

Headlines Himalaya

Aug 27 – Sept 2 (2018)

No. 520

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For the 520th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 34 news from 19 sources and selected 30 happenings from five countries. In far western Nepal, Bajhang is declared as a liquor free district. Deforestation in Nepal terai for the sake of development is adversely impacting the Chure range. Massive poaching in the buffer zone of the Namdapha National Park in north eastern India is posing threats of wildlife species extinction. Infrared camera has trapped Asian golden cat (*Catopuma temminckii*) for the first time in western China. Bhutan is promoting local and organic products to strengthen farm based cottage industries.

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

Loss of endangered One-horned Rhino
Pangolin in Sarlahi
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Inspection of saplings planted
Heavy rain caused bridge damage
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Relief after bridge construction

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Threat of wildlife species extinction
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Massive chilli farming in Sahebganj
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BHUTAN

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PAKISTAN

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LOSS OF ENDANGERED ONE-HORNED RHINO

A rare one-horned rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) has been found dead at Madi Bankatta in Chitwan National Park (CNP), south central Nepal. Assistant Conservation Officer and Information Officer of CNP have stated that the animal is predicted to die a couple of days ago and the investigation team is yet to reveal the details of the case. This fiscal year, death of four one-horned rhinoceros including this was due to natural causes such as locking horns with one another, delivery failure, sweeping by flood, sinking in quicksand, wound infection and ageing.

Aug 28

<https://bit.ly/2xxZ8do>

PANGOLIN IN SARLAHI

Rare and endangered Pangolin (*Manis* sp.) had been found in Sarlahi, south eastern Nepal and handed-over to Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR), south eastern Nepal, by the locals. A local had found the animal near Mahuli Khola while going to the jungle. The villagers had informed the nearby 'Forest Office' after identifying it as pangolin.

Aug 28

<https://bit.ly/2NXW8kj>

CONSTRUCTION OF BUSPARK COMPLETED

The construction of largest bus park of Province No. 1, Baruwa Bus Park joining east to west Nepal has been completed on the bank of Baruwa River, Triyuga municipality, Udayapur, south eastern Nepal. The bus park will come under operation from 17 September. Total of NPR 1 Crore was aided by the Ministry of Urban Development and Triyuga municipality for the construction of the bus park.

Aug 28

<https://bit.ly/2NDG480>

ANIMAL DIED DUE TO LACK OF TREATMENT

A leopard (*Panthera pardus*) caught in a wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) trap has been rescued alive from Arghakhanchi, western Nepal on Tuesday but could not be saved due to lack of proper treatment. With the help of Police, the leopard carcass was handed over to the District Forest Office.

Aug 29

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

FOURTH BIMSTEC SUMMIT 18-POINT KATHMANDU DECLARATION

The fourth summit of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) was held at Hotel Soaltee in Kathmandu, central Nepal on August 30 for two days. Addressing the opening ceremony, the Prime Minister of Nepal has emphasized on poverty eradication and further added that proper implementation of BIMSTEC Action Plan should be done. An 18-point declaration was signed to enhance the effectiveness of BIMSTEC Secretariat. The President of Sri Lanka was handed over the Chairmanship of the next BIMSTEC summit by the Prime Minister of Nepal.

Aug 30 & 31

<https://bit.ly/2pwC9uV>

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

DESTRUCTION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Deforestation in the Terai region has been undergoing for the sake of development work that has adverse effects on the environment leading to natural resource exploitation, according to Chure Concern Society, Nepal. The coordinator of Chure Concern Society has stated that forest area encroachment for settlement and wrong motive and decisions are impacting forests and other natural resources, and crusher industry being the major cause of forest destruction. Therefore, Chure Concern Society has released an 11-point demand to the Government of Nepal to work upon this issue.

