

An Environmental Watchdog Newsletter

Headlines Himalaya

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No. 191

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For the 191 issue, we reviewed 55 news reports from 19 sources and selected 14 happenings in five countries. This week, news from Nepal Himalaya is depressing. Human-Elephant conflict is all over and construction of road in Bardia National Park is likely to take its toll in Biodiversity conservation. Illegal felling of trees is rampant in the Chure region of West Nepal. News on wildlife dominates India Himalaya this week. Killing of rhinos is at high in Kaziranga National Park with a poacher trying to kill rhino at a city zoo and dog coming to the rescue of forest officials to track down poachers. In Bhutan farmers can now ward off wild animals through electric fencing while hydro power dam irks farmers in Pakistan with no water supply for irrigation.

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	Tusker terror continues Construction of road in Bardia National Park in the offing Chure in dire straits Only 10 percent of funds for target groups Smugglers nabbed Fertile land faces water shortage
INDIA	Wetlands losing ground Rhino killed, poachers bid foiled Ban on tourism in tiger reserve is no success Migrating animals in Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong corridor
CHINA	Vegetation restoration along electricity grid
BHUTAN	Electric fencing is legal now Mining increases but policy not on place
PAKISTAN	Farmers cries against water reservoir; floodwall to their rescue

Nepal-Himalaya

TUSKER TERROR CONTINUES

Wild elephants have destroyed houses in Jhapa District, east Nepal. It has been an everyday story about tuskers entering into the human settlements. Similarly, a herd of 10 elephants destroyed houses nearby human settlements in Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, east Nepal. In another incident, human casualty has been reported from a tusker attack in Bardiya District, west Nepal.

17, 21 January
The Himalayan Times

CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD IN BARDIA NATIONAL PARK IN THE OFFING

Department of roads is all set to construct a 27 km long road in Bardia National Park area and 39 km in Chure forest area in west Nepal and in the process around 16,000 trees are going to be axed. Environment ministry has approved the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for the construction. However, forest ministry is not informed about this ordeal.

17 January

Kantipur

CHURE IN DIRE STRAITS

About 130,000 cubic feet of timber has been cut illegally from over a dozen community forest in Chure region in west Nepal, according to the investigation team of Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA). Report corroborated the involvement of local people and their nexus with District Forest Office for rampant deforestation.

18, 20

Republica, The Himalayan Times

ONLY 10 PERCENT OF DEVELOPMENT FUND REACHES TARGET GROUPS

A study has revealed that Non Government Organizations (NGO) working in poverty alleviation, HIV/AIDS and women empowerment sector in Mid and Far western regions spent 90 percent of their social development funds in staff expenses and only 10 percent reaches out to the target groups.

18 January

The Himalayan Times

<http://www.nepalnews.com/home/index.php/news/19/16078-only-10-pc-of-the-funds-allocated-for-poverty-alleviation-hiv aids-reach-target-groups.html>

SMUGGLERS NABBED

Around 150 kg of red sandalwood was confiscated at Dolalghat in Kavrepalanchowk District, central Nepal, while en route to China border. Similarly, two smugglers were apprehended in Kathmandu Valley while trying to smuggle 27 kg of orchids to China. In another incident, smugglers were taken into custody for possessing 7 kg of Pangolin scales by the security personal in Kathmandu valley.

18, 19 January

The Himalayan Times

FERTILE LAND FACES WATER SHORTAGE

Due to lack of irrigation facilities, about 1,000 ha of fertile land remain fallow in Bidur Municipality of Nuwakot District, central Nepal. Neither locals nor the authorities are bothered about making necessary arrangements of irrigation.

18 January

The Himalayan Times

India-Himalaya

WETLANDS LOOSING GROUND

Wetlands in Jammu are on the verge of extinction as two of the five wetlands have dried up giving way to human encroachment as a result few migratory birds visits the area. In addition, villagers scare away migratory birds as they fear that birds damage crops.

15 January

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/2012/20120115/j&k.htm#9>

RHINO KILLED, POACHERS BID FOILED

A female rhino was killed in Kaziranga National Park but the horn remained intact as poachers fled the scene while security personal stormed in. To track down the poachers, a dog has been put into service which has managed to gather some evidence. The dog has been brought from Slovakia to help park officials. Similarly, forest guards at Kaziranga National Park during operation against poachers, gunned down a female rhino. The rhino was shot while the officials were attempting to scare off the rhino. Meanwhile, a man was arrested who sneaked into the city zoo in Assam to kill rhino for its horns.

17, 18, 20 January

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-17/guwahati/30634600_1_rhino-poaching-bid-rhino-poachers-assam-state-zoo

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1120118/jsp/northeast/story_15019212.jsp

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1120120/jsp/northeast/story_15026497.jsp

BAN ON TOURISM IN TIGER RESERVE IS NO SUCCESS

An 'illegal' safari is being operated in the core area of Buxa Tiger Reserve flouting all norms in spite of a ban imposed on September 2010. All it takes is a connection with forest officials as the operator works in connivance with the forest department officials.

17 January

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-01-17/kolkata/30635094_1_night-safari-forest-guard-btr

MIGRATING ANIMALS IN KAZIRANGA-KARBI ANGLONG CORRIDOR

For the first time, Black Panther has been sighted along the Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong corridor. A photographic evidence of tiger in the area has also been camera trapped. This corridor links between the park and the higher grounds in Karbi Anglong. Till last year, mainly elephants were found to be using the corridor.

17 January

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1120117/jsp/northeast/story_15014305.jsp

China-Himalaya

VEGETATION RESTORATION ALONG THE ELECTRICITY GRID

Vegetation restoration along the 1,038-kilometer power lines of Qinghai-Tibet grid interconnection covering about 2.21 million square meters has been completed. Around 370 million Yuan was spent as a part of restoration program. Along with artificial plantation, turf transplant was used in meadows areas.

16 January

<http://chinatibet.people.com.cn/96069/7706260.html>

Bhutan-Himalaya

ELECTRIC FENCING IS LEGAL NOW

Farmers in Bhutan have a reason to cheer upon as the National council has okayed the use of electric fencing to ward off wild animals. Earlier, Bhutan Electric Authority banned the use of electric fences stating that it may pose risk to the human lives.

18, 21 January

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/2011/?p=25248>

<http://www.bhutanobserver.bt/nc-legalizes-electric-fence/>

MINING INCREASES BUT POLICY NOT ON PLACE

Mining operations is in full swing and has emerged to be a lucrative sector for the country in terms of revenue generation. To meet the increasing demand of mining, licenses are being issued regularly to the private mining companies. Demand for mining and quarrying has multiplied in recent years, however, mineral development policy is yet to be promulgated.

20 January

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/2011/?p=25415>

Pakistan-Himalaya

FARMERS CRIES AGAINST WATER RESERVOIR; FLOODWALL TO THEIR RESCUE

For the past one year around 29,000 hectares of agriculture land have been without water in southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as the perennial floodwater is being stored in reservoir of the upcoming hydel project in the area. Farmers are left with no options as they have to wait until the project completion for smooth water supply. Meanwhile, a 137 meter long gabion flood protection wall has been constructed in lower Kuram agency to avoid damages to agriculture land during seasonal flooding.

15, 18 January

<http://www.dawn.com/2012/01/15/khyber-pakhtunkhwa-growers-perennial-floodwater-woes.html>

<http://www.thefrontierpost.com/?p=105266>