

Headlines Himalaya

December 22- December 29, 2015 No. 384

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For the 384th issue, we reviewed 27 news reports from 11 sources and selected 26 happenings in five countries. In Nepal, tree smuggling has increased in Nawalparasi district of western Nepal and the snow leopards were spotted in Gorkha district. The lack of toilets was found in rural villages in Uttarakhand of northern India. In Tibet, China there has been found of Hyenas and the law has revised for the protection of wildlife. Biogas plants have been constructed in Gelephu region of Bhutan. Leopard was found in Margalla hills 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

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- Seven Snow Leopards Spotted In Gorkha*
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INDIA

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CHINA

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BHUTAN

- Construction of Biogas Plants Swiftens*
- Mandarin Harvest Decreases*
- Windstorm Destroy Houses*

PAKISTAN

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TREE SMUGGLING INCREASE

Smuggling of timber in Nawalpur forest of Nawalparasi district in western Nepal has increased rapidly in the recent days. Locals have expressed their anger at the forest administration's insufficient efforts in tackling this problem. However, the administration claims that they are patrolling through the community forests. Smuggling is common in the national and community forests.

December 22

<http://radionepal.gov.np/radio-nepal/timber-smuggling-up-in-nawalparasi/>

<https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/timber-smuggling-up-in-nawalparasi/>

SEVEN SNOW LEOPARDS SPOTTED IN GORKHA

Over the course of a technical survey at Manaslu Conservation Area, seven snow leopards (*Uncia uncia*) have been spotted at Samagaun and Chhekampar VDCs in Gorkha district western part of Nepal. A total of about 500 snow leopards are found in Nepal's Himalayas among them Gorkha is home to 17 individuals.

December 25

<http://www.nepalnews.com/index.php/news/47061-seven-snow-leopards-spotted-in-gorkha>

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/7-snow-leopards-spotted-in-manaslu/>

DEATH MALE RHINO FOUND

A rare one horned rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) has been found dead at Kumroj area of the eastern belt in Chitwan district, southern part of Nepal with multiple injuries in its body parts. All its organs including the horn were found intact and hence could have died of natural causes. The country has celebrated 'zero poaching years' three times in the past years.

December 22

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/rhino-found-dead-in-chitwan/>

FEAR OF LOSING INVESTMENT

Fish farmers of Parsa, south-central Nepal have been unable to sell their fish in the market due to disruption of transportation caused by Protracted Madhes agitation. A total of 1700 metric tons of fishes were produced in the district by 865 farmers in 1,060 fish ponds that occupy an area of 140 hectares.

December 22

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/fish-farmers-in-parsa-at-receiving-end-of-tarai-agitation/>

INCREASE IN BIO-PESTICIDES USER

Farmers are increasingly using bio pesticides instead of chemical pesticides because of awareness and easy availability in Illam of eastern Nepal. According to District Agricultural Development Office, about 445 liters of bio-pesticides was used in the past year, up from 290 liters used in the previous year.

December 26

<http://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/18509>

COMMERCIAL FARMING IN REMOTE JAJARKOT

A large numbers of farmers from the remote hilly district of Jajarkot, mid-western part of Nepal have adopted commercial vegetable farming. With this they have managed to become self-sufficient and shaken off the prolonged food deficit in that area. The area now exports more than 2 tons of vegetables daily to other districts.
December 26

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-12-26/jajarkot-becomes-self-reliant-in-veggies.html>

BIOGAS USERS INCREASED IN DANG

Bio-gas plants have been installed in more than 6306 households in Dang district, western part of Nepal. In order to attract people towards alternative energy government has also been providing 50 percent grants to total cost.

December 26

<http://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/18510>

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/33597/bio-gas-plants-installed-in-6-300-houses.html>

DEPLETION OF RIVER BASED RESOURCES

Smuggling of river based resources is increasing in different rivers of Nawalparasi district of Nepal. Smugglers have excavated sands, pebbles, rocks from the bank of the river due to lack of proper monitoring mechanism of the government. According to locals about 30 tractors of river based resources are being smuggled from Turiyakhola in Shukrauli VDC and Tonawakhola in Hakui VDC.

