

Headlines Himalaya

Oct 8 – Oct 14 (2018)

No. 526

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For the 526th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 30 news from 11 sources and selected 30 happenings from five countries. Gangapurna Glacial Lake in Manang district, western Nepal becomes shallower due to sediments and particulates in water inflows. Pangolin scales weighing 2.9 kilograms seized by Nepal police. Red Panda spotted first time in Lamjung District, western Nepal. Villagers take initiatives to make their village one of the cleanest in Assam, northeast India. Twenty five counties and districts of Tibet, southwest China have been taken off the country's list of impoverished areas. A tiger that killed 18 cows was captured and radio-collared in Bhutan. The number of migratory Siberian birds is in decline in the wetlands of Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north western Pakistan.

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

Gangapurna Lake becomes shallower
Industrial estates face water crisis
Hailstorm ruins crops
Campaign against animal sacrifice
Pangolin scales seized
Farmers hit hard by drought in eastern region
Red panda spotted first time in Lamjung
Solar panels installed
Plantation of tree saplings
Avalanche kills climbers
Wood for livelihood for landless locals
Jeep safari resumes

INDIA

Villagers take up for clean drive
Eco-friendly idols discouraged
Agricultural schemes launched
Devastating paddy blast
Wildlife awareness camp held
A council formed to restore wetland
Project to build resilience to climate change
Precious mineral reserves found
Protest against carbon industries
National park opened for tourists
Disposal of garbage by burning
Tribute to environmental scientist

CHINA

Relief from poverty
Residents relocated from possible landslide areas

BHUTAN

Terrorizing tiger captured

PAKISTAN

Orphan inaugurates first library
Migratory birds in decline

GANGAPURNA LAKE BECOMES SHALLOWER

As sediments and particulates inflows in the water of Gangapurna glacial lake at an awful stride; the lake is becoming shallower in Manang, western Nepal. It has been reported that the lake, extended in an area of 21.08 hectares, has already lost a third of its depth. According to geology experts, a lake may change into a wetland or even to a dry land environment if sedimentation and deposition continues.

Oct 8

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

INDUSTRIAL ESTATES FACE WATER CRISIS

The only three industries in Rajbiraj, south eastern Nepal namely Milan Dairy Industry, Koshi Polymers Industry and Maha Lakshmi Paint industry are facing water crisis that has brought obstacles for continuous production. The same problem two years ago was resolved after extracting underground water, however, it has recurred after the system failure.

Oct 8

<https://bit.ly/2QH2SRu>

HAILSTORM RUINS CROPS

Several paddy (*Oryza sativa*) and vegetable farms worth thousands of rupees have been destroyed by hailstorms on over 500 hectares of land in Parbat district, western Nepal according to the Chief of the Agriculture Research Centre. A farmer of Ramjadeurali told that many farmers have incurred a huge loss.

Oct 8

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

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ANIMAL SACRIFICE

In the country's 77 districts since the last week, social groups are campaigning against the practice of animal sacrifice. Twenty-eight social organizations are involved in the nation-wide awareness campaign during Dashain festival. Society Chairman has necessitated putting an end to the practice of sacrificing animals at reliquaries of Hindu deities and the Kotghars (altars) during the festivals.

Oct 9

<https://bit.ly/2OKTyu9>

PANGOLIN SCALES SEIZED

Two people have been arrested with Pangolin (*Manis* sp.) scales weighing 0.0029 tonnes by the police in Dolakha district, central Nepal. The Deputy Superintendent of Police said that the culprits will be handed over to the Forest Division Office for further legal proceedings.

Oct 9

<https://bit.ly/2C8XiDa>

FARMERS HIT HARD BY DROUGHT IN EASTERN REGION

Yearlong drought has hit tea production and is expected to decrease vegetables and other food crop production in many areas in the region. The local district government has been providing relief grain and other food in drought-hit areas since August, stated by an agriculture officer at the Panchthar District Agriculture Development Office.

Oct 10

<https://bit.ly/2Fn2Pch>

RED PANDA SPOTTED FIRST TIME IN LAMJUNG

The endangered Red Panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) has been sighted for the first time in Marsyangdi Rural Municipality of Lamjung district, western Nepal. A video was recorded of red panda in its habitat near Naphada River in the jungle of Lekali by a team led by a zoologist with the help of a local guide.

Oct 10

<https://bit.ly/2RPTdZ0>

SOLAR PANELS INSTALLED

Solar panels worth millions of rupees were installed in some wards of the Fikkal and Harihar rural municipalities in Sindhuli, central Nepal. These solar panels have provided access to lighting to the areas deprived of national transmission lines.

