

Headlines Himalaya

Mar 25-Mar 31 (2019)

No.550

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For the 550th issue of Headlines Himalaya, we reviewed 33 news from 13 sources and 28 selected happenings from five countries.

Although poaching has largely been controlled in Chitwan National Park, death rate of rhino is skyrocketing due to natural cause. A new species of lizard, the common leopard gecko, has been discovered in Nepal. Hetauda culls poultry birds to prevent bird flu spreading. Jammu and Kashmir government imposed ban on the non-biodegradable disposable items such as plates, cups, bowls, forks and spoons. Due to continued snowfall, groups of Tibetan antelopes and Tibetan kiangs were seen grazing by Qinghai-Tibet Highway, southeast China. The analysis of historical climate suggested that Bhutan will possibly see about 3.2 degree Celsius increase in its temperature towards the end of the 21st century.

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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FOREST RANGER INJURED IN WILDFIRE

A forest ranger, who was injured in a wildfire, is undergoing treatment at a health facility in Gaighat, Udayapur, eastern Nepal. The staff of forest office and locals have been attempting to douse the wildfire that has been spreading for a few days in the Chure region. Wildfire has been occurring every year damaging various community and national forests.

Mar 25

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

DEATH RATE OF RHINO SKYROCKETING AT CNP

Though poaching have been largely controlled in Chitwan National Park, Chitwan, South-central Nepal, rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) are still in vulnerable. Forty one rhinos have been found dead from the natural causes or non-maligned human mistakes. These figures are shocking for a country that earlier celebrated zero poaching years of rhino. As per the 2015 census, Nepal had 645 rhinos among which 26 rhinos had died including 14 female rhinos.

Mar 25

<https://bit.ly/2Fx1EFd>

NEW RECORD OF LIZARD SPECIES

One more species of reptile has been discovered in Nepal. Common Leopard Gecko (*Eublepharis macularius*), one of the ground-dwelling lizard, was found along the Kamdi biodiversity route in Banke, mid- western Nepal. According to the expert, this is the 11th species of lizard found in Nepal. Besides Kamdi, it has been found in some places of Surkhet and along the Banke National Park.

Mar 26

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

<https://bit.ly/2G0Xiqq>

LIGHTNING INJURES TWO

In Arjundhara Municipality-11, Bhadrapur, Jhapa, eastern Nepal, two persons were injured due to lightning and half a dozen of the electricity poles has been lowered in various places due to storm. The spokesperson said that both of them have been receiving treatment at the Manmohan Hospital in Birtamod.

Mar 26

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

DRINKING WATER FACILITY

2,000 people of 326 Chepang households have been benefitted by Drinking Water Project of Oxfam Nepal in association with implementing partner Prayas Nepal and a local organization in Gajuri Rural Municipality, Dhading, central Nepal. This project was carried out at a cost of NRP 19,470,000 and has solved the problem of fetching water for hours from distant source.

Mar 26

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

FIRE BRIGADE DISTRIBUTING WATER

A fire brigade has been mobilized to serve the water scarcity-stricken people for the long time being in PhidimMunicipality, Panchthar, eastern Nepal. According to the ward Chairperson it fetches water from Hewakhola, which is 10 Km away and distributes 30 litres of water each households for cleaning and laundry purposes.

Mar 26

<https://bit.ly/2Ib95Uj>

BROOMERS IN KATHMANDU

The mayor of Kathmandu Metropolitan City, central Nepal has inaugurated five broomer machines brought from Italy. The metropolis plans to deploy the new broomer machines in five different routes to clean the city roads. The machine, which can hold up to 500 litres of water, can clean 25,000 square metres of area in one hour, and its maximum speed is 42km per hour.

Mar 26

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

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

<https://bit.ly/2G0TA00>

HETAUDA CULLS POULTRY BIRDS TO PREVENT BIRD FLU SPREADING

After the detection of bird flu virus in Hatiya and Kamane, Hetauda Sub-Metropolitan City, Makawanpur, central Nepal, more than 50,000 chickens were culled, and 9,015 eggs and 1,463 Kg of bird feed were destroyed. The officers are only allowing the imports of chicks after the veterinarian clearance of the virus.