December 27

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/33723/smuggling-of-river-based-resources-rampant.html>

VULTURES FOUND DEAD

A total of 18 critically endangered vultures (*Gypste nuirostris*) were found dead during last two days in Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve of Kanchanpur district, western Nepal. According to the Chief Conservation Officer, the exact reason behind the mass death has not been revealed. Two cows were also found dead near the site. The vultures that consumed the remains of the cows could have died because of the poison.

December 27

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/33730/18-vultures-found-dead-in-shuklaphanta-wildlife-reserve.html>

AIR POLLUTION MEASUREMENT CENTER

In collaboration of ICIMOD and Nepal National Nature Conservation Trust, an air pollution measurement centre has been established in Chitwan, southern Nepal. The Centre has been established to measure the level of air pollution causing hazards to human and wildlife.

December 27

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-12-27/air-pollution-measurement-centre-in-chitwan.html>

FOOD SHORTAGE IN JAJARKOT

A possible food scarcity is threatening more than one dozen VDCs in Jajarkot of mid western Nepal. The lack of appropriate rainfall this year led to poor maize production. Nepal Food Corporation has also delayed its supply of rice to the local markets forcing farmers to import rice at high prices. The food depots in the VDCs ran out of food two months ago.

December 27

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/food-crisis-looms-large-in-jajarkot/>

FINANCIAL SUPPORT BY COMMUNITY FOREST

A community forest has provided financial support of NRs 350,000 to construct the building of school in Myagdi district of western Nepal. The community forest has been providing NRs 10,000 each month to pay the salary of the private teachers. The money was earned by selling timber, firewood and fodder from the forest.

December 28

<http://www.nepalnews.com/index.php/news/47085-community-forest-provides-rs-350,000-for-school-building-construction>

India-Himalaya

LACK OF TOILET IN RURAL HOUSEHOLDS

The government program which provides sufficient cleanliness services in rural households in Almora of Uttarakhand, northern India showed that 27 percent of the populations in the rural areas don't use toilets in their report. More than 36,000 rural households do not have toilets. Although the district has target of 100 percent toilet in the area only 4,016 toilets have been constructed till now.

December 22

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/No-toilets-for-27-of-rural-households-in-Almora/articleshow/50287739.cms>

POLLUTION CAUSED BY WASTE

Lack of proper solid waste management has resulted in pollution in Palampur of Himanchal Pradesh, northern India. Large quantities of waste are being thrown openly in the forests resulting in pollution and water contamination. Garbage disposed in this area is also being burnt on a regular basis producing copious amounts of smoke and smog like conditions.

December 22

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/community/burning-of-garbage-leads-to-pollution/174050.html>

CROP DESTROYED BY WILD ANIMALS

Farmers have stopped cultivating groundnut due to the threats to their crops from wild boars in Champawat of Uttarakhand, India. Farmers used to produce over 10,000 tonnes of groundnut a decade ago. The farmers informed the district government about their choice to stop growing groundnuts due to the wild animals but it failed to take any remedial actions.

December 22

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/uttarakhand/wild-boars-destroy-groundnut-crop/174158.html>

DISTRIBUTION OF SOLAR LANTERNS

Solar lanterns and mobile charging stations have been freely distributed to households in border areas and remote villages in Uttarakhand, India where there is no electricity. It was distributed in more than 3,000 homes by an NGO in association with various government agencies and border security forces so as to create awareness of environment and life. Around 300 solar lanterns along with seven mobile charging stations and 10 solar home lights were distributed in Haldwani.

December 27

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/Solar-lanterns-lit-up-3k-homes-in-Uttarakhand/articleshow/50345887.cms>

LACK OF IRRIGATION

Agricultural production has been affected in Tehri district of Uttarakhand, India due to the lack of suitable irrigation facilities. The villagers are completely dependent on a canal for irrigation, which has been out of order for the past five years. No initiatives have been taken by the government of the region to repair the canal.

