

Headlines Himalaya

Dec 3 – Dec 9 (2018)

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For the 534th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 25 news from 13 sources and selected 23 happenings from five countries. Young Nepalese volunteers bid to set a new international record and raise awareness about plastic pollution. Cameras installed to monitor movements of wildlife into human settlements and across the international border. Wild tuskers destroy houses and damage crops in south eastern Nepal. Tigers spotted at snow-clad high elevation point in Arunachal valley of north eastern India. A training course was conducted on micro-irrigation in an Agriculture University in Himachal Pradesh, northern India. Climate change is helping birds to evade winter migration. With the technical support from the government, commercial farming is spreading in eastern Bhutan. Clean and green drive extends to irrigation canals in Peshawar, northern 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

Himalayan road upgraded
Bid to set a new international record
Cameras to monitor wildlife movement
President at bilateral meeting
Relief assistance to flood-hit families
Wild tuskers terrorize residents

INDIA

Bid to stabilize potato price
Village prone to landslide
Tigers at high elevations
Saving water through micro-irrigation
Injustice to farmers
Plantation to improve aesthetic beauty
Water borne diseases on the rise
Petition against filtration plant
Irrigation project fails

CHINA

Safeguarding our only home
Tibet's earliest inhabitants
Birds evade migration

BHUTAN

Commercial farming projects spreading
Crop depredation by elephants

PAKISTAN

Gas pipeline project inaugurated
Flowers draw visitors
Clean and green drive extends to canals

HIMALAYAN ROAD UPGRADED

The Chhoser-Korala road section which links Jomsom and Korala, the transit point on the Nepal-China border in Mustang, northern Nepal has been upgraded and gravelled; the breadth has been expanded by 11 metres, gabion walls and machinery walls have been constructed on the road.

Dec 5

<https://bit.ly/2EP1TvC>

BID TO SET A NEW INTERNATIONAL RECORD

Young Nepalese volunteers tied 100,000 colourful used plastic bags on a metal grid 20 m long and 5 m tall, shaped like the Dead Sea, on an open ground in Kathmandu's city centre, central Nepal with a slogan "One Dead Sea is enough for us". This attempt was made in a bid to set a new international record and raise awareness about the vast volumes of plastics polluting the world's oceans.

Dec 5

<https://bit.ly/2rX3fMZ>

CAMERAS TO MONITOR WILDLIFE MOVEMENT

Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras have been installed in Bhanu Municipality, Tanahun, western Nepal to monitor the movement of a leopard (*Panthera pardus*) that wandered into the human settlement recently. The Chitwan National Park (CNP), south central Nepal and Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) programme of the World Wildlife Fund have also jointly installed camera traps in Sumeshwor, a trans-border bio-corridor between the Chitwan National Park and the Valmiki Tigers Reserve of India to monitor the movement of wild animals in the area.

Dec 6

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

<https://bit.ly/2ArR13V>

PRESIDENT AT BILATERAL MEETING

The President of Nepal had a bilateral meeting with her Polish counterpart in Katowice Poland at COP24 (24th Conference of the Parties), the UN Climate Change Summit. The two leaders discussed ways and means of further strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries. In addition, they sat for the issue of climate change and its impact on vulnerable countries and need of support from countries that have the knowledge, technology and resources for mitigation and adaptation in developing countries.

Dec 6

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

RELIEF ASSISTANCE TO FLOOD-HIT FAMILIES

The flood-hit 172 families of Rila village of Bajura district, north western Nepal have been provided with relief materials by different social organizations. Floods and landslides hit the area in August this year. The relief materials included warm clothes and the materials for water supply.

Dec 6

<https://bit.ly/2RkHk0y>

WILD TUSKERS TERRORIZE RESIDENTS

A herd of wild elephants (*Elephas maximus*) have been entering the Hirapur settlement at Lalbandi Municipality-11 in Sarlahi district, south eastern Nepal every night. They have destroyed around a dozen houses and damaged crops. Ward chairman has demanded the authorities concerned to drive away the elephants and provide security to the villagers and provide assistance to those families rendered homeless by the elephant attack.

