

Headlines Himalaya

February 23- March 01, 2016

No. 393

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For the 393rd issue, we reviewed 25 news reports from 10 sources and selected 21 happenings in five countries. In Nepal, camera traps were installed to study pangolin habitat and population in Makwanpur district of central Nepal. Migratory birds declined in Gharana wetland of Jammu state, northern India. Huge money was invested in Environmental Protection in Tibet in China. Strong wind damages 17 houses in Bhutan and black bear extinct in Chitral district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, northern part of 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

Encroachment of Forest Land in Bardia
Electric Fence to Prevent From Wild Elephants
Installed Of Camera Trapping To Study Pangolin Habitat
Avalanche Triggered By an Aftershock in Annapurna Region
Relocation of Rhinos
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Food Scarcity in Karnali Region
People Suffered with Monkey Menace

INDIA

Migratory Birds Declined In Gharana Wetland
Illegal Cutting of Trees
High Bacteria in Parwanoo Water
Fungal Disease Affects Crops in Jammu and Kashmir

CHINA

Huge Investment in Environmental Protection in Tibet
Vegetable Production Reaches 827,300 Tons
Environmental Friendly Vehicles in Tibet

BHUTAN

17 Houses Damaged By Windstorms
Potato Production Fluctuate
Demand To Relocate Dumping Sites
Plantation of Tree Saplings

PAKISTAN

Extinction of Black Bear in Chitral

ENCROACHMENT OF FOREST LAND IN BARDIA

The land area of around 350 hectares belonging to the Khurkhure community forest at Magaragadhi in Bardiya district of western Nepal were encroached by people. The squatters have grabbed 56 hectares of the forest area. The encroachers are backed by the political parties so there has been difficult to clear the encroachment of forest area.

February 23

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-02-23/350-ha-forest-land-grabbed-in-bardiya.html>

ELECTRIC FENCE TO PREVENT WILD ELEPHANTS

To prevent wild elephants (*Loxodonta*) from entering Bahundangi, Jhapa district, eastern part of Nepal, electric fences have been set up by the government. The solar powered electric fences have made local villagers feel safer along with the installation of early warning sirens.

February 23

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-02-23/bahundangi-feels-safer-after-electric-fence-installation.html>

CAMERA TRAPPING TO STUDY PANGOLIN HABITAT

Camera traps have been installed in Makwanpur, central region of Nepal, by National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) so as to monitor the population and potential habitats of the endangered Pangolin. Seven cameras were installed inside a community forest to carry out the research. Due to high poaching and high demand in the market for meat and scales, pangolins are vulnerable.

February 23

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-02-23/camera-traps-installed-to-locate-pangolin-habitats.html>

AVALANCHE TRIGGERED BY AN AFTERSHOCK

An avalanche was triggered by an aftershock and covered the villages of Myagdi, mid western Nepal with bulky plumes of dust. Villagers were afraid because mud and debris were continuously falling from steeper slopes. Many villagers of the district were relocated to safer areas meanwhile no human casualties were reported.

February 24

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-02-24/dry-landslide-strikes-annapurna-region.html>

RELOCATION OF RHINOS

Five rhinos (*Rhinocerotidae*) from Chitwan national park are to be shifted towards Bardia national park, western Nepal. The rhinos are to be taken from the lower belts of Sukhibhar, western part of Nepal in Kasara would be released in the Babai valley. The total cost for relocating the rhinos is estimated at NRs 8.3 million.

February 28

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-02-28/rhinos-being-shifted-to-bardiya-from-chitwan.html>

RED PANDA HIDES SEIZED IN JHAPA

Two red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) hides were seized by personnel from the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) of Nepal Police and the Area Police Office, Birtamod, Jhapa district, eastern Nepal. The illegal hides were making way into Kathmandu.

February 29

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-02-29/two-held-with-red-panda-hides-in-jhapa.html>

ILLEGAL OPIUM FARMING

The illegal farming of opium (*Papaver somniferum*) flourishes in Bara, south eastern Nepal. Police destroy opium poppies but continue to take no action against the farmers. Police have destroyed three hectares of poppy cultivations in Paterwa, Kachorwa, Bhaganpur VDCs and several wards of Simraungadh Municipality. Similarly police destroyed poppy plantations in Madhuban mathawal VDC-2 in Parsa district because they are used to produce narcotic drugs.

February 29

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-02-29/opium-farming-goes-unchecked-in-bara.html>

FOOD SCARCITY IN KARNALI REGION

Food scarcity has hit Karnali region of mid western Nepal due to the drought, affecting around 35,000 people. The area received very little rain and many cultivable lands were left barren due to the lack of irrigation. The crop production declined by 50 percent as most of the land remains uncultivated.

February 29

<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-02-29/food-shortage-stares-karnali-folk.html>

MONKEY MENACE

The people of Dolakha called for a strike to fulfill their demands against monkey (*Cercopithecidae*) menace. Local residents complained to district forest office (DFO) and district administration office that groups of monkey enter into residential areas and destroy crops, vegetables and fruits on a daily basis. The women of the area have requested the DFO to control the on-going problem.

