

Headlines Himalaya

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For the 547th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 36 news from 13 sources and 32 selected happenings from five countries.

In Nepal, Heavy snowfall brings happiness to the farmers of Jumla, Mid-western Nepal expecting better production of apples. Locals are concerned about haphazard collection of stones from Kamala river, Siraha, eastern Nepal. The chairpersons of local bodies of Kathmandu valley, central Nepal stressed that the segregation of biodegradable and non-biodegradable solid waste should be carried out at source. A 3-day workshop on turtle conservation was organized in Assam, northeastern India. A Tibetan female researcher has worked on the Tibetan yak (*Bos grunniens*) aiming to help herders get rid of poverty. A frog species, *Leptobrachium bompu* was spotted in Sarpang of Bhutan and is recorded as new species. A program was organized in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan to mark the World Wildlife Day.

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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WRIT FILED FOR PROTECTION OF STRAY CATTLES

A writ was filed at Supreme Court, Kathmandu, Central Nepal against the protection of stray cattles especially our National animal Cow (*Bos Taurus*). The advocate has pointed out how cows, oxen and their calves were abandoned once the cattle stop giving milk or ploughing and has sought mandamus or any other appropriate decree to discourage the trend of abandoning domesticated cows and oxen after their utility comes to an end.

Mar 4

<https://bit.ly/2W3YrCy>

FIRE DUE TO SHORT CIRCUIT

In Kaushaltar, Madhyapur Thimi-3, Central Nepal, a fire broke out in furniture and wood industry due to short circuit that caused a loss of NPR 6,000,000. The Superintendent of Police (SP) informed that the inferno broke out at around 11:00 pm and lasted to 4:00 am in the next morning. The fire not only destroyed the raw materials of industry but also caused damaged to a neighboring house. Similarly, at Belaka Municipality-1, Udayapur, Ghaighat, eastern Nepal a worth NPR 220,000 was destroyed. The SP has informed that the fire gutted utensils and a Pulsar motorcycle.

Mar 4

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

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

SNOWFALL BRINGS HAPPINESS TO APPLE FARMERS

Farmers of Jumla, Mid-western Nepal, are very happy as they are expecting better production of apples (*Malus*) due to the snowfall. 225 farmer groups of 15 clusters have been producing the apple in 3,000 ha of land in the district. The government has provided 50 percent subsidy on equipment purchase for apple farming.

Mar 4

<https://bit.ly/2TLro95>

VIRAL FEVER HITS BAJURA

About 120 people have been suffering from the viral fever due to cold at Nuri of Budhinanda Municipality in Bajura, far-western, Nepal. The Ward Chairman said that people couldn't get the basic treatment in time as the health Centre is very far from their residential area. Meanwhile, a doctor at the primary health center stated that a team of health workers, along with medicines has been sent to the affected areas.

Mar 4

<https://bit.ly/2W7tDAZ>

AEPC AWARDED FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT PROGRAMS

Alternative Energy Promotion Center (AEPC) has been the nodal agency of the Government of Nepal for the promotion and development of renewable energy and energy efficiency in Nepal. The organization has been awarded NPR 5,636,000,000 for running low carbon climate-resilient development projects and programs in Nepal.

Mar 4

<https://bit.ly/2W4BPBS>

HUMLA SCHOOLS REMAIN CLOSED DUE TO CONTINUOUS SNOWFALL

Dozens of schools in Namkha Rural Development, Simikot, Humla, far-western Nepal, has not been opened for more than a month due to the continuous heavy snowfall. There were altogether 18 schools including 1 higher secondary school, 3 secondary and 14 primary schools.

Mar 5

<https://bit.ly/2O6KeSy>

RE-CONSTRUCTION OF RANI POKHARI

National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) has been given the responsibility to reconstruct Rani Pokhari with the expenditure of NPR 25,000,000. NRA has also formed a Rani Pokhari reconstruction, monitoring and coordination committee and a consumer's committee. On the first day of reconstruction work, about 40 locals who are the members of consumers committee were actively involved in cleaning work. The CEO of NRA vowed to rebuild the pond using traditional construction materials and temple following the Malla-era design.