Aug 30

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

INSPECTION OF SAPLINGS PLANTED

On August 30, the District Forest Office Gulmi, western Nepal has done an inspection of the saplings planted on the roadside by Chhatrakot rural municipality, Gulmi. With the financial support of Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN), 900 saplings of Indian bay leaf (*Cinnamomum tamala*) and 2000 saplings of Broom grass (*Thysanolaena* sp.) were planted. The plants are in healthy condition as reported by the Forest Office.

Aug 30

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

HEAVY RAIN CAUSED BRIDGE DAMAGE

Bridge over Dudhauri River in Dudhauri municipality, Sindhuli district, central Nepal has collapsed due to continuous rainfall and flood that has impacted vehicular mobility in the area. Four wheelers have been prohibited on the bridge. Locals have requested for the arrangement of diversion way to the Department of Roads as the people are being largely affected by the inconvenience.

Sept 2

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

LIQUOR-FREE DISTRICT

Bajhang, far western Nepal has evolved as a liquor free district. With the immense help of intellectuals, social campaigners and women activists, all kinds of alcoholic drinks have been banned from September 17. Women Right's Forum Chairperson added that alcohol consumption has been the main cause of domestic violence and social crimes hindering the development of the district. The residents of Bajhang had been demanding ban of alcoholic liquors since very long.

Sept 2

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

RELIEF AFTER BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION

A bridge has been reconstructed by the Department of Roads over Budhi Rapti River at the border of Khairahani and Ratnanagar municipalities of Chitwan, south central Nepal after 30 years, worth NPR five crore and fifty lakh. Locals are overwhelmed as the bridge has been completed and they can cross the river without risking their lives even during the rainy season.

Sept 2

<https://bit.ly/2Nw85Ou>

CAMPAIGN TO DESTROY CANNABIS

To eliminate the drug menace, the state government of Himachal Pradesh, northern India has enforced cops to destroy the widespread cultivation of marijuana (*Cannabis* sp.) and opium (*Papaver somniferum*) in Mandi and Kullu districts. Over 74.66 ha government lands in Mandi district and over 433.51 ha lands in Kullu district have been used to grow cannabis. The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has launched this drive to destroy cannabis plant on 23rd August and will continue till 5th September.

Aug 27

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

THREAT OF WILDLIFE SPECIES EXTINCTION

The population of different wildlife species has decreased considerably in jungles of N'hkumsang area and in the buffer zone of the Namdapha National Park, Arunachal Pradesh, north eastern India due to poaching by the Indian Reserve Battalion (IRBn) personnel. Villagers who have been coexisting with the wildlife peacefully are concerned about the species and urged the park management and state government to protect the animals by adopting appropriate measures. Similarly, in Jammu and Kashmir, northern India, Union Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) has issued a notification with a list of plants and animal species on the brink of extinction. The notification is expected to protect these endangered species with legal binding and encouraging government to make scientific approach.

Aug 27 & 28

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

<https://bit.ly/2I7YV4L>

RAINFALL-TRIGGERED LANDSLIDES CLAIM LIVES

Landslides triggered after heavy rainfall causing havoc have been reported from the northern states of India. According to the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, monsoon rain this year has already claimed 35 lives with total loss of NRS 15,82,52,26,078.06. In addition, continuous rainfall for six days in Uttarakhand, northern India has led to landslides claiming lives of people. Due to the landslides,, many roads have been blocked in the district affecting the life of residents and tourists.

Aug 28, 29 & 31

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

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

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

MASSIVE CHILLI FARMING IN SAHEBGANJ

The farmers of the Sahebganj village, Dhubri, Assam in north eastern India have been involved in large scale chilli (*Capsicum* sp.) cultivation in their own land or on contractual system. As, their agriculture fields are situated along the banks of river they have ideal fertile land for chilli production. Farmers claim that their success is the result of their own hard work as the Agriculture Department has helped them very little. However, farmers do not get the right amount of their produce as they fall victim of the middlemen.

