

Headlines Himalaya

Jan 6 – Jan 13 (2019)

No. 539

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For the 539th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 14 news from 9 sources and selected 14 happenings from five countries. According to the Government of Nepal's report, an estimated 6.79 tons of mercury was released into the air of the country in the fiscal year 2016-2017. The vegetable products grown in Jhapa, eastern Nepal were found to contain high level of pesticides in it. A rare quillwort species has been found in Sichuan Province, south western China. Life cycle of Ludlow's Bhutan glory life cycle recorded for the first time in Bhutan. Industrial pollution is impacting the environment and health of the people in 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!

- NEPAL** *Heavy snowfall in Humla disturbed lives and transport*
Snowfall and rain affect normal lives
Gandaki endorses forests and watershed management policy
Snowfall hits quake survivors in Sindhupalchowk
Tons of toxic mercury released
Excessive use of pesticides in commercial vegetables
- INDIA** *Water shortage in Shopian village*
Illegal sand mining in Kupwara
- CHINA** *Rare alpine quillwort species discovered*
Tibet investing more on ecological protection
- BHUTAN** *Training for community forest members*
Life cycle of Ludlow's Bhutan glory recorded
- PAKISTAN** *Industrial pollution resulting environmental degradation*
Protest against millers in Peshawar

HEAVY SNOWFALL IN HUMLA DISTURBED LIVES AND TRANSPORT

As the temperature dropped below minus 15°C, the snowfall in Humla, north western Nepal has increasingly affected normal life of the locals finding it hard for them to go outside of their houses. The snowfall has disrupted the regular transportation system of the district.

Jan 7

<https://bit.ly/2SdBY7T>

SNOWFALL AND RAIN AFFECT NORMAL LIVES

According to the Meteorological Forecasting Division (MFD), the temperature has dropped across the country due to rains and snowfall. The high-altitude mountain districts were able to witness heavy snowfall while the hills and Terai observed light rainfalls for two days. Residents of high-altitude regions had to stay indoor due to heavy snowfall. The westerly winds entering the country from the far western region of Nepal attributed to the rainfall.

Jan 8

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

GANDAKI ENDORSES FORESTS AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT POLICY

The meeting of the council of ministers of Gandaki Province has passed the Forests and Watershed Management Policy on Wednesday. The policy focuses on protecting forests and ways to minimize the impact of natural disasters alongside maintaining environmental health. The meeting also passed a report to manage solid wastes released from community hospitals.

Jan 9

<https://bit.ly/2S7UKxB>

SNOWFALL HITS QUAKE SURVIVORS IN SINDHUPALCHOWK

As one of the areas that was worst hit by the earthquake and its aftershock in 2015, Sindhupalchowk, north eastern Nepal, thousands of its people moved to temporary houses. The houses where they live in are useless in cold winter and the local residents are suffering from biting cold and snow.

Jan 9

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

TONS OF TOXIC MERCURY RELEASED

According to a government report, an estimated 6.79 tons of mercury was released into air of the country in the fiscal year 2016-2017. The total mercury released was mainly attributed from different sources and activities like gold plating, use and disposal of mercury-content products, waste incineration, open dumping, energy consumption, and many more. The metal mercury is highly toxic and has adverse effects on human health and overall environment.

Jan 11

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

EXCESSIVE USE OF PESTICIDES IN COMMERCIAL VEGETABLES

The vegetable products grown in Jhapa, eastern Nepal were found to contain high level of pesticides in it. A test carried out on the vegetable samples by experts showed the broccoli (*Brassica oleracea* var. *italica*) and onions (*Allium cepa*) contained 65 percent pesticide content which is very high and is unsafe to human health. The

Jan 11

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

India-Himalaya

WATER SHORTAGE IN SHOPIAN VILLAGE

Since 2010, many water schemes were approved under the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) but the work under the scheme are left unfinished. According to NRDWP, rural areas were supposed to receive 50-55 litres per capita per day but get merely 10 litres per day.

Jan10

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

ILLEGAL SAND MINING IN KUPWARA

Illegal sand mining has been going on in several parts of northern Kashmir by influential people who continue to deploy earthmoving machines at the riverbed. Due to the illegal sand extraction the area has now become vulnerable to flooding.

Jan 13

<https://bit.ly/2Sl2EDW>

China Himalaya

RARE ALPINE QUILLWORT SPECIES DISCOVERED

A rare quillwort species has been found in Sichuan Province, south western China. According to Sichuan's provincial bureau of forestry and grassland, the Chinese endemic alpine quillwort species, *Isoetes hypsophila*, was discovered in a nature reserve in Ganzi in Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. It is the rarest species which is under Class-I national protection which have been found in high altitude wetlands, lakes, and marshlands in Sichuan and Yunnan, south western china.

Jan 9

<https://bit.ly/2HRW4AP>

TIBET INVESTING MORE ON ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION

Tibet autonomous region of south western China, will continue to strengthen ecological protection with 20-percent growth of investment in 2019, according to a local government official. The region will continue making efforts in protecting its forests, grasslands, wetlands and biodiversity, building ecological safety barrier, and curbing desertification and soil erosion.

Jan 11

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

Bhutan-Himalaya

TRAINING FOR COMMUNITY FOREST MEMBERS

Department of Forest and Park Services (DFPS) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forest initiated a month-long furniture-making training for members of community forest. The training is aimed at diversifying the production of wood-based products to improve the livelihoods of community forest members.

Jan 10

<https://bit.ly/2Sl2ZGI>

LIFE CYCLE OF LUDLOW'S BHUTAN GLORY RECORDED

Bhutan becomes the first country to record Ludlow's Bhutan Glory (*Bhutanitis ludlowi*) life cycle in Bumdeling in Trashiyaangtse, north eastern Bhutan. The butterfly which is also Bhutan's national butterfly, was listed vulnerable under International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Awareness programmes and plantation of more host plants are planned to protect the species.

Jan 12

<https://bit.ly/2sXXy21>

Pakistan- Himalaya

INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION RESULTING ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Industrial pollution destroying the environment and health of the people is becoming one of the major concerns among all the pollution types in Pakistan. There is a lack of understanding of pollution prevention and improving control of pollutants, primarily in private sector. As a result, toxic waste is dumped and released to cleaner industrial or in water bodies, unchecked by the authorities and other stakeholders.

Jan 7

<https://bit.ly/2To4ils>

PROTEST AGAINST MILLERS IN PESHAWAR

Sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum*) growers expressed concern over the government's failure to implement Supreme Court's order regarding payment of sugarcane price to the farmers. They warned to protest against sugar mill owners, if the price of sugarcane is not hiked. According to them, agriculture was the most neglected sector because the farmers were not given any financial support to increase production.

Jan 13

<https://bit.ly/2To4pgS>