Mar 4, 5

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

<https://bit.ly/2F81Aug>

LOCALS CONCERNED ABOUT CHURE DESTRUCTION

The bank of Kamala river, Siraha, eastern Nepal, has been a popular spot for picnic and outings. According to a local, people carelessly collect the stones of the river bank and if it continues in the same rate there will be no stones left in the future. He further added that the destruction of the Chure has gained momentum after the formation of local government. The environmentalists have also warned of irreparable loss if unabated excavation of Chure continues.

Mar 6

<https://bit.ly/2UF1VeH>

WILDLIFE CRIME UNABATED DESPITE CRACKDOWN

Two persons with 1.7 kilograms of pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*) scales have been arrested from Mitranagar, Kathmandu, Central Nepal. Their scales and body have high demand in Asian markets in manufacturing traditional Chinese medicine, handicraft and decorative items. 41 people have been arrested with live animals and their parts in Kathmandu valley over a period of 10 months. Anyone involved in the trade of protected species can be slapped with a fine up to NPR 100,000 and a jail term of five to 15 years as per the existing laws.

Mar 6

<https://bit.ly/2XNSf3c>

DEATH OF BABY LEOPARD

About 2-month-old baby leopard (*Uncia uncia*) has been handed over to Division Forest Office by a local person in Dasharathchanda Municipality-5, Baitadi, western Nepal. But unfortunately, while it was being set free to the forest, it couldn't walk and brought to veterinary hospital of Patan. The doctor reported that the baby cub has died.

Mar 7, 8

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

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

PLAN OF SEGREGATION OF WASTE AT SOURCE

The Environment department of Kathmandu Metropolitan City, Kathmandu, Central Nepal, has organized a program on the solid waste management. In the program, the chairpersons of local bodies stressed that the segregation of biodegradable and non-biodegradable solid waste should be carried out at source. The daily waste has been managed in the Sisdol, Nuwakot from 18 different local bodies of the Kathmandu valley without any segregation.

Mar 8

<https://bit.ly/2CnHb3G>

POACHING INCREASES IN BAJHANG

In Bajhang, western Nepal, the illegal hunting and smuggling of wild animals from the district has increased within the last two months. According to the local, wild boars (*Sus scrofa*), ghoral (*Naemorhedus*), jharals (*Hemitragus jemlahicus*) and other endangered species including Danphe (*Iophophorus*) and kalij pheasants (*Lophura leucomelanos*) have been killed after the start of snowfall this year and were sold at different prices.

Mar 8

<https://bit.ly/2W6TpU>

TWO PEOPLE DIE IN AVALANCHE

In Nishyang, Kyangdi Rural Municipality, Manang, western Nepal, one dutch national and a Nepali guide have been killed after an avalanche. The incident occurred when they were on their way to Annapurna trekking route.

Mar 9

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

SNOWFALL RESULTS IN DEATH OF SHEEP AND MOUNTAIN GOATS

More than 450 sheep and mountain goats have been died due to the snowfall in Chunjung, Lo Manthang, Mustang, western Nepal. Due to the heavy snowfall the grassland were covered with snow resulting in starvation whereas some were missing and the others died due to frostbite.

Mar 10

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

<https://bit.ly/2Y2qNPv>

THINI IN DARKNESS

In Lo Manthang, Upper Mustang, western Nepal, the 70 KW solar power project installed by the Chinese government at the cost of NPR 10,000,000 four years ago has been closed down due to snowfall and cold. Now the entire village is deprived of lighting as they were relying only on solar power.

