



VICTORIA FALLS HERITAGE PROTECTION

"NO ONE COULD MAKE A GREATER MISTAKE THAN HE WHO DID NOTHING BECAUSE HE COULD DO ONLY A LITTLE." EDMUND BURKE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 01, 2006

The Global Anti-Golf Movement (GAG'M)

PRESS RELEASE

FOURTH WORLD NO GOLF DAY, 29 APRIL 1996

On 29 April 1996, the Global Anti-Golf Movement (GAG'M) - an alliance of groups and individuals concerned with environmental, consumer and human rights issues -will again celebrate their annual No Golf Day aimed at lobbying decision-makers to enforce a world-wide moratorium on golf course construction and stop the promotion of golf tourism.

While trillions of dollars have been invested in massive golfing schemes all over the globe, there is increasing acknowledgment that local people, especially in Third World countries eager to develop their tourism industries have suffered immeasurable losses and hardships resulting from such mega-projects. For instance, the United Nations' Economic and Social Commission for the Asia-Pacific (ESCAP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) point out in their recently published report 'State of the Environment in Asia and Pacific 1995:

"Perhaps the best example of die impacts of mass commercial tourism is provided by the promotion and massive growth of golf tourism. Golf course construction has created widespread negative social, cultural and environmental impacts, particularly in the developing countries of the region. Typical impacts include forest destruction and air, water and Soil pollution caused by the excessive use of chemicals. Furthermore, in some cases, local people have been deprived of rights to land, disrupting communities and endangering their livelihoods. "(page 334)

BUSH TELEGRAPH

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In addition, it has become utterly clear that the golf boom cannot be sustained in the long term. The most obvious example is the economic fiasco in golf-crazed Japan Which currently has 2,158 golf courses. Course construction there has drastically slowed down since 1991. The membership market has slumped, and many clubs are now facing bankruptcy. According to a study by Nihon Keizai Shimbun, the number of golf players on Japanese courses nation-wide dropped in 1994 by almost three percent from the previous year, for the second straight year of decline and the number of people per course fell 5.2 percent during the same period.

As a result, a whole range of golf-related businesses have also been pushed into crisis: the equipment industry, driving ranges, tournaments, golf magazine publishers, etc. The dramatic situation of the Japanese golf industry has shown considerable impacts on overseas operations as well as many Japanese companies have ceased from further investments in Southeast Asia and sold large golf resort projects in Hawaii, California, and at the Australian Gold Coast. In addition, less Japanese are going on golfing holidays abroad. Thailand, which was at the forefront of the Southeast Asian golf boom in the beginning of the 1990s and one of the most ambitious golf tourism promoters, has been hit especially hard by the sluggishness of the Japanese industry, with plummeting prices for golf club memberships and no new golf projects taking off.

Yet, the most powerful and financially strongest corporations are still trying to impose their unsustainable and economically risky schemes whenever they expect large profits. Japan Airlines (JAL) is a case in point. The airline has been subject to an international consumers' boycott since last year because of its stakes in the controversial golf resort called "The Villages of Hokukano" at South Kona on Hawaii Island. Local citizens with support of the Japan-based Global Network for Anti-Golf Action (GNAGA) have been fighting the project in court and with protest action because this massive 1,540 acre beach-site resort, including over 1000 luxury homes and a 27 hole golf course designed by Jack Nicklaus would most likely destroy the fragile coastal ecosystem and damage the adjacent National Marine Life Refuge which is a unique whale and dolphin habitat. Furthermore, many of the 800 culturally significant archaeological features in the area, among them burial sites of indigenous Hawaiians, would be bulldozed and desecrated. Following the strong resistance and long delays due to several lawsuits filed against them by local residents, JAL has recently established a direct air link between Tokyo and Kona in Hawaii, hoping it can in this way push through the embattled golf resort venture soon. However, this move

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A MOSI-OA-TUNYA VIGNETTE

Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park Development July 2006

LEGACY BWANA MKUBWA

Harrington advises govt to consult over Mosi-oa-Tu...

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PRESS STATEMENT BY LEGACY HOLDINGS ZAMBIA

Renatus Mushinge (01232978), who is the Legacy Hol...

Questions on Mosi-oa-Tunya

LEGACY HOLDINGS...

I received this note this morning: > > What I ha...

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has only given new ammunition for more protest actions to be carried out in Hawaii and Tokyo on the forthcoming No Golf Day.

