

An Environmental Watchdog Newsletter

# Headlines Himalaya

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For the 374<sup>th</sup> issue, we reviewed 27 news reports from 11 sources and selected 25 happenings in five countries. In Nepal, drought affects the production of monsoon crops while earthquake tremors are felt in Uttarakhand in northern India. In Tibet, China, the first large national science museum is established. High nutrition grain is produced in Bhutan and dengue patients increase in Rawalpindi of northern 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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### DROUGHT AFFECTS MONSOON CROPS

According to District Agriculture Development Office (DADO), almost 50 percent monsoon crops were damaged by drought in eastern Kolti, Bajura district of far- western Nepal. There was no rain during the monsoon this year and the existing crops were damaged due to lack of water which had created the problem of starvation in the district. Out of 20,155 hectares of cultivated land, only 2,418 hectares and 3,147 hectares of land have partial and full irrigation facilities. The paddy production is down by 35 percent in this year.

September 28

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/drought-dries-monsoon-crops-in-bajura/>

### RELIEF TO EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

Temporary houses and poultry farms were constructed by various organizations of Nepal and abroad for the earthquake victims of Sindhupalchowk, central Nepal. Chaudhary Foundation in coordination with Surat Human Service Union, Gujrat, India, has successfully handed over the temporary houses to 118 tremor victim families. The health Centre building was repaired with a budget of NRs 1.5 million and was handed to the management committee of the health Centre. The local women were benefited with the income from poultry farming that was constructed.

September 29

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/huts-poultry-farm-for-tremor-victims/>

### ROADS REOPENED

The Baluwa-Barpak road which was blocked since few months has opened in Gorkha of western Nepal. Barpak was the epicenter of the April 25 earthquake which destroyed most of the routes and infrastructures and the villagers lost their access to transportation.

September 30

<http://www.nepalnews.com/index.php/news/46039-baluwa-barpak-route-reopens>

### ECONOMY OF NEPAL COMPETITIVE

Nepal has become the third most lucrative investment destination in south Asia in Global Competitiveness Index. According to the Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016, Nepal with the score of 3.9 was ranked 100 among 140 economies in the world. Nepal was ranked 102 in 2014 with the score 3.8. The ranking is based on the parameters like infrastructure and institution, macro environment among others.

October 01

<http://www.myrepublica.com/economy/story/29063/nepal-3rd-most-competitive-economy-in-south-asia.html>

### LAND ENCROACHED IN CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK

An estimated 1,211 hectares forest of Chitwan National Park, Chitwan, southern central Nepal has been encroached. This has resulted in deforestation, unwanted disturbance to wildlife and frequent soil erosion. An estimated 2,500 households have been living in the encroached area leading to unwanted disturbance to the wildlife.

October 01

<http://www.nepalnews.com/index.php/news/46044-chitwan-national-park-s-1,211-hectares-land-encroached>

## SHORTAGE OF AVIATION FUEL

Because of the continuous obstruction in supply of petroleum products on Nepal-India border, the Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) has been short of fuel to chartered flights and mountain flights. NOC has requested Tribhuvan International Airport to issue a notice to this effect to the chartered and mountain flight operators. All the international flights except China Southern Airlines have been operating their flights by managing 'technical landing' at the nearest airports for refilling.

October 03

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/refuelling-bar-on-mountain-chartered-flights-air-turbine-fuel-in-short-supply/>

## FUEL SHORTAGE

India's unofficial blockade in Nepal has created a crisis resulting in long queues for gasoline, closure of educational institutions and shortage of vegetables and essential items. Taxis are charging four times the normal fare. The government announced that only vehicles for transport would get a rationed amount, while private vehicles would have to wait for fuels. There are also shortages of fresh produce and medicine.

