

Headlines Himalaya

Dec 17 – Dec 23 (2018)

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For the 536th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 24 news from 14 sources and selected 24 happenings from five countries. The number of migratory birds is in decline in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve. In Chepang village, Makwanpur, central Nepal, the locals have started generating good income from bee farming. Chitwan National Park carries out 'Operation major hunt' campaign to control the poaching of rare wildlife. The Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG), northern India laid a prototype 100-m stretch road made of plastic waste. The ecological goose breeding project, a high-altitude project targeting to the poverty alleviation in Chamdo city, south western China, is successful in increasing incomes of the locals. Bhutan raises its voice for effective and robust implementation of Paris Agreement in COP24. Donkey population has increased to over 5 million in 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

Migratory birds in decline
Chitwan set to host elephant festival
Apiculture benefitting locals
Sugarcane drying up
Anti-poaching operation to protect rare wildlife
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Drought leaves fields barren
Much-awaited water supply project begins operation

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Plastic road prototype in Gurugram
President urges to reduce food wastage
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Arrival of migratory birds

PAKISTAN

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MIGRATORY BIRDS IN DECLINE

In Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, Sunsari, eastern Nepal, there has been a significant decrease in the number of migratory birds this year. Although the reserve has the reputation of being a “birds’ paradise,” the number of international tourists has also been decreasing with the decreasing number of birds. Drying wetlands, poaching and other irrational activities are responsible for this decline in migratory birds. There are 526 species of birds including 29 endangered species recorded in the reserve.

Dec 18

<https://bit.ly/2ECfVS1>

CHITWAN SET TO HOST ELEPHANT FESTIVAL

In Sauraha, Chitwan, south central Nepal, the 15th Chitwan Elephant Festival is taking place from December 26 to 30. The festival will highlight the importance of elephants and their protection. Activities such as elephant picnic, elephant race competition, football match involving elephant calves, elephant beauty queen contest have been planned.

Dec 18

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

APICULTURE BENEFITTING LOCALS

In Chepang village, Makwanpur, central Nepal, the locals have started generating good income from bee (*Apis sp.*) farming. In the past year, locals of Raksirang Rural Municipality had sold processed honey worth USD 150,328.50. Locals have stopped taking bees from other districts to the village as they have kept 5000 beehives since last year as a result of the income generated from honey.

Dec 19

<https://bit.ly/2BS3q0D>

SUGARCANE DRYING UP

In Sarlahi district, south central Nepal, sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum*) worth millions have been drying up, leaving farmers in deep trouble. Because the minimum price of sugarcane has not been fixed for this season, factories have not bought crops from farmers. Farmers say that the price offered by mill owners, in the range of USD 3.12 to USD 3.57 per 0.1 tonnes, is not reasonable.

Dec 21

<https://bit.ly/2CLC7ad>

ANTI-POACHING OPERATION TO PROTECT RARE WILDLIFE

In Chitwan National Park, southcentral Nepal, an ‘Operation major hunt’ has been started to control the poaching of rare wildlife such as one-horned rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) and tigers (*Panthera tigris*). Nepal Army troops have been deployed in the national park to provide a special security, with the help of sniffer dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*), domesticated elephants (*Elephas maximus*), vehicles, and boats as well.

Dec 21

<https://bit.ly/2Vor99q>

RHINO DIES DURING RESCUE OPERATION

In Bharatpur, Chitwan, southcentral Nepal, a female rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) of 10 years old passed away after falling into a swamp. The rhino had entered human settlement and fell into a swamp while chasing a local. Both rhino and the local were injured. The rhino died during rescue operation while the local is undergoing treatment.

Dec 22

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

DROUGHT LEAVES FIELDS BARREN

In Bajura district, far-western Nepal, the five year long existing drought has led to fear of a severe food crisis. Due to lack of irrigation facility, crops like paddy (*Oryza sativa*) and barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) have not been planted, and farmers have been compelled to rely on food imports to feed themselves. Out of desperation, men from the Wai Village have left for India in search for work.

Dec 23

<https://bit.ly/2s0Mz7q>

MUCH-AWAITED WATER SUPPLY PROJECT BEGINS OPERATION

In Baradhunga of Salyan, western Nepal, a multi-purpose water supply project has been operated. This has provided drinking water access to locals who were once compelled to use water from a polluted stream. Now that even water for irrigation has been made available, people also grow vegetables and generate income.

Dec 23

<https://bit.ly/2F2lr0w>

India-Himalaya

HUMAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICT IN THE EAST

A herd of 18 elephants (*Elephas maximus*) entered Khaksa village from Taldih village, eastern India causing all except one villager to flee. The 30-year-old villager who was reportedly in a drunken state was trampled to death by the herd of elephants. The local villagers blocked the roads for hours demanding compensation until forest officials handed over USD 143.01 in cash to the dead man's wife and assured that USD 1287.09 would be put in her bank account. In total USD 5720.42 will be provided to the victim's family as per the provision.

Dec 19

<https://bit.ly/2R7dMUT>

FOREST FIRES IN UTTARAKHAND

The forest survey of India (FSI) has detected at least four instances of forest fire in various parts of the state. Plastic waste burnt outside the temple spread to the lower region to a forest in Almora district's Someshwar region, northern India. The FSI has alerted about forest fires detected from the Kotigad range in the Tons Forest Division, the Malta range in the Chakrata Forest Division, and the Suwa range in the Pithoragarh Forest Division.

Dec 20

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

TRACKING SYSTEM FOR GARBAGE TRUCKS

Pimpri Chinchwad municipal corporation (PCMC), Maharashtra, western India has decided to implement a vehicle tracking and management (VTS) system to keep a tab on vehicles collecting garbage within the city limits, which will help in monitoring amount of garbage that enters Moshi dumping ground daily. PCMC revised tenders for collection and transportation of garbage from four different parts of the city in September 2018.