Oct 11

<https://bit.ly/2TboXt8>

PLANTATION OF TREE SAPLINGS

The president planted a tree sapling of Bodhichitta (*Ziziphus budhensis*) at the Natural History Museum run by the Institute of Science and Technology of the Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, central Nepal, on the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR). Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Mayor of Kathmandu Metropolitan City and the chiefs and representatives of various bodies associated with nature conservation also planted saplings on this auspicious day. The museum was established for the awareness and preservation of biodiversity and conservation education through mobile exhibitions, seminars and training as stated by chief of the museum.

Oct 14

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

AVALANCHE KILLS CLIMBERS

Eight, out of nine, who had been earlier at the base camp of the Gurja Peak in Dhaulagiri district, western Nepal have been found dead. A heavy snowstorm followed by an avalanche buried the base camp of Mt. Gurja at 3,500m when the climbers were expecting a fair weather to head towards the high camp. According to the officials, the dead bodies of members of the expedition team have been airlifted to Kathmandu.

Oct 13 & 14

<https://bit.ly/2OL8to0>

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

WOOD FOR LIVELIHOOD FOR LANDLESS LOCALS

Residents of Hanumannagar Kankalini Municipality in Saptari, eastern Nepal who do not own any land and are living in small huts near the bank of Koshi River, have been busy collecting wood that come floating over Koshi River when Dashain festival is going around. One of the locals said that their main source for livelihood is to wait and collect wood, mostly from June to October when water level of river is high. Mayor of Hanumannagar Kankalini Municipality, in the meantime, stated that the efforts were going on to relocate those at risk of flooding to safer areas.

Oct 13

<https://bit.ly/2K6Jyum>

JEEP SAFARI RESUMES

Jeep safaris have resumed in Chitwan National Park (CNP), south central Nepal, which had been closed earlier as precautionary measure during monsoon season. As heavy rains and floods obstruct the roadways and damage bridges, the park stops the jeep tours temporarily each year.

Oct 14

<https://bit.ly/2zVn3nB>

VILLAGERS TAKE UP FOR CLEAN DRIVE

In the Haldha-Sahan, Assam, northeast India, the locals have been taking initiatives to make the village one of the cleanest in the State. The women initially started this by installing bamboo dustbins in front of each house which then grew into plastic ban and use of LED bulbs among many others. The villagers use their spare time from their daily work to clean the village.

Oct 8

<https://bit.ly/2zb9SPN>

ECO-FRIENDLY IDOLS DISCOURAGED

An artisan of Dhubri, Assam, northeast India has been making environment friendly Durga idols from sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum*) wastes, discarded cycle tubes, plastic bottles, etc., but with no buyers. Many artisans like him, who use festivals to promote social issues, are getting discouraged due to the fact that their eco-friendly statues are not sold because the people do not want unattractive and recycled statues on display.

Oct 8

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

AGRICULTURAL SCHEMES LAUNCHED

The Arunachal Pradesh Agricultural Minister has launched two schemes for farmers to increase their income and production, namely, Chief Minister's Sashakt Kisan Yojana (CMSKY) and Chief Minister's Krishi Samuh Yojana (CMKSY). These schemes are aimed at fulfilling the Prime Minister's vision of doubling farmer's income by 2022 by empowering farmers through cooperative approach, providing timely support and marketing intervention for better price realization and income.

Oct 8

<https://bit.ly/2PtMU0p>

DEVASTATING PADDY BLAST

Expecting a good crop year, the farmers of Kashmir were distressed due to blast disease that hit their paddy (*Oryza sativa*) due to humid temperatures. Blast disease is caused by a fungus (*Magnaporthe grisea*) that causes black or brown lesions to grow in different parts of the plant, reducing crop production.

Oct 9

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

WILDLIFE AWARENESS CAMP HELD

In Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh, northern India, the Forest Department along with the wildlife wing organized a wildlife awareness camp to emphasize the link between wildlife protection and preservation and human survival. A painting competition was also held on the topic 'Predators are in danger'.

Oct 7

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

A COUNCIL FORMED TO RESTORE WETLAND

In order to restore and revive the wetland Deeper Beel, Assam, northeast India, the state government has formed a council personally supervised by the Chief Minister. The council will look into the waste disposed near the wetland that harms the fish population. The wetland is one of the migratory sites for birds in India and supports a number of IUCN red-listed species.

