



Search



"A Christian who does not protect creation, who does not let it grow, is a Christian who does not care about the work of God ... And this is the first response to the first creation: protect creation, make it grow."

His Holiness Pope Francis

[Home](#) [About](#) [Sites of Struggle](#) [News](#) [Blog & Views](#) [Gallery](#) [Resources](#) [Policy & Research](#) [Partners](#)

[← Previous](#) [Next →](#)

Press Release: Miners assault Homonhon island residents with pay loader machine

Posted on [August 12, 2013](#)

Miners assault Homonhon island residents with pay loader machine

Groups demand immediate action by CHR, DENR

Four (4) protestors, including a baby, were assaulted and scooped up by a pay loader machine after an official of Mt. Sinai Exploration and Development Corporation (MSEDC) ordered "*Sige, sagasaan ang mga 'yan, bulldusin.*" (*Run them over with a bulldozer.*)

Residents of Homonhon Island in Eastern Samar were assaulted by MSEDC in an attempt to break their barricade in Brgy Canawon on August 5, 2013.

The Incident





Photo by Felix Abug, Jr

Billy Abueme, President of Homonhon Environment Rescuers Organization (HERO) relayed: "On Aug 5, at around 12noon, the concerned residents of Brgy. Canawayon were manning the barricade, which were positioned at the road near the Elementary School. A pay loader (heavy equipment) of MSEDG arrived at the barricade, a total of 8 people, including the driver. After 15-minutes, a certain Florencio Morana Jr. rushed up towards Mr. Jaime Lao, MSEDG Operations Manager asking "Sir, ano na ang gagawin natin?" (Sir, what are we going to do?)

Mr. Lao then stepped out of the vehicle and looked in front of the pay loader where he saw the people sitting facing the heavy equipment – a group which included children. Mr. Lao then gave the order saying, "Sige, sagasaan ang mga 'yan, buldusin." (Run them over with the bulldozer.)

The loader advanced on the group of protesters. In the process, Silvia Abug, Eduardo Sandoval, Margarita Sandoval, and her 1-year-old baby, were pushed into the bucket of the loader. They were then raised up to the air and shaken up, down, and sideways for about 10-minutes. Unidentified security guards also began shooting at the group of protestors.

The barricade was set up on August 1 following the expiration of a Temporary Restraining Order to MSEDG.

Abueme added: "Atrocities made by all mining companies in Homonhon intensify because it is very apparent that they enjoy the protection and blessings of concerned local government units and these government agencies which should act to regulate and protect the environment."

Support groups demand government action

The incident was immediately reported to the local Police. Meanwhile, HERO and other support groups demand immediate action by the government to this.

Jaybee Garganera, National Coordinator of Alyansa Tigil Mina said: "We are sending our reports to the Commission on Human Rights, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and other government offices that should look into what had happened and act on it! We will also seek grievance by filing criminal charges against the mining company and their employees who attacked the people."

ATM is also demanding urgent action from DENR in investigating this case. The group is also seeking the issuance of a cease-and-desist order against Mt. Sinai, for this violent behavior against a legitimate community protest.

According to law, protestors and anti-mining groups have the right to hold activities such as barricades to express their opposition from the entry of mining in their lands.

Clearly the assault made by the mining company endangered lives and is a violation of the peoples right to peaceably assemble in redress of grievances. There is no excuse for the use of force against a peaceful protest against mining. We reiterate anew "Tao Muna, Hindi Mina", said Emmanuel Amistad, Executive Director of the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines.

Mining is opposed by residents of Homonhon Island due to its fragile ecosystem. The island is found in Eastern Samar, Eastern Visayas and lies in the path of typhoons. It is known for its inland lagoons and wild virgin forests, and is a surfer's hub.

HERO is a people's organization that calls for the total stoppage of mining activities in their island.

The Task Force Detainees of the Philippines is national human rights organization concerned with documenting human rights violations, and assisting the victims and their families with their material and legal needs.

Alyansa Tigil Mina is an alliance of mining-affected communities and their support groups of NGOs/POs and other civil society organizations who oppose the aggressive promotion of large-scale mining in the Philippines. The alliance is currently pushing for a moratorium on mining, revocation of EO 270-A, repeal of the Mining Act of 1995, and passage of the AMMB. (30)

For more information:

Jaybee Garganera, ATM National Coordinator, nc@alyansatigilmina.net, 0927.7617602

Billy Abueme, HERO President, billy78abueme@yahoo.com 0906.3064728

Emmanuel Amistad, TFPD Executive Director, ecamistad@yahoo.com

Farah Sevilla, ATM Policy Research and Advocacy officer, policy@alyansatigilmina.net 0915-3313361

This entry was posted in [Blog & Views](#), [Human Rights](#), [News](#), [Press Release](#) by [admin](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

4 THOUGHTS ON "PRESS RELEASE: MINERS ASSAULT HOMONHON ISLAND RESIDENTS WITH PAY LOADER MACHINE"



Paul Hurley on [September 28, 2013 at 7:32 am](#) said:

I am disgusted and completely outraged by this unacceptable act of despicable violence toward the peaceful people of Homonhon Island! I am married to a Filipina whose family has resided on Homonhon Island for years and years! I have had the pleasure of visiting Homonhon twice and was married there 9 years ago. During my visits I met some of the most friendly and kind Human Beings anyone could ever hope to meet! It is very frustrating to hear that these atrocities against the residents of Homonhon Island have and are occurring ! Where is the government of the Philippines? Why are these residents not being protected and their properties being protected? Are these foreign miner workers paying someone off? The people of Homonhon have rights! They are not animals! They are not Basura! They should and must be treated with dignity and the utmost respect, as any Human Being should! Please don't allow this horror to continue! The citizens of Homonhon Island need to join together and become a very loud voice to be heard around the world! This disgraceful violence and thievery should not and must not be allowed to continue!