Dec 20

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

PLASTIC ROAD PROTOTYPE IN GURUGRAM

The Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG), northern India laid a prototype 100-m stretch road made of plastic waste in Sector 51 of Gurugram. A day's worth of plastic waste output (20 tonnes, about 2.2% of Gurugram's daily waste output), can be used to construct a 10 km network of roads. The MCG has proposed setting up 21 collection points to collect plastic across the city.

Dec 20

<https://bit.ly/2F0hOF>

PRESIDENT URGES TO REDUCE FOOD WASTAGE

India, which is a food surplus country, needs to fix missing links in the farm-to-fork value chain and reduce food wastage including in the agricultural and food-processing industry. Addressing the inauguration of the Platinum Jubilee Conference of the All India Food Processors' Association (AIFPA), the President of India highlighted that the difference between what farmers get for their crop and consumers pay both within the country and internationally is substantial and should be reduced.

Dec 20

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

MINING ACTIVITY BANNED

The National Green Tribunal has banned all mining activity within 10 km of the boundary of the Sariska Tiger Reserve\Wildlife Sanctuary, Rajasthan, northern India. This rule will be followed until mining leases are cleared by the standing committee of the National Board of Wildlife. The final notification on the eco-sensitive zone for the Tiger Reserve is yet to be notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MOEF &CC).

Dec 22

<https://bit.ly/2Touv2W>

PLASTIC BAN ANGERS INDUSTRIALISTS

Six months after Maharashtra imposed ban on plastics, the urban bodies have reported reductions in plastics by 40%. However, the impact of the ban has resulted in thousands of manufacturing units for plastic bags shutting down or switching to other products. The president of all India plastic industries association claimed that the ban might lead to mass scale unemployment.

Dec 22

<https://bit.ly/2A8yZn1>

China Himalaya

GOOSE BREEDING PROJECT

The ecological goose breeding project is a high-altitude project targeting poverty alleviation in Chamdo city, south western China. The project has been successful in increasing incomes of the locals. The total investment into this project is USD 133,560 which is officially operated on September 19, 2017. A total of 5,200 geese (*Anserini*) has been raised and more than 14,000 goose eggs are sold to achieve a sales revenue of USD 132,108. Free solar water heaters are also installed for the villagers who breed geese.

Dec 17

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

UNSCHEDULED CLOSURE OF WORLD HERITAGE SITE

After the 24-hour snow that battered in the regional capital city of Lhasa, China, the Potala palace, the world heritage site built by Tibetan King Songtsa Gambo in the seventh century, announced an unscheduled closure. The city had 10 cm of snow and the temperature dropped to -9.4°C according to the regional meteorological bureau. The regional meteorological bureau issued a yellow alert for the day.

Dec 20

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

CHINA FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

The Chinese government on Friday donated 1,000 tons of wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) worth USD 724,000 in humanitarian assistance for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. China will cooperate with Lebanon's Ministry of Social Affairs to transport the wheat to Lebanon as soon as possible in a bid to help the Syrian refugees relieve their humanitarian difficulties.

Dec 21

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

Bhutan-Himalaya

HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT IN GELEPHU

Hatisar- Land of Elephants (*Elephas maximus*), presently called Gelephu, Sarpang district, southern Bhutan was a small town that expanded to a Class A second-level administrative division. The human encroachment has increased human-wildlife conflict. In particular, it is increasingly challenging to protect people or crops from the wild elephants. The district in collaboration with the forest department are trying to solve the human wildlife conflict

Dec 18

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

BHUTAN RAISES ITS VOICE AT COP24

A delegation from Bhutan attended the United Nations Conference on Climate Change Conference of Parties 24 (COP24) in Katowice, Poland. Bhutan also being one of the most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change, the delegation urged the countries to be open and work on the effective and robust implementation of Paris Agreement.

Dec 18

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

ARRIVAL OF MIGRATORY BIRDS

Known as a symbol of marital fidelity, the endangered black-necked cranes (*Grus nigricollis*) have arrived to one of its winter roosting and feeding grounds in Bumdeling valley, Trashiyangtse, north eastern Bhutan. Eighty three cranes have arrived in the district with the first pair arriving on November 5.

Dec 22

<https://bit.ly/2GO1FaM>

Pakistan- Himalaya

DONKEY POPULATION INCREASES

Donkey (*Equus asinus*) population has increased to over 5 million in Pakistan. The Punjab provincial government has established donkey hospital for the health facilities of donkeys. The animal costs start from USD 251.57 to USD 395.33 and could earn for the owner USD 5.75 per day according to the donkey breeders.

Dec 18

<https://bit.ly/2F04P8I>

GOVT AND WWF COLLABORATE TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENT

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between Sindh Provincial Government and World Wildlife Fund (WWF)-Pakistan to provide technical support to run an awareness campaign to improve environment in the province. The technical support would be provided through capacity building, high-tech equipment provision for measuring ambient air quality and helping it to run a mass awareness campaign at the provincial level.

Dec 20

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

PAKISTAN AT COP24

Pakistan has spent USD 4 billion for climate change and it was identified as the eighth most affected change country according to the Adviser to Prime Minister on Climate Change. The Pakistani delegation at the Conference of Parties 24 (COP 24) presented Pakistan's successful Billion Tree Project in five years at a cost of USD 10,06,28,934 hence ensuring beyond their Nationally Determined Commitments (NDCs) pledged under Paris Agreement of 2015.

Dec 21

<https://bit.ly/2R5FU10>