

Headlines Himalaya

Feb 18– Feb24(2019)

No. 545

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For the 545th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 31 news from 15 sources and 28 selected happenings from five countries.

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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!

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THREATS TO GHARIAL CROCODILE

The Chitwan National Park (CNP), south central Nepal, has been breeding Gharial crocodile (*Gavialis gangeticus*) for 40 years but the number of released crocodile in wild has not increased. The park has released 1,300 crocodiles in Rapti and Narayani in Chitwan, south central Nepal and Babai River in Bardiya, mid-western Nepal rivers so far but only 200 are found in the present. The Assistant Conservation officer at national park pointed out the river pollution and river mining to be the greatest threat for crocodiles.

Feb 18

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

ILLEGAL EXTRACTION OF WATER RESOURCES

Praganna Irrigation Project (PIP) and People's Embankment Program Office (PEPO) based in Lamahi, Dang, mid-western Nepal has found liable for illegal water resources extraction from Rapti River, central Nepal. The operators are only allowed to dig in to a certain level and big machines are restricted for the extraction of water resources and these projects have been warned for breaching the rules. The illegal extraction has threatened the exhaustion of the resources and change in river course which causes land erosion and inundation.

Feb 19

<https://bit.ly/2Hi20AQ>

RED PANDA NUMBERS ON RISE IN KARNALI

The population of Red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) has been rising in Karnali, northern Nepal as per the conservationist. There are 500 Red panda in Nepal where 43% of the total population is the resident of Karnali due to the availability of food resources. According to the recent study, the forest of Patarasi, Gidikhola, Depal village, Tampti of Humla, northern Nepal are considered as the favorable red panda habitat. Illegal hunting has become the major threat to the endangered species.

Feb 20

<https://bit.ly/2H7Tw0f>

FARMER HAPPY WITH RAIN AND SNOW

The rainfall for three consecutive days in upper part of Ramechhap, central Nepal, has been expected to increase the productivity of winter crops. Most of the farmers depend on rain water for irrigation and they expressed their happiness as rain water has also made it easy for the cultivation of crops.

Feb 20

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

SET UP OF DIGITAL EDUCATION CENTRE

A digital education center has been set up at central zoo, Jawalakhel, Kathmandu, central Nepal, with the support of Nepal Investment Bank as an honor to a British for his contribution to the conservation to Nepal's biodiversity. The center came into operation on 19 February and is expected to contribute to the conservation efforts.

Feb 20

<https://bit.ly/2H00fZX>

DEAL SIGNED TO BOOST WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Nepal and India has planned to sign an agreement on biodiversity conservation including the transboundary conservation of species like Indian rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*), Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris*) and Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) as reported by Indian media. The memorandum of understanding (MoU) is yet to be signed and is expected as great initiation for the conservation of species. The agreement is expected to focus on biodiversity conservation, wildlife habitat management, tiger conservation, and protection.

Feb 20

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

EXAMPLE OF EFFECTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT

Bagmati river in Kathmandu, central Nepal that stretches 44 km in Kathmandu valley, is a sacred river of Hindus. Although the river has been heavily polluted, the section of the river stretching from Gokarna to Tilganga which is 7 km long has seen effective waste management. The residents of the area, in the coordination of Bagmati Beautification Concern Forum (BBCP), have been actively working on the management of solid waste for clean river. The organization aims to change people's mindset along with the waste management.

Feb 20

<https://bit.ly/2C8ujOX>

SHORTAGE OF DRINKING WATER

A settlement of earthquake survivors shifted to Simalchaur, Gorkha, north central Nepal, consisting of more than 22 families has been facing acute shortage of drinking water. The survivors have to spend more than 1 hour to fetch a pot of water. This situation has been reported to the Municipality but remained in vain. The survivors are not only facing water crisis but also deprived of electricity service.

Feb 21

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

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

BAN ON LEASE OF ELEPHANTS

Banke National Park, mid-western Nepal, has banned leasing of domesticated elephants (*Elephas maximus*) for festivals and personal use. The government has amended an Act related to the elephant management that has outlawed the use of tamed elephants on rent for occasion and personal use across the country.

