

Headlines Himalaya

April 12 – April 19

No 400

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For the 400 issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 30 news from 14 sources and selected 25 happenings from five countries. In Nepal Rhino is found to suffer from tuberculosis. In India soil erosion due to heavy rainfall threatens human settlement in Upper Assam. In China, strong earthquake tremors are felt. In Bhutan fourth annual Rhododendron festival has started. In Pakistan, solar panels have been set up in 405 government school to fulfill the energy requirements.

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

Parliament Directs To Prepare Land Use Plan
New Challenge in Wildlife Conservation: Tuberculosis in Rhino
Livelihood Affected By Increased Temperature
Hailstorm Destroys Crops and Fruits in Eastern Hills
Seed Bank to Conserve Endemic Crops
Drought Decreases Yarchagumba Production
Bio-Engineering Saves Village
Bio-Gas on Demand in Baglung District
Endangered Vultures under Threat of Extinction in Western Nepal
Wildfire Engulfs Forest Land in Western Nepal
Water Source Dry Up
Illegal Extractions in the Kali Gandaki River

India

Climatic Conditions Worries Apple Growers
Lack of Winter Rain Affects Production of Rabi Crops
Panic Due To Earthquake Causes Injury
Green Loot Halts after Media Exposure
Himachal Unable To Trap Renewable Diffused Energy
Central and State Government Pledge Action against Rhino Poacher
Heavy Rainfall Threatens Human Settlement in Upper Assam

China

Strong Tremors Felt In Tibet

Bhutan

Forest Fire in Athang

Fourth Annual Rhododendron Festival Begins

Pakistan

Sustainable Energy in Government School

Heavy Rainfall Predicted In Pakthunkhwa

PARLIAMENT DIRECTS TO PREPARE LAND-USE PLAN

Agriculture and Water resources committee of the Parliament has directed the government to prepare land-use map of 31 earthquake affected districts and 20 districts of Terai before reconstruction starts in these districts. National land use policy 2016 has also been passed this year with necessary corrections. The Ministry of Land-reform notified that Land Act, 1966 has already been amended and to facilitate its implementation the rules, regulations and procedures are also being amended.

April 12

Rajdhani Daily

NEW CHALLENGE IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION: TUBERCULOSIS IN RHINO

Tuberculosis has been found in the biopsy of a rhino which died about a year ago in Chitwan National Park. This presents a new challenge to Wildlife conservationists in Nepal after having effectively dealt with the persistent threats of hunting and poaching of rhinos. *Mycobacterium oryxius* had been observed in captive rhinos before, however this is the first time that the disease was spotted in captive ones.

April 12

Gorkhapatra Daily

LIVELIHOOD AFFECTED BY INCREASED TEMPERATURE

High temperatures and hot waves have severely affected lives of the people in central Terai. Parsa, Bara, Rautahat and other districts of the region are facing extreme weather conditions resulting in head induced sicknesses like nausea and vomiting. The dry conditions have also resulted in forest fires which have razed crops and vegetables to the ground.

April 12

Gorkhapatra Daily

HAILSTORM DESTROYS CROPS AND FRUITS IN EASTERN HILLS

One hour long hailstorm destroyed orange and other crops in Deusa and other villages of Solukhumbu district in Eastern Nepal. The hailstorm caused losses worth millions in oranges, potato, maize, ripening wheat and other crops.

April 12

Gorkhapatra Daily

SEED BANK TO CONSERVE ENDEMIC CROPS

Indigenous "Raji Community" has started a seed bank for the conservation of seeds of endemic crops in Kailali. This is an attempt of indigenous farmers to maintain food security after they faced problem of low production and pest invasion in hybrid seeds. They have observed increased production after this effort.

April 12

Gorkhapatra Daily

DROUGHT DECREASES YARCHAGUMBA PRODUCTION

A year long drought has not only dried water resources and affected agricultural land but has also affected production of valuable "Yarchagumba" (*Cordyceps sinensis*), a medicinal fungus which grows on caterpillar of a particular species of butterfly in mountainous places of the country. This effect on Yarchagumba production is expected to worsen the income of people of the rural mountains.