Aug 28

<https://bit.ly/2Dr7UQ0>

INCREASED HUMAN DEATH

The death toll due to Japanese encephalitis (JE) has reached 88 while 428 people were tested positive for the disease across Assam, north eastern India this year. Scientists had issued the alert regarding the probability of prevalence of JE this year in four districts of the state. The National Vector Borne Disease Control Program is aiming to vaccinate 100 percent population of the state with the minor vaccination and adult vaccination program.

Aug 30

<https://bit.ly/2I6PNxj>

APPLICATION OF BANNED PESTICIDE

The orchard owners in Kashmir, northern India have been constantly using a fruit growth regulator chemical called ethephon to ripen fruit even after the government has banned its use.. The chemical registered as pesticide has harmful effects on human health as well as plants and degrades the quality and shelf life of fruits.

Aug 31

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

URGE TO PROTECT ELEPHANT CORRIDOR

Wildlife and nature lovers from Assam, north eastern India recently have submitted a memorandum to the Sonitpur Deputy Commissioner for the conservation of elephant corridor and recommended not to use the movement trial of the animal for any purpose. Human-elephant conflict has become problem in many districts of the state due to invasion of animal tracks by humans. According to data, the protection of the elephant corridor can help reduce the human-elephant conflict and save lives and farm of people.

Aug 31

<https://bit.ly/2Dr86yl>

DENGUE OUTBREAK

Out of 1500 tested positive, two have died due to dengue (*Flavivirus* sp.) outbreak that swept across Himachal Pradesh, northern India, this year. Total of 1588 cases of dengue have been reported from around the state of which 783 cases were recorded from Bilaspur district, 681 from Solan district, 91 cases from Mandi and three cases in Sirmour. According to the State Health Minister, health department has already taken serious measures to control further spread of the disease.

Aug 31

<https://bit.ly/2pxO8IA>

RESCUED RHINO CALF DIES

A rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) calf that was rescued from Japoripathar area in Kaziranga, Assam, north eastern India, after 2016 flood has suspected to die of snake bite. The two and a half year male rhino calf was inactive and was under the care of the Centre of Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC). According to veterinarian, further tests would be carried out for identifying the cause of calf's death.

Sep 01

<https://bit.ly/2Q0GIOR>

OUTSPREAD OF PARTHENIUM

Residents and farmers of Raha, Nagaon district in Assam, north eastern India have been distressed over the outspread of a weed commonly known as Congress grass or Carrot weed (*Parthenium hysterophorus*). This weed is extremely toxic that causes health issues as skin allergy, hay fever, asthma and bronchitis. Animals are also equally affected and the milk of animal that feeds on this weed is unsafe for consumption.. However, the state government and other concerned authorities have not taken any measures to control it.

Sep 02

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

HIGHLAND BARLEY PROVIDING EXTRA INCOME

Highland barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) that grows at an altitude higher than 1,000 meters above sea level on the Qinghai-Tibet plateau, southern China, not only has served as a staple for the farmers but also has helped in generating income after the sell of surplus grain. About 55, 000 people are involved in the production of the grain on about 4, 000 hectares of land in Lhorong, south eastern China. The highland barley is used to prepare tsamba- the most popular staple food in Tibet while flour, noodles and biscuits are made by processing of surplus grain by the local tsamba company.

Aug 27

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

CAMERA FOOTAGE CAPTURED ASIAN GOLDEN CAT

The footage of Asian golden cat (*Catopuma temminckii*) a second-level key protected wildlife animal of China has been trapped in infrared camera traps in the Chaqing Songduo Nature Preserve, western China, for the first time. The activity of this medium sized animal of the cat family was captured on July 16th 2018 at an altitude of about 4, 300 meters. Leopards (*Panthera pardus*), Thorold's deer (*Cervus albirostris*), black-necked cranes (*Grus nigricollis*), black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*) and other animals have been found in the Nature Preserve in previous years.

Aug 28

<https://bit.ly/2NCV4mn>

EFFORTS ON ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION

Understanding the significance of ecological environmental protection, Shannan City in Tibet, south western China, held different activities to raise awareness among people about importance of environmental protection and its role in eradication of poverty. Voluntary plantation, low carbon cycling, promotion of industrial upgrade and green economy are some of the major activities.. In few years, the plantation area in Shannan city has passed over 1.5 million with the forest coverage rate of 24.79 percent.