October 03

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/nepalis-adapt-to-fuel-shortage-by-carpooling-riding-bikes/>

## FACTORIES AFFECTED

The continuous strike for past 50 days has affected around 2,000 factories which have stopped operation along the Birgunj-Pathalैया Industrial Corridor in southern Nepal. The factories have not been able to import necessary raw materials and fuels, for the past nine days after the blockade on the border point. The corridor faces the loss of around NRs 560 million every day and around 50,000 workers have been affected due to this, which has caused a loss of around NRs 25 billion so far.

October 03

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/business/2000-factories-along-birgunj-pathalैया-corridor-stop-operation/>

## CHOLERA CONTROLLED

There has been no case of the cholera for the past two weeks in Kathmandu, central Nepal, after more than 80 cholera cases were reported in the Kathmandu Valley from August to September. Health officials say the epidemic is now under control. Nearly 20 percent of patients admitted to the hospital tested positive for cholera this year compared to around 5 percent last year.

October 03

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/cholera-outbreak-under-control-now/>

**India-Himalaya**

## TREMORS IN UTTARAKHAND

Tremors were felt in some parts of Uttarakhand, northern India with Kumaon as the epicenter. An earthquake of 4.8 magnitude hit Pithoragarh. There were no human and economic losses in the area.

September 29

[http://zeenews.india.com/news/uttarakhand/4-8-magnitude-earthquake-hits-pithoragarh-tremors-felt-in-parts-of-uttarakhand\\_1803872.html](http://zeenews.india.com/news/uttarakhand/4-8-magnitude-earthquake-hits-pithoragarh-tremors-felt-in-parts-of-uttarakhand_1803872.html)

## UNMANAGED WASTE

The lack of garbage bins has turned the main market into a dumping site as people throw trash at public places in Ganderbal of Jammu and Kashmir, northwestern India. The locals complain that Ganderbal Municipal Corporation has not installed garbage-bins and this has forced them to litter on roadsides. Executive Officer said that they have installed waste bins at various places in main market many times but people objected by saying this was not right place for installation and then the municipality was compelled to remove those bins.

October 03

<http://www.kashmirreader.com/ganderbal-market-sans-garbage-bins/>

## TOURIST INCREASE IN LAKE CITY

There has been increased in number of tourist in Nainital, Uttarakhand India. Tourists increased in the lake city due to weekend holidays and have also increased the traffic jams as a large number of vehicles. All tourist rest houses had been booked for two days and tourist visited the area mostly from Bengal, Gujarat, Maharastra, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh.

October 04

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/uttarakhand/weekend-rush-of-tourists-in-nainital/141207.html>

## KHADI PRODUCTION AT RISK

The Gandhi Ashram, the only manufacturing unit of khadi clothes in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand district, northern India is bearing loses of IRs 2.57 crore due to declining sales of khadi products. The retail sales which were at IRs 5.13 crore during 2012-13, dipped to IRs 74.33 lakhs last year. The manufacturing of clothes is becoming unfeasible in times of competition due to the delay and lack of modernization of manufacturing machine.

October 04

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/uttarakhand/khadi-producing-unit-in-almora-in-the-red/141208.html>

## China Himalaya

### TIBET TOURISM

A record 14.3 million tourists visited Tibet in the first eight months of 2015. According to the Tourism Development Commission of Tibet Autonomous Region, increased tourism has generated USD 3 billion in tourism revenue. The revenue collected from tourism accounted for about one fifth of the region's GDP. The region aims to attract 17 million tourists this year.

October 28

[http://eng.tibet.cn/2010ly/tnews/201509/t20150929\\_3949004.html](http://eng.tibet.cn/2010ly/tnews/201509/t20150929_3949004.html)

### FIRST NATURAL SCIENCE MUSEUM

There first natural science museum and the biggest museum in the southwestern autonomous region of Tibet, China has been opened. The 30,000 square-meter museum was financed by investment of more than USD 63 million. Interactive devices have been installed so visitors can experience Tibet's natural wonders. This is expected to facilitate innovative spirit among local youth and increase interest in science and technology in the wider community.