December 28

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/uttarakhand/defunct-canal-hits-agricultural-production-in-tehri-villages/176114.html>

DEMAND TO INCREASE ETHANOL

Terai farmers have demanded the increment in production of ethanol in sugar mills of Uttarakhand state, India. They demanded because these mills might collect profits as ethanol is sold for IRs 49 per kg in the market, the price of which is comparatively higher than sugar. Over 10 lakhs sugarcane farmers in Udham Singh Nagar and Haridwar regions of the state suffered from economic crisis every year after supplying sugarcane to sugar mills as these mills are not in a position to pay them full payment of their produce.

December 28

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/uttarakhand/farmers-for-more-ethanol-production/176409.html>

China Himalaya

NEW REVISED LAW FOR WILDLIFE PROTECTION

The Law on Protection of Wildlife was corrected and handed to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress for deliberation in Tibet. This outline tightens guidelines on illegal purchase and consumption of wildlife. It also included the modification on wildlife and habitat safeguard list, captive reproduction and wildlife safeguard fund.

December 22

http://eng.tibet.cn/2012sy/xw/201512/t20151222_3996914.html

HYENAS IN SW CHINA

Chinese archaeologist and U.S. scientist has discovered the existence of pliocene-era bone-crushing hyenas of some four million years ago on Qinghai- Tibet plateau. Research on the fossils has shown that hyenas existed on the plateau, and as far as west Europe, during the early Pliocene. They are likely to have originated from north China but disappeared 2.2 million years ago.

December 24

http://eng.tibet.cn/2012sy/xw/201512/t20151224_3998002.html

Bhutan-Himalaya

CONSTRUCTION OF BIOGAS PLANTS SWIFTENS

The construction of over 2,000 biogas plants in Gelephu region of Bhutan was completed so as to reduce deforestation and decrease greenhouse gas emissions. A total of 2,172 biogas plants have been constructed in 13 dzongkhags and 453 biogas plants were constructed in Samtse region. Certificates, biogas stoves and cash prizes were provided as honors for different masons, gewog agriculture extension officers and dzongkhag officials.

December 22

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/construction-of-biogas-plants-gains-momentum/>

MANDARIN HARVEST DECREASES

Mandarin harvest has dropped to an all time low in Trashigang of Bhutan. For the past three years, trees haven't borne appropriate fruits with leaves turning yellow and most trees dying off. In Lumang, about 80 percent of orange trees have been affected. The household that earned almost USD 1,510 every year earned USD 150 this year.

December 23

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/mandarin-production-drops-in-trashigang/>

WINDSTROM DESTROY HOUSES

A windstorm has damaged 30 houses in Lunana of Bhutan and the government is likely to send the helicopter to assess the damage. The roofs of around 15 houses were blown off while 15 others suffered partial damage. All the news was acknowledged through telephonic discussion with the local people.

December 28

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/windstorm-damage-30-houses-in-lunana/>

Pakistan- Himalaya

LEOPARDS RETURN TO MARGALLA HILLS

After a six years period, leopards have been found in Margalla Hills of Islamabad, northeastern Pakistan. The villagers had noticed their animals going missing in the past few days and figured they were being hunted by a predator. They then spotted the big cats near Faisal Masjid and Pir Sohawa. These leopards reportedly do not come into the villages and stick to the surrounding hills.

December 24

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1228442/leopards-seen-on-margalla-hills>

LAKE POLLUTED IN PAKISTAN

The unmanaged release of sewage from nearby industrial area is destroying the biodiversity of Keenjhar lake in Karachi of northern Pakistan. The lake has become a waste dumping ground for effluent from Nooribad Industrial Area and 15 villages of about 1,500 people. Keenjhar is the second largest freshwater lake in Pakistan.

December 28

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1229061/wastes-govt-neglect-destroying-keenjhar-lake>