks. The locals complained that the government or the Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) has not shown any interest in finding solutions to the issue.

**Oct 6**

<https://bit.ly/2RMgz1J>

### **RHINO POACHER UNDER CONTROL**

Chitwan National Park (CNP), south central Nepal has finally caught an infamous rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) poacher from Nawalparasi, western Nepal after ten years of relentless search whose involvement was recorded for two cases of illegal poaching of rhinoceros and trading animal parts in October 14, 2009. According to CNP Assistant Conservation Officer and Information Officer, the accused has been sentenced to 30 years of imprisonment and fined NPR 120,000.

**Oct 7**

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

## **India-Himalaya**

### **GOVERNMENT APPROVES ANTI-POLLUTION PROJECT**

Two rivers, Devika and Tawi, of Jammu & Kashmir, northern India, are now under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) after being approved by a pollution abatement project. The project has an estimated cost of USD 25.5 million, to be shared 90:10 between the Centre and the state government of Jammu & Kashmir.

**Oct 2**

<https://bit.ly/2T2CEum>

### **LOW RAINFALL IN THE NORTHEAST**

Northeast India has been reported to receive the driest monsoon in the past five years. According to India Meteorological Department (IMD), monsoon ended with a 9% rainfall deficit across the country. Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, north-eastern India, both had deficits of 32% and 26%, respectively.

**Oct 1**

<https://bit.ly/2qJ2sPg>

### **GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION**

According to the Public Health Engineer, the groundwater in 6881 areas of 24 districts of Assam, north eastern India is contaminated by arsenic. Furthermore, 930 areas in 13 districts were found to have fluoride contamination. Around 250 schemes for arsenic and fluoride free water have been established by the government.

**Oct 5**

<https://bit.ly/2Fg7jSb>

## Bhutan-Himalaya

### RESCUED YAKS RELEASED

Semchen Tsethar Tshogpa, an Animal Life Saving Association has bought four yaks from herders of Chamgang, Thimpu, western central Bhutan, and released them in Saephu, Wangdue, central Bhutan. Every year, the herders bring yaks to the committee who buy them so the yaks do not get slaughtered for meat but were unable to buy all the yaks this year due to less donations. The committee aims to continue 'tsethar', which is a traditional Buddhist practice of life release.

**Oct 2**

<https://bit.ly/2T8EdH0>

### LANDS LEFT FALLOW

Many farmers in several districts of Bhutan have been forced to leave their fields fallow due to the drying water source and lack of rainfall. However, the farmers expressed hope for future as the candidates of political parties in the forthcoming election are pledging to make irrigation and drinking water available by building canals.

**Oct 6**

<https://bit.ly/2RS9XyZ>

## Pakistan- Himalaya

### CM TO STOP DEFORESTATION

The chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north western Pakistan, has ordered an inquiry on the cutting of trees in Kumrat Valley, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said that the people involved in the deforestation process would be punished accordingly along with the timber Mafia.

**Oct 3**

<https://bit.ly/2z0gu3B>

### PAK-EPA TO SHUT DOWN STEEL MILLS

All steel mills that are violating the environmental laws are shut down by the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) under orders from the Supreme Court. The mills have a week before they have to deposit around USD 37,300 until they install equipment to filter the emissions. After nearly 30 years, the Supreme Court has taken a decision in the favor of residents of Rawalpindi, eastern Pakistan as well as nearby areas by looking into steel mills that have been causing major air pollution.

**Oct 4**

<https://bit.ly/2OFj8AL>