October 02

[http://eng.tibet.cn/2012sy/xw/201510/t20151002\\_3950744.html](http://eng.tibet.cn/2012sy/xw/201510/t20151002_3950744.html)

### QUINOA - HIGH NUTRITION GRAIN

Two varieties of Quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*) have been introduced by department of agriculture to improve the country's nutritional status in Bhutan. The protein quality and quantity in quinoa seed is often superior to those of more common cereal grains. The average production is expected to be around 500 to 600 kilo grams an acre and globally the price of processed quinoa seed ranges from USD 4 to 6 kilograms.

October 02

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/quinoa-introduced-to-address-nutrition-issues/>

### FOREST AND WILDLIFE CRIMES INCREASE

Crimes related to forest and wildlife has increased even after the frequent patrolling and active watch during the nights. Smuggling of animal products rose from six cases to 19, poaching from 13 to 35, collection of sand and stones increased to 138 from 119 cases, illegal fishing from 123 to 138, and illegal felling of trees from 228 to 232 incidents in this year.

September 29

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/forest-and-wildlife-crime-on-the-rise/>

### NEW TECHNOLOGY TO CONTROL WILDLIFE CRIME

Forestry and Royal Botanical park services department has come up with a mobile application, where information on wildlife crime could be securely and easily accessible to frontline staff in Bhutan. This contains information about diverse regional species relevant to Bhutan, general description and distribution of the animals, commonly traded animal and animal's parts in international market, photographs of the animals and its body parts, and visual clues for more accurate identification of wildlife contraband.

October 03

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/mobile-app-to-help-curb-wildlife-crimes/>

### WILDLIFE DEPRADATION CHALLENGE TO CONSERVATION

There have been challenges to conserve the parks and natural resources due to lack of investment from the government in Royal Botanical Park, Lampelri, western Bhutan. The increasing demand of natural resources is a serious challenge for conservation. Annual crop loss to wildlife depredation ranges from 0.3 to 18 percent of the total household income. Livestock depredation is 2.3 percent. These losses are equal to 17 percent of the household's annual income.

October 02

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/poor-investment-hampers-conservation-efforts/>

### LIVELIHOOD AND FARM ROADS

Farm roads have connected 10,444 houses in the first two years of the 11th Plan, according to the Agriculture and Forests Ministry in Bhutan. Distribution of subsidized farm machineries and improving access to market is one of the ways to promote agricultural development, central to which are farm roads.

October 03

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/more-than-10000-homes-connected-with-farm-roads/>

## ALTERNATIVE TO FARM LABOUR

There has been shortage of farm labour in Bhutan. The agriculture ministry issued a power tiller each to eight gewogs in Thimphu, central Bhutan to mitigate farm labour shortages and to improve accessibility of the farm machinery to the marginal farmers who cannot afford to own machines. It has been distributed to benefit the people by putting the machine to maximum utilization to boost agriculture production and achieve food security in the country.

October 03

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/eight-power-tillers-distributed-to-gewogs-in-thimphu/>

## Pakistan- Himalaya

### DENGUE FEVER

18 people tested positive for dengue fever in Rawalpindi, northern Pakistan. A total of 636 patients were found affected by this virus this year. The mass movements of people within the country during the Eid period have spread the disease further. It is estimated that the number of dengue cases has reached 4,000 this year.

September 30

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/964635/renewed-fears-dengue-virus-outpacing-control-efforts/>

<http://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/137-fresh-dengue-cases-rawalpindi-take-total-934>

### ILLEGAL POWER CONNECTIONS REMOVED

The local elected representatives of various areas of provincial capital and officials of Peshawar Electric Supply Company have agreed to remove all illegal power connections in Peshawar, North West of Pakistan. The decision was taken after an attack on a grid station in Gulozai and Mohammadzai areas a few days ago where consumers seized the office to protest excessive power load shedding. The elected representatives said that at least 18-hour load shedding was carried out in the rural areas of the area.

October 01

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1210137/illegal-power-connections-in-peshawar-to-be-removed-till-oct-10>