Mar 10

<https://bit.ly/2JjGvT9>

MANAGEMENT OF NON-DEGRADABLE WASTE

Bhanu Municipality, Tanahu, Central Nepal, has already managed vehicle and landfill site of 1.78 ha of land investing NPR 600,000 for the management of only non-degradable waste materials near Andhikhola. The municipality will be charging NPR 5,000 to 50,000 fine for the offenders under section 38 of Solid Waste Management Act, 2011.

Mar 10

<https://bit.ly/2Hr1uBs>

COLD WAVE IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

Most parts of Himachal Pradesh, northern India were hit by cold wave with Keylong in Lahaul and Spiti recording the lowest temperature at minus 8.6 degrees Celsius. A minimum of 3.7 degrees Celsius was recorded in Shimla which was a 2-degree rise from Tuesday. The state would experience sunny days but the mercury would hover near the freezing point at many places till Friday.

Mar 6

<https://bit.ly/2FexFk2>

PRIVATE SCHOOLS INVOLVE IN PLANTATION

In Srinagar, Jammu-Kashmir, northern India, the Valley's private schools have come forward to meet the target of planting one million trees in the region in collaboration with the forest department. According to the chairman of Private Schools Association Kashmir, 53 schools would witness a massive plantation drive in the first phase and depending on the capacity, 300 to 3,000 trees are being planted in every schools. The focus of the programme was to sensitize the students about environment.

Mar 6

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

ONE WAY TRAFFIC ON JAMMU-SRINAGAR HIGHWAY

Stranded vehicles were allowed to move on the Jammu-Srinagar highway, northern India and one-way traffic was opened on Thursday. Authorities were trying to ensure that there was no further traffic congestion on the nearly 300-km long road especially the Ramban-Ramsoo stretch, which is prone to landslides resulting in the frequent blockades on highway.

Mar 6, 7

<https://bit.ly/2F6W1wi>

TRAINING ON FISH-PIG-HORTICULTURE FARMING

Scientists from Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Nalbari and several resource persons from renowned institutions of Assam, northeast India delivered lectures in skill development training programme organized by The Department of Biotechnology under the Central Government in association with KVK. The training on the integrated fish-pig-horticulture farming with focus on management of waste and aquatic environment was held for five days including theory and practical classes in relevant fields conducted as exposure visits to native progressive and entrepreneurial farmers of Nalbari district.

Mar 7

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

ATTACK OF LEOPARD

In Maligaon, Assam, northeast India a leopard (*Panthera pardus*) caused panic for several hours. Leopard entered the residence and injured Hujuri couple. Forest officials were called, took the cat to the State Zoo after tranquilizing the feline. The injured Hujuri couple were sent to Sanjeevani Hospital for treatment.

Mar 9

<https://bit.ly/2Y1IEHg>

WORKSHOP HELD ON TURTLE CONSERVATION

The Assam Sate Zoo-cum-Botanical Garden, Turtle Survival Initiative, India and Help Earth and Nature Learning Centre, and Assam Science Technology and Environmental Council (ASTECC) organized 3-day workshop in Assam, northeastern India on turtle conservation. 34 veterinarians and biologists from three states of northern India – Assam, Manipur and Nagaland participated in the workshop. In Assam, 70% of turtle species are threatened.

Mar 9

<https://bit.ly/2Fi4u00>

TRAINING ON POPULATION CENSUS

There is no census on the population of Garos in Assam, northeast India after the last census (2001). The United Garo Autonomous Council Movement Committee (UGACMC) held a two-day training on the population and socio-economic survey on the Garo tribe of Assam in Bakrapur village under Goalpara involving Gaonbura village secretary and youths of Goalpara district. The training is the first phase of looking at census data for implementation of a Council for Garos in the State.

Mar 10

<https://bit.ly/2UG7WHU>

GREEN SRINAGAR PROGRAM

In Bemina, Srinagar, northeast India, Urban Forestry Division Srinagar in collaboration with Auqaf Committee Jamiya Zubair, SDA Colony Srinagar and other local youth and community groups organised a plantation drive and about 300 saplings of different species including Deodar (*Cedrus deodara*), Kail pine (*Pinus wallichiana*) were planted.