Mar 27

<https://bit.ly/2FLQ7AY>

RAINFALL DESTROYS BRICKS IN BRICK KILNS

Due to continuous rainfall with storms in Dhading, central Nepal, bricks worth NPR 302,500,000 has been destroyed in 41 brick kilns around Prithvi Highway. More than 48,500,030 bricks have been turned into mud due to the rainfall. NPR 200,000 has been given to about 400 labors for their daily livelihood.

Mar 27

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

MOU SIGNED FOR GAS EXCAVATION

Methane gas excavation is to kick off with the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Vice President of China Geological Survey and Director General of Department of Mines and Geology. Earlier, Nepal government had undertaken research on petroleum products and declared its excavation in Shiristhan of Dailekh, midwestern Nepal. The research was carried out three years ago when the country was facing crisis of petroleum products due to trade embargo enforced by India.

Mar 27

<https://bit.ly/2TVCy70>

DRYING UP OF WETLANDS

The wetlands of Koshi Tappu Conservation Area, Sunsari, eastern Nepal are drying up as the aquifer of water has been changed and water has stopped to recharge. The drying up of the wetland has affected the ecosystem of that region affecting the birds, aquatic wildlife. Similarly, the farmers are also affected as they are not getting enough water for irrigation.

Mar 28

<https://bit.ly/2Vnw82e>

FLIGHT DISRUPTED DUE TO SNOWFALL

The flight service to and from Simikot airport has been disrupted following the heavy snowfall in Humla, mid-western Nepal. It has caused inconvenience to send the ailing people outside the district for treatment. However, Nepal police together with Nepal Army and Armed Police have concentrated their efforts to clear the snow from the airport.

Mar 28

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

DEER KILLED BY STRAY DOGS

Two stray dogs (*Canidae*) have killed a young deer (*Axis axis*) grazing near the Namuna Community Forest in Kawasoti Municipality-13, Nawalparasi, western Nepal. Earlier four deer were killed by the attack of these stray dogs.

Mar 28

<https://bit.ly/2Vjx2MY>

RHINOS YET TO RETURN FROM INDIA

Thirteen rhinos (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) were swept away from Nepal to India about two years ago from Chitwan National Park, south-central Nepal. Of them, 10 rhinos were rescued back from the Balmiki Tiger Reserve and Division Forest of India. According to the officer, the Indian authorities have not responded to the request to bring them back so far and the park authorities are now trying to take an initiative for the same through the Foreign Ministry.

Mar 30

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

INITIATION TO SET UP FOOD DEPOT

After a break down in supply owing to supplier's inability to deliver government subsidized rice in the stipulated time in Himali Rural Municipality, Bajura, far-western Nepal, about 4,000 households has been reeling under food shortages and have to rely on Sisno (*Urtica genus*) through the day. Moreover, the local are impelled to hike down for two days to Kawadi Depot at ward 5 to fetch the rice but have to return village without a single grain. The local production lasts barely for two months and the denizens have to rely on subsidized rice for the rest of the year. The officer and the Chair of the Himali Rural Municipality, Bajura, Far-Western Nepal had been requesting the province and the central government to establish food depot at Bichhayon-1.

Mar 30 & 31

<https://bit.ly/2Y0IQZK>

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

RISK OF LANDSLIDE

Dozens of houses at Riga Village, Khatyad Rural Municipality, Mugu, mid-western Nepal are at risk of landslides as the village is situated at the base of steep mountains. Meanwhile, the chairperson of the Municipality stated that a lack of budget had marred his plan to relocate the village to a safer location.

Mar 30 & 31

<https://bit.ly/2VkZY7h>

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

SEASONAL CROPS DAMAGED

The hailstorm and rain with snowfall has caused considerable damages to the seasonal crops like Potato (*Solanumtuberosum*), wheat (*Triticumaestivum*) and Kiwi (*Actinidia*) in Phalelung and Yangwarak Rural Municipality, Panchthar, eastern Nepal. The hailstorm has also destroyed Cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*) with mustard. The staff are collecting data to assess exact loss caused by the hailstorm.

Mar 31

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

India-Himalaya

RAIN AND SNOWFALL IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

In most parts of Himachal, northern India, lower and mid hills were lashed by thunderstorm and rain while tribal areas and higher reaches had moderate snowfall. Shimla and surrounding areas were lashed by thunderstorm, accompanied by intermittent rain while high-altitude tribal areas and other higher reaches received a fresh snowfall.