Dec 6

<https://bit.ly/2QQ579t>

BID TO STABILIZE POTATO PRICE

During the months of November to December, huge amount of potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) is available in markets at retail prices as low as USD 0.035 per kg due to routine maintenance work of cold storages for the coming year. The farmers incur heavy losses due to low price during the period. However, they control the amount of potatoes going to the markets during February-March and thus the price of potato surges to USD 0.43 per kg. The government of Bengal, eastern India has ordered cold storage owners to store potatoes free of charge for this month to stabilize the retail price.

Dec 3

<https://bit.ly/2EQs7Oq>

VILLAGE PRONE TO LANDSLIDE

Bhakra village in Himachal Pradesh, northern India is situated on a hill that is prone to a massive landslide. Seventy per cent of the households in the village are facing this threat. In addition, despite the village's contribution towards the construction of the important Bhakra Dam, the village still lacks basic facilities such as education and health facilities.

Dec 3

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

TIGERS AT HIGH ELEVATIONS

Tigers (*Panthera tigris*) were spotted in the snow-covered Dibang valley, Arunachal Pradesh, north eastern India at 3,630 m above sea level, which may be one of the highest spots at which they have been sighted. This information was obtained as a result of a three-year camera trap study in Dibang Wildlife Sanctuary.

Dec 3

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

SAVING WATER THROUGH MICRO-IRRIGATION

A ten-day short training course on "Advances in micro-irrigation for enhancing crop and water productivity in water scarce areas" was sponsored by The Indian Council of Agricultural Research at the Chaudhary Sarwan Kumar Himachal Pradesh (CSK HP) Agriculture University, Himachal Pradesh, northern India. According to the vice-chancellor of the university, more than 50% water could be saved and about 20% enhancement of crop production was possible by micro-irrigation. Saving water was underlined as important as 60% area in the country is rain-fed.

Dec 4

<https://bit.ly/2EOT8Sf>

INJUSTICE TO FARMERS

Farmers in Kangra, Hamirpur district and Bangana tehsil, Una district, Himachal Pradesh, northern India are affected because of a law prevalent since the British regime. The law, known as Khudara Drakhstan Malkiyat Sarkar (KDMS), denies ownership rights of trees grown on their own private land, and instead provides these rights to the government. Meanwhile, the farmers of Jammu district, northern India have been treated unjustly as authorities have forcibly tried to snatch their agricultural land with an unfair compensation in return.

Dec 5 & 9

<https://bit.ly/2rXRp5w>

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

PLANTATION TO IMPROVE AESTHETIC BEAUTY

Plantation of 1000 high quality healthy poly-saplings of different conifer and broadleaf species has been undertaken in Budgam, Jammu Kashmir, northern India, by Pir Panjal forest division. The Plantation programme, under Charari Sharief Project, aims at improving greenery and aesthetic beauty of Charar-e-Sharief area in Budgam.

Dec 5

<https://bit.ly/2Q4CXsz>

WATER BORNE DISEASES ON THE RISE

In Poonch town of Jammu, northern India, it has been estimated that over 40% of the population is in risk of water borne diseases, as there was a rise in the number of infections of diarrhoea, jaundice and hepatitis in the past 15 days. Doctors have been deployed to investigate the area, due the spread of such diseases. Locals reported that they had no other option but to drink contaminated water, as clean water is unavailable to them.

Dec 6

<https://bit.ly/2Vayf9E>

PETITION AGAINST FILTRATION PLANT

A petition has been filed to study whether Doodh Ganga filtration plant supplies potable water or not to Budgam and Srinagar of Jammu and Kashmir, northern India. A population of around 700,000-800,000 people is supplied drinking water from the Doodh Ganga. It is alleged in the petition that the faecal matter and the solid and the liquid waste enter into the waters of Doodh Ganga from various sites.