April 13

Kantipur Daily

BIO-ENGINEERING SAVES VILLAGE

Use of bio-engineering has saved Lalbojhi village of Kailali district, far-western Nepal from floods in Mohana and Kandra River. Last year, 900 m long and 9 ft tall bio-embankment was constructed under "Local Adaptation Program of Action". Villagers have extended this embankment using plants available in local place, which has controlled the river channel.

April 13

Kantipur Daily

BIO-GAS ON DEMAND IN BAGLUNG DISTRICT

Low investment requirements and economic efficiency of bio-gas has led to an increase in its demands in Baglung district, western Nepal. More than 1000 biogas structures have been installed in a number of Village development committees. This has minimized the negative effects of wood and fuel burning in environment and human health.

April 15

<http://gorkhapatraonline.com/epaper/showimage?img=uploads/epaper/2016-04-16/3d66cf94a0507fecdb2a9d8a89276af8.jpg>

ENDANGERED VULTURES UNDER THREAT OF EXTINCTION IN WESTERN NEPAL

An endangered species of vultures face threats of extinction in Jajarkot, mid-western Nepal. Vultures feed on animal carcasses laced with Diclofenac, administered to the livestock as medicines by the farmers, which is poisonous to the birds. The arbitrary deforestation and wildfires in the forests have also affected the habitats of the vultures in the area.

April 16

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/40600/endangered-vultures-pushed-to-verge-of-extinction.html#sthash.X5C9cFiH.dpuf>

WILDFIRE ENGULFS FOREST LAND IN WESTERN NEPAL

Due to a long dry spell, windy weather and people's carelessness, forest fires engulfed more than 77,000 hectares of forest land in six districts in Lumbini zone, western Nepal. Likewise, wildfire has destroyed 500 hectares of forest in 438 community forest and National forest in Gulmi district. The efforts of concerned authorities have proven less effective due to the difficult terrain, limited resources and unmanaged forest.

April 17

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-04-17/wildfire-sweeps-through-77000ha-of-forest-land.html>
<http://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/recurrent-wildfires-destroying-forests/>

WATER SOURCE DRY UP

Water sources like rivers, streams and ponds are drying up in several areas of Kavre, Sindhuli, Saptari districts of Central and Eastern Nepal. Haphazard urbanization, human encroachment, deep boring, random tap connections, deforestation, change of river courses and lack of water conservation mechanism are blamed for this acute water problem. The displacement of water sources by the Gorkha earthquake and the Indian government's pumping of water along the Indian border have also contributed to this scarcity.

April 17

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/40673/water-sources-drying-up-fast-in-hills-tarai.html#sthash.od7QxGwf.dpuf>

ILLEGAL EXTRACTIONS IN THE KALI GANDAKI RIVER

The District Development Committee (DDC) Parbat, western Nepal, has controversially permitted the use of equipments in excavation of stones, gravels, and sand from the Kaligandaki River violating environmental guidelines. The extractions are undertaken during night by the crusher plants to avoid detection and objections from locals and stakeholders. The extraction has created a 10 meter deep hole in the riverbed that has put the nearby Raja Bagar settlement at risk.

17 April

<http://www.myrepublica.com/society/story/40679/ddc-accused-of-permitting-illegal-extractions-in-the-kali-gandaki-river.html>

CLIMATIC CONDITIONS WORRIES APPLE GROWERS

Farmers in many parts of the Shimla-Kullu-Mandi, Himachal Pradesh fear that the current climatic conditions, will affect their apple yield this year. It is believed that the decrease in snowfall this winter followed by the recent spells of freak snow and hailstorms will compound the effect on apple crops.

April 11

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/community/unfavourable-weather-conditions-worry-apple-growers/220930.html>

LACK OF WINTER RAIN AFFECTS PRODUCTION OF RABI CROPS

Around 33 percent of rabi crops in the seven districts of Uttarakhand was affected due to lack of winter rain. The Department of Disaster Management will make arrangements for the disbursement of compensation for crop loss from the disaster-relief fund

April 12

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/uttarakhand/lack-of-winter-rain-affects-17-per-cent-of-rabi-crops/221518.html>

PANIC DUE TO EARTHQUAKE CAUSES INJURY

Sixteen people have been injured in Arunachal after a massive earthquake measuring 6.8 on Richter scale struck Myanmar, with major tremors felt throughout India and China. Most of the cases were a result of people getting injured in the rush due to panic.

