

Headlines Himalaya

Dec 31 (2018) – Jan 06 (2019)

No. 538

Editorial Team: Roshni Gurung and Babita Aryal

For the 538th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 18 news from 10 sources and selected 17 happenings from five countries. Natural deaths of rhino concern conservationists in Chitwan National Park, Central Nepal. A two-day national climate change conference was held in Nepal to raise awareness on climate adaptation planning. Locals stop illegal river mining in Udaypur, eastern Nepal. Heaviest snowfall was received across Kashmir forming a blanket of snow and leaving roads slippery. Three new bird species have been discovered in China's autonomous region of Tibet. Bhutanese government has started a project to preserve traditional houses and to build affordable and seismic resilient homes in the country.

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

Natural deaths of rhino concern conservationists
National conference on climate change held
Troublesome tiger shifted to the Central Zoo
Presidential visit elates locals
Man arrested with rhino horn
Locals stop illegal river mining
Fine for unauthorized pesticide use
Construction of sewage treatment plant begins
Chitwan National Park to be plastic free
Study of biodiversity begins in Lumbini
Bee farming under threat in Jumla
Continued efforts from the volunteers despite the biting cold

INDIA

Heavy snowfall in Kashmir

CHINA

New bird species discovered
Better environment for black-necked cranes

BHUTAN

Drinking water shortage to be solved
Initiation for earthquake resilient houses

NATURAL DEATHS OF RHINO CONCERN CONSERVATIONISTS

Although there has been consistently zero poaching of one-horned rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) in Chitwan National Park, central Nepal, the continuous increase in number of deaths of the rhinoceros by natural causes has led to biggest challenge to conservationists. Natural causes including delivery failure, ageing, fighting with one another, sinking in quicksand and wound infection has resulted to the death of 21 rhinoceros in the park in 2018, according to the data provided by reports.

Dec 31

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

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE HELD

A two-day national climate change conference, inaugurated by the President on 31st December, 2018, was held in Guphadanda, Sindhupalchowk, central Nepal. The conference aimed to raise awareness on climate adaptation planning. The president suggested to include issues of climate change in school curriculum to raise awareness and protect the Earth. District Coordination Committee (DCC) chiefs from 75 districts attended the conference while DCC chiefs of Morang and Nawalparasi remained absent.

Jan 1

<https://bit.ly/2Dd8Rcv>

TROUBLESOME TIGER SHIFTED TO THE CENTRAL ZOO

A tiger (*Panthera tigris*) that continued to prey domestic animals in the buffer zone of Chitwan National Park (CNP), south central Nepal, was captured after two days of stalking and was taken to central zoo in Lalitpur, central Nepal. According to the CNP Information Officer, the tiger was transferred to the zoo as it could create a problem in other parts of national park.

Jan 2

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

PRESIDENTIAL VISIT ELATES LOCALS

The observational visit of the President to the model agricultural project in Jhapa district, eastern Nepal had elated the locals as efforts were being made to convert the farm into Agricultural University. The project has been implemented across 16 ha of land area by farmers associated with Women Agriculture Cooperatives Organization.

Jan 2

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

MAN ARRESTED WITH RHINO HORN

A man, was arrested with a rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) horn weighing 0.00129 tonne from Dhangadhi-5, southwestern Nepal, by an investigation team from District Police Office, Kailali, southwestern Nepal. The man had been monitored for his activities for the past one and half months. The seized horn was smuggled into the country from India.

Jan 3

<https://bit.ly/2Cks5eE>

LOCALS STOP ILLEGAL RIVER MINING

After knowing that the contractors of a construction company has been extracting sand, gravels and other river materials from the rivers of Udayapur, eastern Nepal illegally, the locals have banned such illegal extraction of the river materials. The mining has put the entire village at high risk of flood during rainy season.

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

FINE FOR UNAUTHORIZED PESTICIDE USE

The Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Development has insisted on checking the unauthorized use and smuggling of pesticides while presenting the 'Management of Pesticides Bill, 2075' in the meeting of House of Representatives. The bill, introduced to control the widespread use of pesticides, has made provision to fine ranging from NPR 50,000 to NPR 1,50,000 on those people involved in unauthorized use of pesticides.