Mar 10

<https://bit.ly/2W7sCsO>

China Himalaya

PEOPLE ENGAGE IN ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

The Autonomous Region, Tibet, southwest China hired 309,000 farmers and herders as forest rangers in 2018, bringing the total number of people engaged in environmental protection to 667,000 to conserve the ecosystem while eradicating poverty. The authorities said that the implementation of a series of measures contributed to environmental protection, making Tibet one of the areas with the best ecological environment in the world.

Mar 7

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

DISCOVERY OF FOSSILIZED PALM LEAVES

The discovery of well-preserved palm (*Arecaceae*) leaves fossils at the Lunpola Basin in central Tibet, southwest China has led scientists to make new conclusions on when the Qinghai-Tibet plateau reached its current height. According to the leading scientist of the study from Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden, it is very rare to find fossil palms on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau because the plants are mainly distributed in tropical and subtropical regions and can hardly survive in high-altitude areas. So by simulating a variety of topographic scenarios, the research team conjectured that about 25 million years ago, palm trees grew at a west-to-east valley flanked by high mountains in the central part of the plateau then the plateau's central area gradually rose, reaching above 4,500 meters above sea level 23 million years ago and causing the valley to disappear

Mar 8

<https://bit.ly/2UEhp2h>

RESEARCH IN YAKS TO FIGHT POVERTY

A Tibetan female researcher who graduated with a doctoral degree at the International Potato Center in Peru has researched on the Tibetan yak (*Bos grunniens*) aiming to help herders get rid of poverty. She and her team have contributed in increasing yaks' milk yield, reproduction rate, and meat production.

Mar 9

<https://bit.ly/2OadsA6>

Bhutan-Himalaya

NEW FROG SPECIES RECORDED

A frog species, *Leptobrachium bompou* spotted at Pakhola, Jigmecholing in Sarpang and is recorded as new species. With this, Bhutan has 57 amphibian species now. According to the forester the frog was recorded only from one spot out of 1.42 km length of Pakhola stream which indicates the rarity of its population. The frog has distinctive blue colored eye, vertical iris and noticeably wrinkled skins, which differentiate from other species.

Mar 4

<https://bit.ly/2Hpu4mU>

WBH BREEDING CENTRE

A captive breeding centre is being constructed at Changchey in Tsirang district of Bhutan for the conservation of habitat of White-Bellied-Heron (WBH) (*Ardea insignis*). The Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) started construction work in April last year and expected to complete by the end of this year.

Mar 8

<https://bit.ly/2UByv0R>

RENEW OF PES AGREEMENT

In eastern Bhutan, Yakpugang community forest management, Mongar town and regional referral hospital plans to renew their five year contract agreement on payment for environment services (PES) that ends in December this year. The contract enabled the community forest management members of more than 100 households to receive more than 2,002 USD annually for their conservation and watershed management at Yakpugang community forest (CF).

Mar 8

<https://bit.ly/2O7xfjL>

NEW WATERBIRD SPECIES SPOTTED

A new waterbird species, Common Golden Eye (*Bucephala clangula*) was spotted along Punatsangchhu at Bajo in Wangdue Phodrang, central Bhutan and with this now Bhutan has 81 waterbird species as per the annual waterbird census. It is usually found in Canada, Northern Europe, and Siberian Plains in Russia and is rarely sighted in the Indian Subcontinent.

Mar 8

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

Pakistan- Himalaya

EFFORTS OF WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

Wildlife Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Project jointly organized a function to mark the World Wildlife Day. The theme for World Wildlife Day was 'Life below Water: for People and Planet'. Environmentalist urged people from all segments of society to play their effective role in the protection and conservation of wild species and forests. The chief conservator stressed the importance of conservation of biodiversity at the function.

Mar 5

<https://bit.ly/2XZAv58>