Oct 10

<https://bit.ly/2B7F7N7>

PROJECT TO BUILD RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The Assam Agricultural University (AAU) and the Norwegian government collaborated on a project entitled 'Building Climate Resilience of Smallholders in Assam and Odisha' which aims at improving agricultural productivity, adaptive capacity and livelihoods of smallholders to climate and economic enhancements, by building resilience and strengthening the agro-product market. The project will be implemented in drought-hit and heavy-rainfall affected areas and will help adapt the small farmers to the effects of climate change.

Oct 10

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

PRECIOUS MINERAL RESERVES FOUND

A team of geologists have found belts of rock formations in Karbi Anglong, Assam, north eastern India, containing platinum, titanium, vanadium, and iron ores. The place is already known for its proven reserves of coal and lime and is expected to hold a rich depository of rare and high quality minerals.

Oct 10

<https://bit.ly/2T8Dgid>

PROTEST AGAINST CARBON INDUSTRIES

In Chirang district, Assam, northeast India, the members of Bodoland People's Front (BPF) are protesting against a carbon industry for polluting the residential area in its vicinity. After biased action taken by the Pollution Control Board in inspecting the factory, the general secretary of Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti demanded that all mandated tests and pollution monitoring be done for different industries of the area.

Oct 12

<https://bit.ly/2RTujl4>

NATIONAL PARK OPENED FOR TOURISTS

Kaziranga National Park, Assam, northeast India has been opened for tourist season 2019 by the State Environment and Forest Minister. Speaking on the occasion, the minister informed that a special force had been set up to handle weapons to check poaching activities. He also appreciated local people for supporting conservation and protection of the forests and wildlife of the Park.

Oct 12

<https://bit.ly/2B8ggIM>

DISPOSAL OF GARBAGE BY BURNING

After claiming that the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, northern India, would use scientific ways of garbage disposal, locals have since witnessed numerous incidents of the SMC burning heaps of garbage on residential roadsides without any regard to the environment. Burning of garbage is said to release carcinogenic substance and pollutants to the environment and even warrants a penalty under the National Green Tribunal rules. The SMC however seem to be refuting all allegations of garbage burning even after a video of the garbage burning went viral.

Oct 13

<https://bit.ly/2K9gToQ>

TRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST

The Assam Science Society paid tributes to the environmental scientist who died on his 111th day of fast for the conservation of the River Ganga. The scientist had been an important personage in preparing the legislation for preventing water contamination and made people aware of the issues concerning environment conservation.

Oct 13

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

China Himalaya

RELIEF FROM POVERTY

According to the local poverty relief office, 25 counties and districts of Tibet, southwest China have been taken off the country's list of impoverished areas. All these counties now have less than 2 percent of its population living below the poverty line, defined as per capita annual income of around USD 335 at 2010 prices. Reason for poverty in Tibet has been cited for the region's harsh climatic conditions with more than 85% of its land is over 4000 meters above sea level.

Oct 8

<https://bit.ly/2DKi10E>

RESIDENTS RELOCATED FROM POSSIBLE LANDSLIDE AREAS

Around 8455 residents from possible affected flood areas of Deqen, Tibet, southwest China, have been relocated to higher grounds. Tents have been set up and the government has distributed necessary relief materials.

Oct 14

<https://bit.ly/2FGP0Ww>

Bhutan-Himalaya

TERRORIZING TIGER CAPTURED

A tiger (*Panthera tigris*) aged 6-7 years that has reportedly killed 18 cows (*Bos taurus*) from three different villages of Bhutan was trapped and radio-collared by the Global Tiger Centre (GTC) in Tali ridge, Zhemgang, central Bhutan. The centre will monitor the animal for a year.

Oct 9

<https://bit.ly/2TGHA8y>

Pakistan- Himalaya

ORPHAN INAUGURATES FIRST LIBRARY

Youth Jirga, a local organization of Shangla District, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, northwest Pakistan, has established the first library of the district which was inaugurated by an orphan girl of grade three. The books in the library have been donated by different people to get more youth into reading books and less into using cellphones.

Oct 9

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

MIGRATORY BIRDS IN DECLINE

The number of migratory Siberian birds in the wetlands of Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north western Pakistan, have dropped from 60,000 to 6,000 in a year due to climate change and drying of wetlands. The sub-divisional wildlife officer of Kohat also informed that the number of native birds was also declining for the same reasons. This has led to an increase in the hunting license prices.

Oct 13

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