Jan 3

<https://bit.ly/2QQ8CrA>

CONSTRUCTION OF SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT BEGINS

The Prime Minister has laid the foundation stone for a sewage treatment plant at Balkumari, Lalitpur district, central Nepal. The plant is to be completed within five years by the Ministry of Water Supply and Sanitation. The locals of the area have been assured that no stench would come from the sewage plant.

Jan 3

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

CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK TO BE PLASTIC FREE

The government has declared Chitwan National Park (CNP) as the first plastic free national park of Nepal on January 1, 2019. Every item of single use plastics including water bottles and food wrappers that are taken inside the park must need to be brought out and disposed of at the several bins near the gates. This initiative led by the Ministry of Forests and Environment has been supported by various national and international organizations.

Jan 5

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

STUDY OF BIODIVERSITY BEGINS IN LUMBINI

Lumbini, located in south central Nepal stretches over the area of 187 ha with very rich biodiversity. A study led by the Lumbini Development Trust aims to find the distribution and diversity of plants, animals and insect species. Moreover, the study is expected to give more information about the plants that existed during the Buddha time period and the evolutionary history of plants.

Jan 5

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

BEE FARMING UNDER THREAT IN JUMLA

The bee (*Apis spp.*) farming in Jumla, northwestern Nepal is under threat but the reasons to it are unknown to locals. The experts that have been doing research for 3 months on the area showed the changing climate, extreme weather patterns and lack of open space for bee colonies as the triggering factors behind the decline in the growth of honey bees. Moreover, the bees are not getting herbs which they need to survive and thrive due to excessive herb collection.

Jan 6

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

CONTINUED EFFORTS FROM THE VOLUNTEERS DESPITE THE BITING COLD

Despite of the freezing cold and the winter being at its peak in the country, the volunteers for Bagmati Cleanup Mega Campaign running under the 295th week have been joining hands in efforts meant for restoring the glory of valley-based rivers clean by assembling since early morning on the river bank and other cleaning destinations in Kathmandu, central Nepal. On the very day of 6th January, 2019, a total of 27 metric tons of river waste and solid wastes were collected and managed with the help of Nepal government.

Jan 6

<http://therisingnepal.org.np/news/28043>

India-Himalaya

HEAVY SNOWFALL IN KASHMIR

Heaviest snowfall was received across Kashmir, northern India where precipitation covered some part of regions with thick layer of snow and left roads slippery. Roads remained shut and flights were cancelled due to heavy snowfall and bad weather. There was possibility of downpour at scattered places and weather was expected to remain dry after that.

Jan 6

<https://bit.ly/2sBBTg1>

China Himalaya

NEW BIRD SPECIES DISCOVERED

The Tibet Autonomous Region Institute of Plateau Biology has discovered three new bird species in the region. These species are the white-cheeked starling (*Spodiopsar cineraceus*), the black-capped kingfisher (*Halcyon pileata*), and the lesser black-backed gull (*Larus fuscus*). About 600 species of birds are distributed in Tibet. However, there is still scientific gap in the study of diversity of migratory birds.

Dec 31

<https://bit.ly/2QQ96ho>

BETTER ENVIRONMENT FOR BLACK-NECKED CRANES

Fine environment and availability of abundant food in Lhunzhub County, Lhasa, south western china has been a boon for black necked cranes (*Grus nigricollis*). They are seen frequently in various habitats in the county in winter.

Jan 4

<https://bit.ly/2FsYy6s>

DRINKING WATER SHORTAGE TO BE SOLVED

Kanglung village block, Trashigang, eastern Bhutan were struggling with drinking water shortage because of growing population and inefficient water management practices. With the new water supply system, identification of new sources and construction of water reservoirs, shortage of water supply is expected to end soon. Meanwhile, a treatment plant with water source expected to serve 60,000 individuals in Thimpu, western Bhutan is assumed to complete within January along with the replacement of water pipelines with new and larger diameter will solve the Thimpu's water problem.

Jan 1 & 5

<https://bit.ly/2QMrSG9>

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

INITIATION FOR EARTHQUAKE RESILIENT HOUSES

A project to evaluate and mitigate risk of masonry buildings has been initiated to preserve the existing stock of traditional houses and to build affordable and seismic resilient homes. A full-scale static test was done at the Department of Culture in Thimphu, western Bhutan to check the strength of buildings. The project aimed to fulfill three sustainable development goals that include industry, innovation and infrastructure, sustainable cities and communities, and partnership for sustainable development.

Jan 1

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