April 14

<http://www.northeasttoday.in/16-injured-in-arunachal-as-massive-earthquake-hit-northeast-myanmar/>

GREEN LOOT HALTS AFTER MEDIA EXPOSURE

The felling of trees by smugglers by colluding with the forest officials have stopped after the recent 'Early Times' expose'. The published news stated that many Deodar trees have been felled down by the smugglers in Bunjwah and Keshwan of Kishtwar district falling under administrative control of Doda forest division, Jammu-Kashmir.

April 15

<http://earlytimesnews.com/newsdet.aspx?q=173947>

HIMACHAL UNABLE TO TRAP RENEWABLE DIFFUSED ENERGY

Himachal state has not been able to capitalize even one percent of its total solar and wind power potential. The state has only one turbine which has been out of function for six years, and the state produces only 3.29 MW of solar power, out of its total 33,000MW capacity. Himachal Pradesh Energy Development Agency had installed 956 solar street lights in 10 districts, but 426 are out of function now.

April 15

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/less-than-one-per-cent-solar-power-tapped-in-himachal-caq/article8477335.ece>

CENTRAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT PLEDGE ACTION AGAINST RHINO POACHER

Indian government has asked state government of Assam to take actions against rhino poachers, after the poachers shot a rhinoceros in Kaziranga National Park. Union Cabinet has recently given approval to adopt South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) to increase co-operation between south Asian countries to curb wildlife crimes. Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi asked the Additional Chief Secretary to probe the incidents of rhino killings.

April 16

<http://www.northeasttoday.in/centre-to-take-stringent-measures-against-rhino-poachers/>

HEAVY RAINFALL THREATENS HUMAN SETTLEMENT IN UPPER ASSAM

Residents of around 10 to 12 villages of Saikhowa, Hatighuli area of Tinsukhiya district in Upper Assam are at threat from extreme erosion of riverbank by the Brahmaputra River. Continuous rain in last two weeks has increased water levels tremendously. More than 10 meters of land has already been flooded in two kilometer stretch. The local people urged the government to take immediate action to save their lives and properties.

April 17

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/showpage.asp?id=apr1816,9,753,1515,501,225>

China Himalaya

STRONG TREMORS FELT IN TIBET

Residents rushed out of their houses for safety as strong tremors were felt in Lhasa southwest China Tibet's Autonomous region after a 7.2-magnitude quake hit Myanmar. The official of Nyingchi and Xigaze cities and Shannan Prefecture are assessing the situation in each town and village.

April 14

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-04/13/c_135276025_3.htm

Bhutan-Himalaya

FOREST FIRE IN ATHANG

Continuous five-day forest fire has destroyed hundreds of acres of forest in Rukha and Samthang in Athang, Wangdue District, Bhutan. Despite the effort of Locals, police, army, foresters and volunteers, strong winds during the evening flamed the fire, making it more difficult to control. This is the fourth forest fire in Athang this year.

April 14

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/forest-fire-rages-in-athang-for-fifth-day/>

FOURTH ANNUAL RHODODENDRON FESTIVAL BEGINS

The three day annual rhododendron festival began on 15th April at Royal Botanical Park in Lamperi known as "Rhododendron Garden". The botanical park is the first recreational park in the country, which fulfills the mandate of keeping 60 percent forest cover in the nation and achieving one of the four pillars of "Gross National Happiness". The objective of the festival is to conserve and promote the preservation of pristine environment.

April 16

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/>

Pakistan- Himalaya

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

To provide uninterrupted powers to the school and encourage students to understand the importance of sustainable energy, solar panels have been installed in 405 government schools in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province of the northwestern region of the country.

April 15

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1084629/adding-facilities-solar-panels-installed-in-405-schools-across-k-p/>

HEAVY RAINFALL PREDICTED IN PAKHTUNKHWA

The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has predicted more rains with thunderstorm and gusty winds across the province from Saturday evening to Monday. The PDMA said more rains during the weekdays may also trigger landslides in Malakand and Hazara Divisions. The PDMA directed all District Disaster Management Units and concerned departments to remain vigilant and take all necessary actions and precautionary measures to prevent damages and losses.

April 16

<http://www.khybernews.tv/newsDetails.php?cat=3&key=MTA2MjEy#sthash.UUSj03dh.dpuf>