Aug 28

<https://bit.ly/2NEzpu8>

LARGEST GREENHOUSE VEGETABLE BASE

The Bainang County in Shigatse district, south western China, has become Tibet's largest greenhouse vegetable base producing 37.5 million kgs of vegetable annually. The sale of vegetable is worth USD 14,573,500 per annum. With total of 5428 greenhouses built at an altitude of more than 4000 meter with only 1.28% arable lands, it produces 41% of its agriculture and animal husbandry economic results.

Aug 29

<https://bit.ly/2OK2I16>

WILDLIFE RESERVES FOR CONSERVATION

A nine days long campaign has been launched to protect the natural biodiversity by four national level nature reserves including one from Tibet, south western China. The campaign has been launched following the reports of illegal hunting, deforestation and trespassing and will be dealing with these issues including public awareness. Covering 58 percent of China's total nature reserve areas, these four reserves are the home to many rare wildlife species. Under this campaign, the tourists breaking the codes of conduct of the nature reserve shall be punished.

Aug 29

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

NGAWANG SHEEP ELEVATED NOMAD'S LIVELIHOOD

Rearing of Ngawang sheep (*Ovis* sp.) has helped the nomads of Ngawang Township, south eastern China, earn money and alleviate poverty. Nomads who have been raising sheep for thousands of years have recently adopted the systematic cultivation after the development and expansion of the Ngawang sheep industry. Due to the popularity of the Ngawang sheep for its high quality leather and delicious and odourless meat, it is sold quickly in the markets.

Sep 01

<https://bit.ly/2OPYP4z>

Bhutan-Himalaya

PROMOTING LOCAL PRODUCTS

To promote the farm-based cottage industries, Dagana Dzongkhag district, has launched its first local and organic farm products on August 24 in Tsenda-Gang village block, south western Bhutan. The launch of the local farm products has favored the farmers as they can earn surplus money by selling their produces like pulses (Leguminosae), mustard (*Brasica* sp.), flattened maize (*Zea* sp.), bamboo (*Bambusa* sp.) shoot pickle and honey and consumers will have access to organic products.

Aug 28

<https://bit.ly/2NEKT0u>

HEAVY DOWNPOUR DEVASTATES LOCALS

The farm road of Karmaling village block in Lhamoidzingkha Dungkhag district, south western Bhutan has proven to be a misery for the residents during monsoon. As per locals, the road has not been maintained since its construction in the 1980s and poses greater threat during monsoon after the river along the road gets flooded and block the road. When the river volume increases after rainfall, the locals are unable to get out of the village even at the times of emergencies and school kids skip their classes. Construction of bridge over the river and maintenance of road is under planning by the Department of Roads (DoR).

Aug 28

<https://bit.ly/2OLRBP2>

BACTERIAL INFECTION CLAIMS LIVES

Klebsiella pneumonia, a bacterial infection has claimed lives of 11 newborns after its outbreak at the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) of the National Referral Hospital (JDWNRH) in Thimphu, western Bhutan. Newborns have suffered from lung and blood stream infection after they acquired the infection from the hospital itself. According to doctors, infants are more vulnerable to the infection as their immune systems have not developed properly. The hospital is currently working on infection control.

Sep 01

<https://bit.ly/2Icj9dU>

PROGRAM FOR SNOW LEOPARD CONSERVATION

Officials from the snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*) provinces – Gilgit-Balistan, northern Pakistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, north western Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, northern Pakistan, had attended a workshop on ‘Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program’ (PSLEP) held on thursday and assured to support the program implementation. The workshop has addressed the threats to snow leopards and its habitat along with the importance of its conservation. PSLEP is believed to help protect the snow leopards and its habitat including forests and protected area.

Aug 30

<https://bit.ly/2lbr8l4>