Reply ↓



[paz o. dimaangay](#) on [October 3, 2013 at 6:34 am](#) said:

The Commoners' Society of Guiuan International (CSGI) is also a civic society organization who serves as a watchdog and environmental advocate in Guiuan, would like to condemn this violence towards the natives of Canawayon whose main purpose for barricading is no other than to protect their rights to a clean and balance ecology, so why is this happening to them..instead of the local government protecting the welfare of its people, it's the people who is now protecting/depending themselves from enormous human rights violations and environmental destructions from mining companies. What the hell is this Gov't for ?

..... for the mining companies ?
..... for the politician?

..... for the

Reply ↓



paz o. dimaangay on **October 3, 2013 at 6:46 am** said:

The Commoners' Society of Guiuan International (CSGI) is also asking other support groups to help this poor protesters in our locality any financial and legal assistance you can at least share. We are a small group of expats and ofw and could not afford to help 16 members of the Canawayon group who were sued by this mining company and assaulted afterwards...

Reply ↓



Laura L. Garcia on **March 3, 2014 at 11:52 pm** said:

I'm a traveller, blogger, photograprer, and a journalist. I've been to Homonhon Island, not only for a vacation but also to study the flora and fauna recorded by my colleagues to have been in the island for sometime. I am an environmentalist and a member of an NGO that promotes reforestation. When I stayed on the island, I noticed that the most influencial entities that resides there are the mining companies. Ofcourse, when there are mining companies, there are also anti-mining movement that tries to voice out their advocacy. I for one support them and documents the events that took place last year. In the process of documentation for my blog, I noticed a very ironic fact about the mining companies versus the anti-miners. One of these are the following:

1. Most of the active individuals participating in the anti-mining movement were former employees of the same mining companies that they try to restrain;
2. On the account of the event that was mentioned above, the anti-mining group included kids and even infants into the barricade which is totally opposite to their human rights advocacy;
3. Also on that event, I learned that the road they blocked was a Barangay road, which is illegal in the context that it's a public road;
4. (Did I mention that I was there at that time?) When the shooting occured, I was at the school at that time and noticed that the security guards of the company didn't really aim at the group but aimed upward, meaning to neutralize the situation (the group were already shouting insults and threat at the MSEDG group that caused panic and confusion from non-participants near the area); and
4. Some of the anti-mining movement members were also producers of chromite which is the main comodity of these mining companies which serves as their buyers.

I respect the anti-mining movement for its unceasing plea's of protecting the environment and their land, but I can't help to wonder if their stand is really true. In the community, there are rumors that circulates about the name of the anti-mining group (HERO) being abused and used by other individuals to acquire financial support from families and relatives of Homonhon residents just to use it for their own consumption. I'm not just a photograprer who takes pictures of beautiful sites and incredible views, but also takes pictures of events, people, and life in a sophisticated manner, also interviewing them in the process.

Anyway, the island is like a paradise and I really enjoyed my stay there. I hope that the anti-mining movement will not cease to continue their advocacy of protecting the environment and nature, but in the process, also evaluate their agenda, the members participating their movement, the transparency of their financial and objectives to their members and even non-members, and the promotion of awareness to the community.

Reply ↓

Leave a Reply

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *

Name

*

Email

*

Website

Comment

Post Comment

NEWS UPDATE

ATM Press Release: Shame campaign launches against pro-mining countries

September 16th, 2015

ATM Press Release 16 September 2015 Shame campaign launches against pro-m

[read more](#)

ATM Press Release: Environmental groups slams mining confab, launches week-long activity against mining

September 15th, 2015

ATM Press Release 15 September 2015 Environmental groups slams mining conf

[read more](#)

ATM Press Release: Cagayanons, support groups question absence of policy on offshore mining, submit position to MGB

September 9th, 2015

Press Release 9 September 2015 Cagayanons, support groups question absence of policy

[read more](#)

FEATURE

NO
IMAGE

Please sign! **Petition: Human rights defenders in Honduras need protection**

MINING VIDEO

OPINION

SAVE MOTHER EARTH! *A Message to all Earthlings* by Bridgette Mae Jazon

OPINION

SAVE MOTHER EARTH! *A Message to all Earthlings* by Bridgette Mae Jazon

August 25th, 2015

I would like to address this deceptive impression for some or if not a fiction most probably, to eve

[read more](#)

ATM Statement on the mining revenue bills: Taking back what's ours: Philippines mineral resources for the benefit of the Filipino nation

August 18th, 2015

ATM Statement on the mining revenue bills 18 August 2015 - Batasan Pambansa, Quezon City, Philipp

[read more](#)

META

- [Log in](#)
- [Entries RSS](#)
- [Comments RSS](#)
- [WordPress.org](#)

LINKS

- [CBCP-NASSA](#)
- [Haribon Foundation](#)
- [KASAPI](#)
- [LRC-KsK](#)

CONTACT

[Click here](#)

FOLLOW US

