

Headlines Himalaya

Sept 24 – Sept 30 (2018)

No. 524

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For the 524th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 26 news from 15 sources and selected 22 happenings from five countries. Six climbers including four rope-fixing Sherpas successfully summited Mt. Manaslu in this autumn season. The Supreme Court of Nepal has issued the final verdict to reduce Kathmandu valley's extreme air pollution. The newly constructed Pakyong Airport in Sikkim, northeast India, has become the first airport of the Himalayan state. The local people of Khemar Township, Tibet find a way to use their natural springs and lakes to get rid of poverty. Five new fish species have been discovered in Bhutan. Water contamination was detected in most of the seminaries across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north western 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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INDIA	<i>First airport of Sikkim inaugurated</i> <i>Torrential rain devastates the northern India</i> <i>Hazardous pesticide use</i> <i>Erosion destroys houses</i> <i>Arrests for stealing elephant tusks</i>
CHINA	<i>Improving status of rural highways</i> <i>Spring water to alleviate poverty</i> <i>Technology improves animal husbandry</i>
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AUTUMN MOUNTAIN CLIMBING

Six climbers including four rope-fixing Sherpas successfully summited Mt. Manaslu, central Nepal and became the first team to climb the mountain this autumn season. The Department of Tourism has given permits for different 27 mountains in this season. Meanwhile, four American climbers along with two climbing Sherpas have also attempted to make the first ski descent from the summit point of Mt. Lhotse, eastern Nepal after they had successfully climbed the mountain, according to the expedition organizer.

Sept 25 & 30

<https://bit.ly/2T6Dzd7>

<https://bit.ly/2AZ8TUo>

RAIN CAUSED PADDY LOSS

The monsoon rain in the harvesting season has caused heavy loss of paddy (*Oryza sativa*) in Kailali district, far-western Nepal. The ripe paddy crop started decaying in the field as claimed by the Chairperson of Dhangadi sub-metropolitan city, ward no. 10.

Sept 25

<https://bit.ly/2FeE4ze>

FINAL VERDICT AGAINST AIR POLLUTION

The Supreme Court has issued the final verdict in favor of environment by ordering to reduce Kathmandu valley's extreme air pollution. Environmental Development and Conservation Law Forum (EDCLF) had filed a writ petition which was publicized only on Tuesday by apex court, which also necessitated coordination among various projects and agencies to reassure minimum dust pollution while doing developmental activities.

Sept 26

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

DISASTER RESPONSE EXERCISE AND EXCHANGE

The Nepal Army and the US Army Pacific held the fourth iteration of Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE) in Kathmandu, central Nepal. It emphasizes on civil military coordination, mass trauma, search and rescue camp management and coordination. The Chief Director of the Nepal Army, Directorate of Disaster Management aforesaid the skills learned during the exercises 2011 and 2013 had greatly helped the soldiers in dealing with the 2015 earthquake.

Sept 26

<https://bit.ly/2RPVW4N>

CONSTRUCTION OF WATERWAYS

In a meeting of the Agriculture, Cooperatives and Natural Resources Committee under the House of Representatives, Minister of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation claimed that there is high potential for the construction of waterways in Koshi, Gandaki, Narayani and Karnali rivers of Nepal. He added that the government would start the construction within the current fiscal year.

Sept 26

<https://bit.ly/2z6KL0w>

RARE PYTHON RESCUED

A rare python (*Pythonidae*) had entered the house of local resident Punarbas Municipality-4, Kanchanpur district, south-western Nepal. The chief of Area Forests Office said that the python was rescued and was set free in Namuna Community Forest.

Sept 27

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

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR URBAN WATER AND SANITATION

To ensure access to community-managed water supply and sanitation, Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved loan of NPR 116.2 billion in 20 urban municipalities of Nepal. ADB has supported the government in improving water supply and other services since 2000. The installation or repair of 16000 kilometres of water supply pipes and 15 water treatment plants will be supported by the new project.

Sept 27

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

HUNTING SEASON BEGINS AT DHORPATAN HUNTING RESERVE

Hunting season has been kicked off at Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve, Baglung district, western Nepal for a period of three months, from the Nepali month of Ashoj to Mangsir. The animals that have been permitted for hunting are Himalayan Blue Sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*) and Himalayan Tahr (*Hemitragus jemlahicus*).

Sept 28

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

HYDEL PROJECT CONSTRUCTION OBSTRUCTED

The locals of Narchyang, Myagdi District, mid-western Nepal have hindered the construction of Mistrikhola Hydel Project. The locals are protesting the failure of project management to take efforts to prevent landslide caused by water flowing out of the project tunnel outlet. Till now more than 60 percent of the project work has been completed.

Sept 30

<https://bit.ly/2z5Mmnf>

UNDER-CONSTRUCTION BRIDGE IN LIMBO

The construction of bridge, that began 8 years ago, over Bagmati River in Durga Bhagawati Rural Municipality-10, Rautahat, central Nepal remains in limbo after the construction company left the office. The bridge construction was stopped as the design was found faulty, according to the Managing Director of the construction company.