Since last year, Mexico has become another symbol of the destructive and exploitative nature of the golf industry. In September 1993, the whole town of Tepoztlan, located south of Mexico City, raised up to battle a US\$500 million mega-golf resort to be built inside Tepozteco National Park. In what has become known world-wide as an unprecedented "Golf War", the mayor of Tepoztlan had to resign after he was held hostage for days by villagers armed with sticks and machetes, because he had illegitimately given approval to the golf course project. And as with the disputed Hawaiian project, the designer of the Mexican golf course is Jack Nicklaus - the famed "Golfer of the Century" who has already been denounced by social and environmentalist activists in many other countries (i.e. Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Japan) due to his involvement in the most damaging and scandal-burdened golfing schemes.

Golf course construction at Tepoztlan will irreversibly transform an ecological intact conservation zone and the communal property of local peasants into an artificial landscape, disrupt wildlife habitats, squander scarce water resources, threaten the small-town way of life and vandalise the cultural heritage of the Indian population. On the occasion of this year's No Golf Day, GAG'M calls on the Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo, golf course designer Jack Nicklaus, and the developing companies, the Mexican KS Group and the US GTE Data Services to exercise their influence to immediately stop this ruinous project which has already sparked off tremendous conflict and even violence.

Last December, the matter was brought to a head when a man was shot dead in Tepoztlan and, subsequently, three project opponents were imprisoned for alleged murder, although there was no evidence for their guilt. As arrest warrants issued in this case appear to be motivated by vested political and economic interests related to the proposed golf course development rather than legitimate public interest, a worldwide campaign, titled "Golf War" Political Prisoners, has been launched by concerned people's organisations and individuals urging the Mexican government to release the three imprisoned men. The campaign also calls for the establishment of an independent human rights commission to bring the case to justice.

The Mexican "Golf War" just exemplifies what can happen when local communities are not consulted over mega-development projects

WECSZ President to DD
Legacy Holdings

SEED PROJECT which
includes Livingstone and
Mosi-o...

World Bank SEED Project PID
2001

Beforetimes...

The Lowdown...

From the Livingstone Structure
Plan 2006

Legacy Holdings Planned
Development

From "This week in
Livingstone - 7-13 August",
the...

Victoria Falls threatened
Officially...

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Parliamentary submission..

This is the original statement
made by WECSZ - not...

More oppose Livingstone plan

Zambian farmers oppose
building hotels, golf cours...

ZNBC says..SEED project to be
revised

Gone to SEED??

Mosi-oa-Tunya/Chief
Mukuni/African Wildlife
Founda...

AWF, MOSI-OA-TUNYA AND
THE MUKUNI TRUST

Press Release by the National
Heritage Conservatio...

At the recent scoping meeting,
'twas said by NHCC....

The assessment road ahead...

Workshop on Mosi-oa-Tunya
NP Management Plan

A way forward ?..

The Daily Mail 30 August 06

which will investigate their natural and cultural heritage. In many parts of the world golf resorts catering to super rich recreationists and tourists continue to prompt evictions of residents and human rights violations. Very often, golf developers collaborate with state authorities to harness and intimidate poor people who try to defend their land and customary rights.

In view of this, the latest drive of the golf lobby especially in Northern countries, such as the US Golf Association (USGA) and the European Golf Association's (EGA) Ecology Unit, to design and promote environmental strategies for golf courses are completely out of context. Such proposals for purportedly ecologically sound course management - i.e. improvements of landscaping and methods to reduce high consumption of water and chemicals - are obviously incomplete, superficial and Cosmetic, as they are limited to mostly technical measures concerning course construction and maintenance. The real problems with golf courses, however, start much earlier, namely with land acquisition for such projects: when biodiversity-rich nature reserves, wildlife sanctuary and public recreation areas comes under attack by golf course construction: when farmers, cattle herders and fishermen loose their livelihoods because developers take over agriculture fields, grazing areas, coastal stretches, river banks and wetlands; when indigenous peoples are deprived from their customary rights in forests, mountains and other ancestral territories.

There is no doubt that from the perspective of local people, such projects profoundly infringe on public needs and interests just to meet the demand of a privileged few, and thus, it is a folly to claim that golf courses can be made environmentally friendly and socially acceptable. Given these realities in combination with the severe economic crisis of the golf courses, it is highly irresponsible that governments still allow new golf course investments in their countries, especially economically less advantaged regions such as Indochina, South Asia, Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe. Therefore, the Global Anti-Golf Movement (GAG'M) reiterates its continuing call for World No Golf day 1996:

"THERE IS NO MORE PLACE ON EARTH FOR DESTRUCTIVE PROJECTS LIKE GOLF COURSES!"

For more information, please contact the GAG'M Secretariat: do APPEN, 27, Lorong Maktab, 10250 Penang, Malaysia. Tel: (60) 4 2276930 Fax: (60) 42275705

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