

# Headlines Himalaya

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Editorial Team: Rajita Budhathoki and Suveksha Jha

For the 489<sup>th</sup> issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 18 news from 9 sources and selected 17 happenings from five countries. In Nepal, tourist arrivals are on upswing in Ghalebhanjyang, Nuwakot, central part of the country. Water canyoning, a new attraction to the tourist, has started for the first time in Palpa, western Nepal. In India, the police forces are strictly on a charge to ban the plastic bags from Jammu and Kashmir, northern part of the country. A pilot project on the harvest of Quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*), a substitute grain for rice has become popular among farmers in western Bhutan.

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### HIGH VALUE OF YAM AND SWEET POTATO

The value of Yam (*Dioscorea* sps.) and Sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) has increased in the market with the arrival of religious festival Maghe Sankranti in Nepal. The cities in the western parts of the country, namely; Bhairahawa, Butwal, Lumbini, Merchwar, Dhakdai, Devadah, Manigram, Kandval and Surkhhand have been recorded as the highest consuming regions. According to sources, more than 20 tonnes of Yam are sold in Rupandehi, western part of Nepal that are imported from Muzaffarpur, Banar and other parts of India, because Nepal has not yet adopted the commercial farming of this products.

Jan 16

<http://bit.ly/2nd9YjV>

### TOURISTS INCREASED IN NUWAKOT

Enriched in mountainous and beautiful sceneries, Ghalebhanjyang, Nuwakot, central Nepal has been developing as a tourist area. Due to its high altitude, the places in central Nepal such as Dhading, Gorkha, Rasuwa and Sindhupalchok can be witnessed through Ghalebhanjyang. The main attractions of this place are the homely environment and welcoming behaviour of the locals. However, the astonishing view and sceneries has added lot to increase the flow of huge number of tourists to the district but still some infrastructural development must be considered.

Jan 17

<http://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/49991>

### WATER CANYONING IN PARBAT

The people of Parbat district has started water canyoning at Mahabhir River of Durlung, western Nepal to develop this region as a tourist destination. The location of water canyoning is seven kilometers away from Kushma Bazar, the district headquarters. The locals also have started homestay facilities. A survey report of the company has shown that four places of the Mahabhir River are suitable for at least 110-meter-long canyoning. This adventurous facility was started in order to promote tourism industry and also to create employment opportunities to the local along with the conservation of the environment.

Jan 17

<http://www.myrepublica.com/news/34537/>

### DECREASE IN RICE PRODUCTION

However, the rice (*Oryza* Sps.) production has increased to the maximum last year, this year the productivity has slightly decreased by 1.5 percent than the previous year due to the drought. Though the production was expected to decline due to flood and landslide but according to the Agriculture Ministry, a total of 5,151,000 tonnes of rice have been produced this year. According to the officials, the use of fertilizers and the appropriate rainfall have led to the increase of the production slightly in spite of the natural calamity.

Jan 18

<http://bit.ly/2FQjFg2>

### KAILALI: A REGION DEPENDENT ON IMPORT VEGETABLES

Due to lack of local production and facilities to the farmers in Kailali, far western Nepal, the locals have been bound to depend on imported vegetables from nearby India areas. Potato (*Solanum tuberosum*), onion (*Allium* sps.) and chillies (*Capsicum annum* L.) are being imported daily in similar quantities as compared to other products. In the first five months of the current period, vegetables worth NPR 40 million have been imported which is NPR 14.5 million more than the previous corresponding periods.

Jan 18

<http://bit.ly/2FkGVsq>

#### **LOW VALUE OF CINNAMON**

The farmers of Palpa, western Nepal have been worried due to unreasonable price of Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*) in the market and are compelled to sell them in low price. Despite the beneficial use of Cinnamon, farmers with improper professional education about the market are forced to sell at NPR 35 per kg to the market. Due to the lack of the knowledge of market price, the farmers have not been able to take benefits from Cinnamon cultivation. The sale of Cinnamon produced in Palpa has resulted in the loss of sales outside the country due to legal conflicts and low production quality.

**Jan 18**

<http://bit.ly/2GfP4Zz>

#### **WITHDRAWAL PROBLEM IN GINGER**

The farmers of Tehrathum, eastern Nepal have faced a problem in withdrawal of ginger (*Zingiber officinale*), as huge amount of ginger collected from the district are stuck in the warehouse and unattached roads. Despite the huge production of Ginger in the district, good amount of income has not been collected which has frustrated the farmers. However, the farmers have claimed that the lack of technical knowledge, market uncertainty, lack of bank loans and insurance have resulted a state of displacement for ginger farming.

**Jan 19**

<http://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/50119>

#### **STUDY ABOUT YARSHAGUMBA**

Realizing the importance of the education about the conservation and the quality improvement of Yarshagumba (*Ophiocordyceps sinensis*), Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), Lalitpur, central Nepal has started an education course about Yarshagumba. Among 540 species of Yarshagumba found in the world, 17 of them are found in Nepal. Not only Yarshagumba, but other important herbs are also getting endangered at the time of the species collection. In order to preserve these species, the program has been started in various areas among the locals.