Feb 23

<https://bit.ly/2ITGI4z>

OBSTRUCTION OF ROADS BY HEAVY SNOWFALL

The Gamgadhi-Nagma section of the Karnali highway, Jumla, northern Nepal has been remained shut for the past few months due to the accumulation of snow on the road. The latest spell of snow has affected the process to remove the snow by bulldozer. People in headquarters are facing shortage of cooking gas and daily necessities. The Kalakhadha road which links to Khatyad, Mugu, north western Nepal, has been obstructed due to the deposition of snow. The transportation in Upper Mustang, north western Nepal, has also been obstructed for past month due to snow fall.

Feb 23&24

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

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

TERROR OF ELEPHANTS

Three wild elephants (*Elephas maximus*) entered Nipane village of Dudhauri Municipality, Sindhuli, east central Nepal and destroyed nine houses and damaged crops in the past three nights. The locals witnessed that the elephants enter the forest in the morning and return to the village in the evening. The terror of the elephant has forced locals to spend sleepless nights and fear of the destruction of their crops.

Feb 24

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

NEW HOME FOR ANIMALS

Central Zoo of Jawalakhel, Kathmandu, central Nepal, has intensified the renovation of the zoo with advanced structure for animals. According to the Zoo's information officer, air conditioned shelter is being built for Red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) and new shelter for crane (*Gruidae*) and Jackal (*Canis aureus*) is in progress. As per the record, there are 1,219 wildlife belonging to 127 species in the zoo and will soon have Blue bull (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*).

Feb 24

<https://bit.ly/2tTdRO5>

MONKEYS TRAPPED BY HUNTERS

As a part of a campaign launched by local government to protect crops, the hired Indian professional hunters have trapped 56 monkeys (*Macaque assamensis*) in Khotang, eastern Nepal in just 4 days. The campaign was initiated as the monkeys terrorized locals by damaging their crops and stored foods. The local unit has planned to capture at least 250 monkeys in the next four months and the trapped monkeys will be shipped to national park.

Feb 25

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

SEARCH FOR WATER RESOURCES

Panchkhapan Municipality of Sankhuwasabha, eastern Nepal, has been facing drinking water crisis which is ultimately hampering the development activity in the municipality. Cutting off the trees near water sources and unplanned road construction is drying up water sources. According to a ward chairperson of the municipality, 10 families were displaced due to shortage of drinking water.

Feb 25

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

India-Himalaya

WORKSHOP HELD ON OPEN FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

A workshop for improving fish production by utilizing open water resources was organised by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CIFRI), Kolkata in Imphal, Manipur, north-east India. Despite having vast fisheries resources, the production of fish in Manipur is very low than Market demand. About 50 Fishery department officials participated in that workshop.

Feb 18

<https://bit.ly/2C7Ui99>

BINS INSTALLED ALONG URBAN AND RURAL ROADS

In Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, northern India, 6,000 dustbins worth USD 317891.60 have been installed along rural and urban roads revealing the names of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Members of parliament. The waste bins have been installed in pairs in order to store dry and wet waste separately. Similarly, another 13,000 dustbins worth USD 364309.40 are in the process of being installed.

Feb 19

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

BIRD COUNTING PROGRAM HELD IN ASSAM

Under the supervision of Bird Count India, a four-day bird count program was conducted by the Department of Zoology of B Barooah College, Guwahati, northern India in tandem with 'Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)'. Various species of birds were counted in an area of 4.3 ha and few rare bird species such as Asian openbill (*Anastomus oscitans*), yellow-footed pigeon (*Treron phoenicoptera*), black-rumped flameback (*Dinopium benghalense*), etc. were also found.

Feb 19

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

LANDSLIDE HITS JAMMU

In Jammu, northern India, landslide triggered by nightlong rainfall caused the blockage of Jammu-Srinagar highway. According to the traffic department official, the traffic was stopped for the protection of travellers and the vehicles would be allowed only after the clearance of landslide debris.

Feb 20

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

GOVERNMENTAL QUARTERS DESTROYED BY FIRE

In Pasighat of Arunachal Pradesh, northern India, a fire destroyed the two governmental quarters and the fire had been extinguished by three fire tenders from Pasighat Fire Station. The main cause of the fire incident is yet to be determined.