Dec 8

<https://bit.ly/2T7NjmA>

IRRIGATION PROJECT FAILS

In Jammu, northern India, a project, Lift Irrigation Scheme was executed to increase agricultural produce in the state. It was started in 2003-04 to create 566 ha of Irrigation Potential. But, due to non-installation of machinery as a result of the issues related to the standard of civil work during construction, the scheme remained incomplete. An amount equivalent to USD 33,545 has already been spent for the project.

Dec 9

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

China-Himalaya

SAFEGUARDING OUR ONLY HOME

The Dalai Lama, a Tibetan leader has urged participants of the Conference of the Parties (COP24) to take serious action to combat climate change and to safe guard the earth, human being's only home. A Tibetan delegate including an environment researcher of the Tibet Policy Institute of the exile Tibetan government is attending the ongoing summit.

Dec 4

<https://bit.ly/2ERmC2l>

TIBET'S EARLIEST INHABITANTS

More than 3,600 stone artifacts have been found by researchers of Chinese Academy of Sciences, about 186.441 miles northwest of the capital, Lhasa, Western China. Tibet's harsh climate was inhabited by hunter gatherer groups, with tools found that were made 30,000 to 40,000 years ago.

Dec 7

<https://bit.ly/2AgqK8m>

BIRDS EVADE MIGRATION

Cormorants (*Phalacrocoracidae*) are a large group of fish eating birds, found in Lhundruk County, southwestern China's Tibet. They normally migrate to the south eastern coast during winter. Because Lhasa river valley has grown warmer, the birds have chosen to stay instead of migrating.

Dec 7

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

Bhutan-Himalaya

COMMERCIAL FARMING PROJECTS SPREADING

Over 12 commercial farming projects have begun with technical support from Horticulture Research and Development Project implemented by the Agriculture Research and Development Centre (ARDC), Wengkhari in Mongar, eastern Bhutan. The project is receiving technical cooperation from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Generating suitable horticulture technology, quality seed production, and strengthening research are the aims of such projects. Also, a batch of farmers has been selected for an outreach program where the farmers will receive training from pit digging to post-harvest techniques.

Dec 3

<https://bit.ly/2BE8c1M>

CROP DEPREDATION BY ELEPHANTS

The Regional Farm Machinery Corporation (RFMCL) in Gelephu, southern Bhutan has lost more than 90% of its paddy (*Oryza sativa*) harvest to elephants (*Elephas maximus*). Electrical fences were installed to protect the crops but they are too damaged by the elephants. Besides, chili (*Capsicum sp.*) plantation was also completely damaged.

Dec 7

<https://bit.ly/2V8a4J4>

GAS PIPELINE PROJECT INAUGURATED

A project to lay a gas pipeline to overcome the issue of low gas pressure in Peshawar, northern Pakistan has been inaugurated. The pipeline is to be laid from Turnab station to Suri bridge, and aims to fulfil longstanding demand of gas to the city.

Dec 7

<https://bit.ly/2QVZc2r>

FLOWERS DRAW VISITORS

Chrysanthemum flowers were displayed at the Khalid Bin Waleed Park, Peshawar, northern Pakistan which attracted a large number of people in the city. The show has been organized regularly in the winter for visitors. Over 200 types of chrysanthemum flowers are grown in the nursery for this public display.

Dec 7

<https://bit.ly/2EQ6azB>

CLEAN AND GREEN DRIVE EXTENDS TO CANALS

As an extension of the ongoing clean and green drive in Peshawar district, northern Pakistan, the district administration has started campaign for cleaning irrigation canals in the district. The district administration also imposed section 144 of the criminal procedure code on throwing wastes to canals. Officials have appealed to people to cooperate with the district administration.

Dec 7

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