February 29

<http://www.nepalmountainnews.com/cms/2016/02/28/dolakha-women-take-to-the-street-against-monkey-menace/>

India-Himalaya

MIGRATORY BIRDS DECLINING IN GHARANA WETLANDS

There has been a decline in population of migratory birds in the Gharana wetland by thousands due to unkind methods adopted by farmers in the area in Jammu state, north western part of India. Recent studies show that the number of bird arrivals is declining with each passing year along with visitors. Villagers use high-decibel nuts to drive away birds and some by using bird traps.

February 23

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/jammu-kashmir/community/human-effort-keeps-winged-visitors-off-gharana-wetland/200307.html>

ILLEGAL CUTTING OF TREES

There has been illegal cutting of trees and selling it for firewood in Mussoorie area, Uttarakhand state of northern India. The people cut down the trees massively and sell firewood to numerous hotels.

February 23

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/Illegal-tree-felling-threatens-Mussoories-green-cover/articleshow/51111985.cms>

HIGH BACTERIA IN PARWANOO WATER

A lab report of the State Pollution Control Board showed high presence of coli form and suspended solids in water samples of Parwanoo town of Himanchal Pradesh, northern India. The water sample was drawn from the final outlet of the treatment plant at Kamli. It was found to be as high as 1,600 most probable number (mpn)/100 milliliters and was marked not portable for drinking purpose.

February 24

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/community/bacteria-count-high-in-parwanoo-water-report/200849.html>

FUNGAL DISEASE AFFECTS CROPS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Farmers suffered from dry spell and yellow rust in their crops in Jammu and Kashmir of northern India. The fungal disease has harshly affected the wheat production in the state. A total 2.47 lakhs hectares of cultivated area in Jammu, has experienced 3,126 hectares of wheat crop to be harshly affected by yellow rust.

February 28

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/jammu-kashmir/community/a-double-whammy-for-wheat-farmers/202490.html>

China Himalaya

HUGE INVESTMENT IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN TIBET

A total of 18.8 billion yuan was invested in ecological protection of Tibet. The huge investment is to protect the ecological environment and promote pleasant development between man and nature. Tibet has already established 47 nature reserves and 22 ecological protection areas and water quality.

February 24

http://eng.tibet.cn/economy/green_tibet/1456280216924.shtml

VEGETABLES PRODUCTION REACHES 827,300 TONS

The data of Farming Department of Tibet Autonomous Region showed that the yield of vegetables got 820,000 tons which has reached one million tons more for the first time. Grain planted in 170,000 hectares, barley in 124,667 and vegetables in 24,947 hectares within Tibet yielded 827,300 tons of crops.

February 24

http://english.chinatibetnews.com/tj/201602/t20160224_1085122.html

ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY VEHICLES IN TIBET

In a span of two years, there are now five electric vehicles and 147 gas-electric hybrid buses operating in Lhasa, Tibet. Also the first solar energy bus was put into service in Tibet at the end of last year. This has promoted energy utilization in Tibet and reduced traditional energy consumption in the region.

February 29

http://english.chinatibetnews.com/tt/201602/t20160229_1091955.html

Bhutan-Himalaya

17 HOUSES DAMAGED BY WINDSTORMS

Windstorms have damaged roofs of 17 houses in Balana, Zhengosa, Saychena and Dragchukha chiwogs in Punakha of central Bhutan. The roofs of eight houses were fully damaged while others were partially blown off. Reliefs were distributed to affected households in the area.

February 26

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/windstorm-damages-roof-of-17-houses/>

POTATO PRODUCTION FLUCTUATE

Potato production has to some extent decreased in 2015 in Trashigang, eastern Bhutan but the production remained constant in few gewogs areas. The total production was 11,224 metric tons in 2014 and the production in 2015 dropped to 10,634 metric tons. The reasons for the fluctuation in yield are erratic rainfall, area of cultivation, interest of the farmers, and crop damage by animals.

February 27

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/potato-yield-drops-in-trashigang/>

DEMAND TO RELOCATE DUMPING SITES

A village has demanded the relocation of dumping sites of Zobel gewog, south eastern Bhutan, as it is just below the village's holy site where villagers worship their deity. Villagers complained about the dumping sites but officials ignored and constructed the dumpsite. Villagers have suffered due to the smoke and waste from the dumping area.

February 27

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/village-demands-dump-site-relocated/>

PLANTATION OF TREE SAPLINGS

Around 108,000 tree saplings were planted in Kusenselphodrang in central Bhutan with the joint efforts of 1,500 students. The 108,000 trees will be planted in all the 20 dzongkhags by every household and in the form of plantations.

February 29

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/108000-sokshing-plantation-this-sunday/>

Pakistan- Himalaya

EXTINCTION OF BLACK BEAR IN CHITRAL

There has been decrease of black bear from the forests of Chitral district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, northern part of Pakistan. There was not any Black bear in the Chitral Gol Wildlife national park at the time of its establishment in 1984 while the number of black bear was high until 1950s. High poaching for meat is the reason for the extinction of black bear in the area. Department of wildlife was trying to save the population of black bear in southern Chitral and had highlighted its natural importance to the people to join their support for its protection.

February 26

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1242016/black-bear-now-extinct-in-chitral>