

Headlines Himalaya

Jan 28 – Feb 03 (2019)

No. 542

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For the 542nd issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 17 news from 11 sources and selected 17 happenings from five countries. Under the Phewa Lake Protection Campaign, The Pokhara metropolitan city has started removing soil and mud brought by seasonal streams into the lake. A variety of rhododendron flower, *Loderi*, has been discovered recently in Western Nepal. Locals of Narchyang along the Annapurna Trekking Route are unhappy with the construction work of hydel projects that cause environmental degradation. Extreme cold is making wildlife vulnerable to poaching in Himachal Pradesh, northern India. Resettlement programs in Tibet make homes for nomadic herdsman to cope with extreme cold. The high price of vegetables in local markets has prompted their illegal import in Bhutan. A medium intensity earthquake hits part of north western region of 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	<i>Bad weather affected flights</i> <i>Stone and soil extraction begins in Phewa</i> <i>Snowfall: a boon to farmers</i> <i>Rare Rhododendron discovered in Nepal</i> <i>Declining productivity of terai farmland</i> <i>Bagmati cleanup in despair</i> <i>Hydel projects threatening to aquatic life</i>
INDIA	<i>Harshest winter period in 12 years</i> <i>Highway closures cost economic loss</i> <i>Extreme cold facilitates poaching</i> <i>Tremor felt in Jammu and Kashmir</i> <i>World Wetland Day celebrated in Wular</i>
CHINA	<i>Tibet welcomes Black Necked Cranes</i> <i>Eradication of treelessness</i> <i>Homes built for nomadic herders</i>
BHUTAN	<i>Imported vegetables confiscated</i>
PAKISTAN	<i>Quake hits parts of Pakistan</i>

BAD WEATHER AFFECTED FLIGHTS

Poor visibility due to bad weather affected flights at the Tribhuvan International Airport for three hours by thick fog in Kathmandu Valley, central Nepal. Few international incoming flights were put on hold whereas domestic flights, especially those scheduled to mountain regions were postponed.

Jan 28

<https://bit.ly/2TM90cP>

STONE AND SOIL EXTRACTION BEGINS IN PHEWA

Under the Phewa Lake Protection campaign, the locals and state governments have jointly taken initiative to conserve the main tourist site of Pokhara i.e. Phewa lake, central Nepal. The Pokhara metropolitan city, in coordination with the state government, has kick-started the campaign by removing soil and mud brought by seasonal streams in Bangladi area of the lake.

Jan 29

<https://bit.ly/2S0711F>

SNOWFALL: A BOON TO FARMERS

Because of continuous snowfall, local farmers in Manang, western Nepal are very happy and believe that the snowfall is good for seasonal crops. The rain dries quickly on the land whereas the snow melts gradually helping crops grow better. Melting of snow provides sufficient water to plants that makes farming easier with increased production.

Jan 31

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

RARE RHODODENDRON DISCOVERED IN NEPAL

A variety of rhododendron flower, *Loderi*, has been found growing in the forests of Narchyang area in northern Myagdi district, western Nepal which is considered very rare in the world. According to the Ward chair of Annapurna Rural Municipality-4, initiatives will be taken for the conservation of this rare species of rhododendron.

Feb 1

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

DECLINING PRODUCTIVITY OF TERAI FARMLAND

The quality of soil in the terai, the best crop-yielding area in Nepal has been degrading due to various reasons. This has resulted in the decrease in crop yield in this region and there is a growing trend of importing food grains from other districts as well as from India recently.

Feb 1

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

BAGMATI CLEANUP IN DESPAIR

The river banks do not have much change in hygiene despite the completion of 300 weeks of Bagmati Cleanup Campaign in Kathmandu, central Nepal. Although the cleaning campaign has spread the awareness but the bursting of sewer installed by Bagmati Civilization Integrated Development Committee has created problems to the source water and people.

Feb 2

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

HYDEL PROJECTS THREATENING TO AQUATIC LIFE

In Naryang, along the Annapurna Trekking Route in central Nepal, the aquatic animals in the rivers lack safe habitat due to the ongoing construction works of hydropower projects. Though the hydropower projects have created job opportunities for the local residents, they are unhappy with the degradation of natural heritages despite physical gains.