Sept 30

<https://bit.ly/2T5cNIG>

India-Himalaya

FIRST AIRPORT OF SIKKIM INAUGURATED

Pakyong Airport in Sikkim, north eastern India, has become the first airport of the Himalayan state and the 100th of the country. During the official inauguration, the Prime Minister claimed that this would greatly improve the connectivity of Sikkim and mentioned that the airport is part of the "Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik" (UDAN) scheme.

Sept 24

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

TORRENTIAL RAIN DEVASTATES THE NORTHERN INDIA

Flood and landslides due to heavy rain claimed more than 30 lives in Doda and Kathua districts, Jammu and Kashmir, northern India. Inundation due to floods has caused the highways and schools to close. The Dobhi Tibetan settlement of Kullu district, Himachal Pradesh, north India has been worst hit by the overflowing of the Beas River, with over 200 roads blocked and 11 casualties. Recently, among more than 5000 people stranded in Lahaul-Spiti district, Himachal Pradesh, northern India, 252 have been rescued. The operation has been called-off as per the directions of the Indian government until further assessment of the situation.

Sept 24, 26 & 30

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

<https://bit.ly/2RPW9oG>

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

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

HAZARDOUS PESTICIDE USE

Excessive use of pesticides in the tea gardens of Golahat district, Assam, north eastern India has led to degraded quality of air, water and soil. A senior associate professor of chemistry of Dergaon Kamal Dowerah (DKD) College of the state told that the solid particulate matters (SPMs) released from the pesticides can attack the central nervous system as well as cause failure of respiratory system, stomach problems, eye disease, etc.

Sept 27

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

EROSION DESTROYS HOUSES

Following heavy rainfall, 10 houses have been washed away because of erosion in Tezpur, Assam, north eastern India. Erosion has posed a threat in many other villages of the area which may affect both human habitations and crop lands.

Sept 30

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

ARRESTS FOR STEALING ELEPHANT TUSKS

Four people were arrested for stealing ivory tusks of a 45-year-old elephant (*Elephas maximus*) that had died on September 16 in Thanko range, Uttarakhand, northern India due to cardiac arrest. The tusks, worth USD 40-55 thousand, were chopped, cut into six pieces and hid in the nearby forest.

Sept 30

<https://bit.ly/2z4kPm8>

China Himalaya

IMPROVING STATUS OF RURAL HIGHWAYS

According to the Tibet Department of Transportation, 695 of the 697 townships of Tibet, western China, now have access to highways. Around USD 11.45 billion has been funded to build rural highways in the Tibetan region and large construction companies have been invited to participate in the highway construction to keep pace with the huge leap in the road development.

Sept 25

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

SPRING WATER TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY

Next to Mt. Qomolangma (or Mt. Everest), the local people of Khemar Township, Tibet, south western China, have put into use their natural springs and lakes to get rid of poverty. After the discovery of the springs in the 1980s, people have been shifting their income source from herding and farming to processing and treatment of spring water. The locals say that improvement in road conditions has helped them prosper more.

Sept 28

<https://bit.ly/2T57OBo>

TECHNOLOGY IMPROVES ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

After the artificial grass-planting project was implemented in 2012, it has shown tremendous improvement in meeting the livestock demand in Jiaduo Village, Tibet, south western China. This year, during the Farmers' Harvest Festival, around 2.2 tons of artificial planted tall oat-grass was allocated to each household. Implementing the project has improved livestock health condition, decreased mortality rates and helped herders gain extra income by selling the surplus.

Sept 30

<https://bit.ly/2K0XFSc>

Bhutan-Himalaya

IMPROVING CHILLI PRODUCTION

Farmers from Samtse district, south western Bhutan have come up with various ideas to improve the chilli (*Capsicum frutescens*) production to meet the winter chilli demands. Since the district was not able to reach the target of chilli production last year, the district has installed green houses and water tanks and will be using bio-fertilizers and compost to increase soil fertility.

Sept 25

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

DISCOVERY OF NEW FISH SPECIES

Five new fish species belonging to the torrent catfish group namely *Parachiloglanis drukyulensis*, *Parachiloglanis benjii*, *Parachiloglanis dangmechhuensis*, *Exostoma mangdechhuensis*, and *Creteuchiloglanis bumdelingensis* have been discovered using morphometric and molecular studies in Bhutan. Considered to be endemic to Bhutan for now, these new species could be found in north-eastern states of India due to similar geophysical characteristics.

Sept 27

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

WFP FOR NUTRITION

In order to improve nutrition, livelihoods and educational facilities in the tribal district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north western Pakistan, the World Food Programme (WFP) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that aligned with the Pakistan government's 10-year socio-economic development plan, multi-sectoral nutrition strategy and Pakistan's Vision 2025.

Sept 26

<https://bit.ly/2DxSx7J>

WATER CONTAMINATION IN SEMINARIES

A survey was conducted in 400 seminaries across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north western Pakistan, after water consumption led to food poisoning. More than half the seminaries were given improvement notices and directions to install water filtration after it was found out that the water tanks were exposed, rusty and not meeting the required standards.

Sept 26

<https://bit.ly/2qH2Ai4>