**Jan 19**

<http://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/50099>

#### **ANNAPURNA KEEPS RECORD**

Annapurna, Lamjung, western Nepal has kept a new record in 2017 when tourists had increased by 39 percent in the area. According to the Department of Immigration, more than 940 thousand tourists had visited Nepal in the year 2017. Tourists' businessmen have been more enthusiastic after the domestic tourists have seen significant increase in the previous time. According to the Tourism Board, tourism has increased due to good publicity, natural beauty and local culture as about 60 percent of tourists prefer Annapurna area.

**Jan 20**

<http://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/50086>

#### **HYBRID SEEDS REPLACING THE LOCAL ONES**

The farmers are getting attracted to the hybrid seeds of vegetables and crops in Baitadi, far western Nepal as the hybrid seeds yield high production. The excessive use of hybrid seeds has resulted in the extinction of local seeds in the market. Though the hybrid seeds have adverse effect such as early ageing and pest harms, hybrid seeds are preferred more than the local seeds. The local seeds of old paddy (*Oryza sativa*), wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), corn (*Zea mays*), and vegetables, including modernity, have come to an end as District Agriculture Development Office has not taken any initiative to protect the local ones.

**Jan 21**

<http://gorkhapatraonline.com/news/50146>

<http://www.myrepublica.com/news/34780/>

#### **LOCAL FARMING IN RISE**

The largest poultry farm has been launched in the province of Poultry in Pyuthan, mid western part Nepal. About 50- 60 numbers of poultry farms have been established in Bangesal region, namely; Butwal, Pokhara, Gulmi and Damauli, western Nepal; Nepalgunj, mid western Nepal; Kailali, far western Nepal and Kathmandu, central part of

the country. The farms have been operating not only in a profitable manner but to attract youth towards entrepreneurship. The varieties of medicines, dipper facilities, and vaccines have been arranged in the farms. Despite the rise in such business, the farmers have been lacking supports and encouragement in terms of loan and market flourish from the government.

**Jan 21**

<http://bit.ly/2DM7Yca>

## India-Himalaya

### **POLICE AGAINST THE USE OF POLYTHENE**

Jammu and Kashmir police have started its drive against the use of polythene and has seized more than 500kgs of polythene in Anantnag and Handwara, Jammu and Kashmir, northern part of India. The initiative was launched in the jurisdiction of all the police stations of the districts which is good initiate for clean and plastic free environment.

**Jan 16**

<http://bit.ly/2rGmNbe>

### **DROUGHT AFFECTED RABBI CROPS' CULTIVATION**

The average rainfall of Himachal Pradesh, northern India this year was 0.2 mm against the normal rainfall of 45.5 mm which caused dry spell and affects about 70 percent of cultivable area and Rabi crops (winter crops). Though winter crops have been targeted to be of 75.135 million Metric Tonnes (MT) but due to unfavourable condition, the total production of grains and vegetables has been fixed to 3.396 million MT and 3.248 million MT for the year 2017 and 2018 respectively.

**Jan 18**

<http://bit.ly/2GiIN0k>

## China Himalaya

### **DOMINANCE OF WOMEN OVER MEDICINE MANUFACTURING**

Once, a male dominated field, the herbal pharmaceutical companies of Tibet, has seen a rise in the female workers in the past few years in Tibet. Being more careful and having more patience among the two genders, female are more suited for this job says, one of the medical Pharmaceuticals. In 2016 fifteen therapies and practices of Tibetan medicine have been listed as national intangible cultural heritage worth around USD 234 million and it has been gaining more popularity and funding ever since.

**Jan 15**

<http://bit.ly/2DPq50C>

### ENVIRONMENT FRIENDLY TOILETS IN TIBETAN PLATEAU

In north western China's Qinghai Province, Tibet the local government has invested USD 637,000 for promotion of the toilet revolution since 2015. Ecology and environment- friendly were the two main talking points of the public toilets, built in scenic areas in Yushu, south western Qinghai province, Tibet. The toilet revolution in Tibetan-inhabited had reflected a shift in perspective due to urbanization of those areas.

Jan 17

<http://bit.ly/2DFU0Jq>

### GROWTH RATE OF FISH AFFECTED

According to study, the growth speed of fishes (Pisces) has declined in the regions of the Qinghai-Tibet plateau, north eastern Tibet as an effect of the global warming. According to the study released by the Institute of Hydrobiology of Chinese Academy of Sciences, juvenile naked crap (*Gymnocypris przewalskii*) which is endemic to the plateau has increased its growing season by about 17 days, from the 1970s to the year 2000. Tibetan plateau is one of the most sensitive regions to climate change and has gone wetter and warmer over past 40 years.

Jan 19

<http://bit.ly/2GjOwSo>

## Bhutan-Himalaya

### HARVEST OF QUINOA

Popular in the North and South America, Quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*), a substitute grain for rice, has been grown as a part of a pilot project in western Bhutan. Being a mass cultivable and biannual crop, Quinoa has already started to become popular among the Bhutanese farmers. A total of around 8 hectares of land have been used for Quinoa cultivation by 30 households in the district and after harvesting, the crop will be supplied to the Renewable Natural Resources Research Center in Yusipang, central part of Bhutan for supplying seeds to other regions of Bhutan as well.

Jan 17

<http://bit.ly/2ng7KiS>