Feb 3

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

India-Himalaya

EXTREME COLD FACILITATES POACHING

The cold and snowfall in higher regions, is driving many endangered wildlife straight into the hand of poachers. The animals and birds are descending to lower regions in search of food where poachers have laid ambush for them. The poachers are killing wild animals not for economic benefit but for thrill and entertainment. The Forest department received information that poachers killed Himalayan goral (*Naemorhedus goral*) and Himalayan monal (*Lophophoru simpejanus*) in Bhekhali and Byasar villages of Himachal Pradesh, northern India.

Jan 28

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

HARSHEST WINTER PERIOD IN 12 YEARS

According to the meteorological department, the highest number of wet spells was recorded in January 2019 as compared to the last 10 years. The 40-day-long harshest winter period in Kashmir, northern India ended on Wednesday. The average minimum temperature during the season fell to -6.4°C.

Jan 31

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

HIGHWAY CLOSURES COST ECONOMIC LOSS

According to the recent Government figures, the closure of Srinagar-Jammu highway 21 times in the past two months in winter has cost economic loss of Kashmir, northern India by at least USD 281 million. The state finance department data shows that the trucks loaded with goods and raw materials could not reach their destinations in time during closure of the highway which hampered the valley's normal trade cycle.

Jan 31

<https://bit.ly/2N2hXvX>

TREMOR FELT IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

According to the meteorological department, a moderate intensity earthquake measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale was felt in Jammu and Kashmir, northern India. The epicentre of the earthquake was in Pakistan and the depth was measured at 212 Km under the earth, however no report of any casualty or damage has been received.

Feb 3

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

WORLD WETLAND DAY CELEBRATED IN WULAR

Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA) celebrated World Wetlands Day at Zurmanz Village which is situated on the shore of Wular Lake of Kashmir, northern India. The campaign raised awareness on anti-poaching and protection of water birds in the lake through roadshow, broadcast and children rallies.

Feb 3

<https://bit.ly/2E6PEto>

China Himalaya

TIBET WELCOMES BLACK NECKED CRANES

Black-necked cranes (*Grus nigricollis*) are welcomed by locals and tourists in Tibet, south western China every winter. These endangered cranes don't have to face hunger, pesticide or poachers rather they can easily find pollutant free highland barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) left by farmers in Lundhrup County, Tibet.

Jan 31

<https://bit.ly/2RZv6qx>

ERADICATION OF TREELESSNESS

Tibet, south western China has implemented the five-eradication action plan which includes eradicating treeless towns, treeless villages, treeless yards, treeless households, and treeless areas. Under the plan, about 863 treeless villages had trees planted and about 83200 households have had trees which accounts for 80% of the goal.

Jan 31

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

HOMES BUILT FOR NOMADIC HERDERS

The nomadic herdsmen in Tibet, south western China used to endure a long, cold winter in their winter sheds before moving to the meadows in summer. Nowadays, various local resettlement programs have been run that benefit herdsmen to cope with the extreme cold. Under the program, brick and mortar Tibetan style homes are built for the local herdsmen and they no longer, have to stay in winter sheds.

Jan 31

<https://bit.ly/2E6PGS2>

Bhutan-Himalaya

IMPORTED VEGETABLES CONFISCATED

Bhutan has banned import of certain vegetables including chillies (*Capsicum annuum*). However, the high price of these vegetables in local markets has prompted their illegal import. Bhutan Agriculture and Food Regulatory Authority (BAFRA) has been seizing imported vegetables almost every day in Bhutan.

Jan 31

<https://bit.ly/2TU5mxm>

Pakistan- Himalaya

QUAKE HITS PARTS OF PAKISTAN

A medium intensity earthquake was felt in several parts of the country including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar, and many other districts. The tremor with intensity of 5.8 on Richter scale had epicentre 80 Km deep in the mountainous range of Hindu Kush region of Afghanistan. The tremor forced people out of their house and offices.

Feb 3

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