Feb 22

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

GOVERNMENT WORKING FOR PROTECTION OF COWS

A cow welfare trust has been set up in Shimla of Himachal Pradesh, northern India by the BJP government. Under the chairmanship of Animal Husbandry Minister, the HP 'Gau Seva Aayog' has been formed and will be headquartered in Shimla. The vice chairman and non-official members will be holding the office for 3 years.

Feb 23

<https://bit.ly/2Hi2k2w>

MONKEYS ANNOUNCED AS VERMIN

According to the State Forest Minister, monkeys (*Macaca mulatta*) have been declared vermin in 11 districts' 91 tehsils and sub-tehsils of Himanchal Pradesh, northern India. Monkeys were declared vermin in 10 districts of the state in 2016 for a year and the government has been extending it by one year since then as the monkeys have been severely damaging crops and harming locals.

Feb 23

<https://bit.ly/2EN5tpq>

CLEANLINESS DRIVES ORGANIZED

Cleanliness drives with an aim to involve people in mission of Swachh Bharat have been successfully carried out in Jammu, Udhampur, Rajouri and Samba districts of Jammu and Kashmir, northern India by Field Units of Regional Outreach Bureau, Ministry Information and Broadcasting, J&K Region. The drives were part of ongoing Sunday Shramdaan Series with the involvement of councilors, locals and workers of Municipal committee Rajouri.

Feb 24

<https://bit.ly/2IV6ekB>

NATURE STUDY DAY ORGANIZED

Ecological society and Army Wives Welfare Association have selected Sunny Sunday as nature study day in order to connect kids with nature. The guest speaker Director State Forest Research Institute delivered Feathered Friends Tree Talk featuring the interrelationships between bird and tree by giving various relevant examples.

Feb 24

<https://bit.ly/2XGz0bZ>

China Himalaya

HUGE CYPRESS TREE DISCOVERED

A family of 1000 giant cypress (*Glyptostrobus pensilis*) trees covering an area of 10 ha are growing along the Niyangriver in Nyingchi, eastern Tibet in an altitude of 3000-3400 meters. Among them, the oldest cypress tree of 3233 years old with height of 57 meters and diameter of 5.8 meter, and is considered the Biggest Cypress Tree of China winning a "Guinness World Record" certificate.

Feb 20

<https://bit.ly/2VBsb9G>

CONSTRUCTION OF SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS

For the protection of "Asia water tower", 49 sewage treatment plants are under construction in Lhasa, south western Tibet. The construction of 25 treatment plants in 19 counties and 6 towns has also been initiated this year with the budget of USD 93,000,000. According to the head of the regional housing and urban-rural development department, the sewage plants have potential to improve the ability of sewage treatment in that region.

Feb 22

<https://bit.ly/2Vli2Z1>

Bhutan-Himalaya

GRAFTING TO INCREASE HAZELNUT PRODUCTION

With the support of Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Mountain Hazelnuts Pvt. Ltd. is training over 150 field staffs on hazelnut grafting. The company plans to carry out large-scale grafting programme in the country. The program is supposed to cover around 2,025 ha of hazelnut orchards in 15 dzongkhags (districts).

Feb 19

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

NEW SPECIES RECORDED

A new moth, two birds and a fish species have been discovered in Bhutan. the hawk moth species was discovered in Thimphu, west central Bhutan; two new bird species- Pin-tailed Parrotfinch (*Erythrura prasina*) and Rusty-tailed flycatcher (*Ficedula ruficauda*) and a new striped dwarf catfish were discovered in Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary, Sarpang, southern Bhutan. The record of new species has brought the country's moth species to 1146, bird species to 739, and fish species to 23.

Feb 23

<https://bit.ly/2EHsj0K>

Pakistan- Himalaya

FLOODS UNLEASH HAVOC IN BALOCHISTAN

Rain and flood related events in Pakistan killed around 13 people and injured dozens while in Lasbela district of Balochistan, southern Pakistan, 4 people were killed and 200 families were trapped. Flash floods induced by heavy rainfall in lasbela district lasted for 3 days and severely affected 40,000 people. According to the Deputy Commissioner, the local government with the help of Army and other forces have been struggling a lot to provide food and other relief goods to the victims.

Feb 21

<https://bit.ly/2tT8oH6/>

<https://bit.ly/2IT098k>

