

Headlines Himalaya

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For the 370th issue, we reviewed 19 news reports from 10 sources and selected 17 happenings in five countries. In Nepal, there is expansion of wildlife habitat and decrease of illegal trade and hunting, while afforestation campaign takes off in Uttarakhand of India. In Tibet, China, there is a clean and safe drinking water and improvement in tourism industry. Innovative technology has been introduced in agriculture in Bhutan. Fumigation has affected student and plastic bag disposal have created problem in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north-west 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!

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RHINOCEROS POPULATION INCREASES

Decrease of illegal trade and hunting has increased Rhinoceros (*Rhinocerotidae*) population by five in Bardia National park, far west Nepal. Active involvement of Nepal Army, local youth and Buffer zone conservation helps in preventing the illegal trade and hunting. There has also been increase in the number of elephants and the number of tiger has also increased by 12 from 2014 to 2015.

September 10

<http://kantipur.ekantipur.com/news/2015-09-11/20150911082218.html>

MARIJUANA DESTROYED

Police and locals have destroyed three trucks of marijuana (*Cannabis*) plant in Karyabinayak municipality, Lalitpur, central Nepal. The plants were destroyed because the locals complained that the plants were growing out of control in the area. According to police such activities have been carried out in Bungmati and Khokana areas as well.

September 12

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-09-12/photo-feature-police-and-locals-destroy-3-trucks-of-marijuana-plant.html>

EXPANSION OF WILDLIFE HABITAT

Tiger numbers have declined 95 percent over the past century due to habitat loss, overhunting of tiger prey species. Government approved an extension of further 2,500 square kilometers of prime habitat for the big cats in Parsa Wildlife Reserve, inner terai lowlands of south central Nepal. Conservationists believe the new expansion, called Bara will increase the protected regions tiger capacity to more than 40 adults.

September 13

<http://news.mongabay.com/2015/09/big-reserve-expansion-gives-tigers-a-boost-in-nepal/>

HIGH PRODUCTION AND UNFAIR MARKETS

There have been 4,000 tons of apples production in Karnali districts in mid-western Nepal, known for its tasty apples. Due to the strike that has been going on in terai region, farmers are forced to sell their apples at lower rates as the region does not have enough cold storage facilities to store the apples until the price rises.

September 13

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-09-13/apple-farmers-toast-good-harvest-but-rue-low-price.html>

TIMBER SMUGGLING ON THE RISE

There has been an increase in illegal trade of timber in Parsa region of Janakpur Zone, south central Nepal. Timber smuggling has been unchecked as several police stations have been relocated due to the strike at Terai region. According to the District Police Office, police stations in southern villages have merged with area police offices. Smugglers are supplying timber illegally at high cost in India on bicycle.

September 13

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-09-13/timber-smuggling-on-rise-in-parsa.html>

LANDSLIDE PUTS VILLAGES AT RISK

Frequent soil erosion on the riverbanks and the fear of being buried under landslide has been giving sleepless nights to people in Okhaldhunga, eastern Nepal. It is estimated that 70 households are at high risk of landslides whereas over hundreds of ropani of cultivable land has turned barren. Local primary school building was also damaged by the slide.

September 13

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/fear-of-landslides/>

SOLAR ELECTRICITY IN MUSTANG

The Chinese government has handed over a 70-KW solar panel project constructed at Lomanthang in the trans-Himalayan district of Mustang, western Nepal. The solar panels installations provide access to electricity to 1,400 locals belonging to 221 households. The Chinese team had overseen the entire work from solar lines expansion to wiring of the households.

September 14

<http://therisingnepal.org.np/news/6461>

India-Himalaya

AFFORESTATION CAMPAIGN

The Eco Task Force associated with IAS (Indian Administrative Service) and school children planted 350 saplings in Kempty, Mussoorie, Uttarakhand, north western India. Its motive was to raise environmental awareness among schoolchildren. Eco Task Force has played an important role in conserving ecology of Garhwal Himalayas.