Mar 26

<https://bit.ly/2uHb1w3>

LANDSLIP ON PARWANOO HIGHWAY

Landslide occurred on the Parwanoo-Dharampur section of the National Highway in Solan, Himachal Pradesh, northern India. Vehicular movement remained disrupted due to erosion of an excavated hill and vehicles remained stranded on both sides of the eroded earth.

Mar 27

<https://bit.ly/2FSPo13>

BAN ON NON-BIODEGRADABLE DISPOSABLE ITEMS

In northern India, Jammu-Kashmir government imposed ban on the non-biodegradable disposable items such as plates, cups, bowls, forks, spoons, etc. The order will be in force after one month from the date of publication in the Government Gazette.

Mar 28

<https://bit.ly/2Ut0KBX>

WORKSHOP ON COMBATING ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

In collaboration with the J&K Wildlife Protection Department, the Central University of Jammu organized one day symposium cum training workshop on combating illegal wildlife trafficking to sensitize and spread awareness among the frontline staff of Wildlife Protection Department, Forest Protection Force and Forest Department at Nature Interpretation Centre, Wildlife Department, Manda, Jammu, northern India.

Mar 28

<https://bit.ly/2CTRH3e>

CONCERN OVER RISING POLLUTION IN BEAS

Due to poor waste disposal management in Kullu district, Himachal Pradesh, northern India, the Beas is turning into a place for dumping garbage and other waste material. Environmentalists have raised concern over the rising pollution in the Beas and the concerned authorities should take strict action to protect the water body as it has posed threat to the aquatic life.

Mar 28

<https://bit.ly/2HZx6hP>

FOREST FIRE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

In Himachal Pradesh, northern India, the local Forest Department conducted forest fire awareness campaigns in Basoli and Talaipanchayats of Una district where locals were informed regarding the prevention of forest fires and ways to control it. Forest Fire Force Volunteers registered on the spot would get an SMS alert on their cellphones whenever there is a fire in the nearby forests so that they could respond and prevent the fire from spreading, with or without the assistance of forest staff.

Mar 29

<https://bit.ly/2YKGD1u>

China Himalaya

TIBETAN ANTELOPES GRAZING BY QINGHAI-TIBET HIGHWAY

Due to continued snowfall, groups of Tibetan antelopes (*Pantholopshodgsonii*) and Tibetan kiangs (*Equus kiang*) were seen grazing by Qinghai-Tibet Highway, southeast China, becoming a very rare ecological landscape by the highway. In recent years, the Hoh Xil National Nature Reserve and surrounding area has provided effective protection for wildlife as a result the number of Tibetan antelopes has increased from around 20 thousand about a dozen years ago to more than 60 thousand today.

Mar 25

<https://bit.ly/2uMQ4Qq>

GLACIERS IN BHUTAN

According to the 2018 Bhutan Glacier Inventory carried out by the National Center for Hydrology and Meteorology (NCHM), Bhutan has a total of 700 glaciers cover an area of about 630 square kilometre or 1.64% of the country's total land area. Current study showed that there is a significant decrease both in terms of number and area of glaciers in the country.

Mar 25

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

BAN ON MOVEMENT OF LIVESTOCK AND ITS PRODUCTS

In eastern Bhutan, Trashigangdzongkhag administration issued a ban order on movement of livestock and livestock products from Kanglunggewog after a disease investigation report by the veterinary hospital in Trashigang found the suspected rabid dogs positive for rabies. The tests were conducted in the field on Rapid Rabies Antigen Test Kits.

Mar 26

<https://bit.ly/2FYnv8W>

PREDICTION OF HOT CLIMATE IN BHUTAN

According to the analysis of historical climate and climate projection for Bhutan, it will possibly see about 3.2 degree Celsius increase in its temperature towards the end of the 21st century. The study published by the National Centre for Hydrology and Meteorology (NCHM) reveal that there was an increasing trend of temperature and a marginal decrease in the trend of rainfall in Bhutan.

Mar 27

<https://bit.ly/2G0XUMK>

REINFORCEMENT OF PLASTIC BAN IN SJ THROMDE

SamdrupJongkhar (SJ) thromde, southeast Bhutan is already reinforcing the ban along with awareness programmes even before the ban on use of plastic bags from April 1. Thromde officials have started seizing plastic bags and doma wrappers from people, deployed officials at the border gate to monitor the carry bags and doma wrappers and also recently they organised cleaning campaigns in and around the town.

MAR 30

<https://bit.ly/2G0XXbo>