September 12

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/uttarakhand/350-saplings-planted-at-kempty/132217.html>

MONKEYS AS VERMIN

During the last three years, 296 people were attacked by monkey due to increasing number of monkey bites, Forest Department has urged the Union Ministry of Environment and Forest to declare monkeys as vermin in Shimla, northeast India. Despite the Wildlife wing running eight sterilization centers and sterilizing 96,709 monkeys till August 15, there has been no reduction in the number of attacks by monkeys. It has become a big problem especially for school children and women who are more vulnerable.

September 13

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/declare-monkeys-as-vermin-in-shimla-state-asks-centre/132267.html>

PLASTIC BAGS STILL IN USE

Despite a ban on the sale and use of polythene bags in Palampur region, Himachal Pradesh, it is still seen in the markets. The main markets are littered with polythene bags. Shopkeepers have been openly selling vegetables and fruits in polythene bags without any hesitation.

September 13

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/community/despite-ban-use-of-plastic-bags-continues-in-palampur/132695.html>

TOURISM AT RISK

Narrow roads and frequent traffic jams at tourist places such as McLeodganj, Palampur, Baijnath and Kangra have adversely affected the tourism industry of the Himanchal Pradesh. Poor transport and air services, expensive food and fleecing of tourists by taxi operators have disappointed tourists. Governments have failed to take steps for the promotion of the tourism industry.

September 13

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/traffic-jams-poor-roads-hit-state-tourism-industry/132698.html>

China Himalaya

TIBET TOURISM

The Gorkha –Nepal earthquake has that affected the number of tourists in Tibet. The largest and highest Tibetan Plateau had become the destination for refreshment and scenery to the visitors as this area of Tibet is known the “Switzerland of the East”. Tibet had recorded 15.53 million visitors in 2014. It was expected to increase to 17 million in 2015.

September 9

http://eng.tibet.cn/2012sy/xw/201509/t20150909_3936412.html

CLEAN AND SAFE WATER

New water conservation projects have made clean water available to over 900,000 local people in Tibet southwest China region. Around 750,000 rural dwellers and 150,000 urban residents were benefited. The projects also generate electricity for local residents, control water and soil loss and helps to protect the environment.

September 14

http://www.china.org.cn/environment/2015-09/14/content_36576213.htm

Bhutan-Himalaya

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY OF CULTIVATION

New technology in tomato cultivation has brought agriculture revolution in Wangsisina, Paro, western Bhutan. Tomato blight had become a serious problem as it spoiled many crops. New technique helps to grow disease resistant crops and also increase the productivity. The farmers were also introduced to other climate smart agriculture and low cost technologies at the farm.

September 9

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/farmers-learn-new-cropping/>

YAKS ARE BACK

Yaks (*Bos grunniens*) are once again wandering in the green meadows after National Centre for Animal Nutrition (NCAN) successfully reinstated the ancient tradition of rearing the yaks in Bumthang, eastern part of Bhutan. Around 50 yaks are now in the mountains and were bought from Bji and Katsho in Haa, Dagala in Thimphu, Sephu in Wangdue, and Chokhortoe for Nu 2 million.

September 10

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/bringing-yaks-back-to-tang/>

FUMIGATION AFFECTS STUDENTS

Anti-dengue fumigation had been carried out in a Government Girls High School during school time in Attock district's Jand area, Rawalpindi, western part of Pakistan by Tehsil Municipal Administration (TMA). Out of the total 700 student present inside the school premises during the spray, some 400 students were affected by the fumigation and at least 30 fell unconscious. Despite spending million rupees on the anti-dengue measures medicines, dengue had gone out of control in Rawalpindi.

September 10

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1206105/at-least-30-school-girls-fall-unconscious-due-to-anti-dengue-fumigation-in-attock>

DISPOSING PLASTIC BAGS

Proper disposal of plastic bags has been an issue of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north-west Pakistan. It has been creating problems in sewage piping. Plastics are made of polyethylene, when it is burnt in the open, these bags produce toxic gases which is injurious to human health.

September 14, 2015

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1206798/plastic-bags-disposal>