



Tourists taking crystals from Iceland mine



Crystals from the Helgustadanama mine.

A famous mine in Iceland may have to be closed to the public because visitors keep taking crystals, environmental officials have said.

The Helgustadanama mine is known for its Icelandic spar, which is rare and hard to come by. Tourist guides note that the area is protected and removing any spar is forbidden, but that message doesn't seem to be getting through to everyone. Some locals are unhappy that funds have been spent improving access to the mine, including car parking and toilet facilities, but not on security measures to protect the site.

Did you turn your lights off for Earth Hour?

At 8.30pm on Saturday, cities all around the world fell dark to mark the tenth Earth Hour.

Thousands of landmarks and people in their homes all around the world switched off their lights to urge action on climate change. Siddarth Das, Executive Director, Earth Hour Global said, "We started Earth Hour to make a statement. Never did we imagine that we would be writing a dramatic new story for climate action where each individual can help turn the page toward a sustainable, climate-resilient future for all."



Mike Fleming

The lights of a typical London evening.

What is Earth Hour?

Earth Hour is an annual event, usually held on the last Saturday evening in March, when millions of people and thousands of businesses worldwide turn off lights and shut down most electrical appliances to celebrate sustainability and show their support for strategies that will help solve the problem of global warming.

How did Earth Hour start?

Earth Hour was inspired by a demonstration in Sydney, Australia on March 31, 2007, when more than 2.2 million Sydney residents and more than 2,100 businesses switched off lights and non-essential electrical appliances for one hour to make a powerful statement about the leading contributor to global warming, coal-fired electricity.

Did you take part in Earth hour? If so – let us know!



Is your favourite chocolate about to shrink?



Sweet and chocolate producer Mars has confirmed it is shrinking the pack size of some of its chocolate snacks including Maltesers, M&Ms and Minstrels but keeping the prices the same.

A representative from Mars said, “We have been absorbing rising raw material and operational costs for some time, but the growing pressures mean that we can’t keep things as they are.”



Update from SOS Africa!

At Picture News, we sponsor the education of a 7-year-old girl called Mbali who lives in South Africa. In the village where Mbali lives, there are not enough places in the school for all the children to go, so without sponsorship, sadly many children do not go to school at all.

The charity’s founder, Dr Matt Crowcombe has just returned from his annual visit to the schools the charity helps fund. Here is his account of the trip:

Visiting our new Education Centre at the Methodist School in Somerset-West was one of the highlights of the trip. We launched the facility at the start of the year. The new centre has two primary functions.

During the mornings, it operates as a Learning Support Centre which provides educational support to 56 children from the Methodist School with learning difficulties. After the first two months of operation, our staff are already able to report significant improvements in the reading and writing abilities of many of the children under their care. In the afternoons, the building operates as an Aftercare Centre, supporting the 13 SOS Africa children attending both the Tereo Mission School and the Methodist School who are currently part of our education programme in the area.

It quickly became clear that both our staff and children are already extremely proud of the new centre. During our visit, Claudia and I asked them if there was anything they would like added to the centre and they asked for a fence along the front of the building. Over the course of the week we laid a gravel path and built a colourful “pencil fence.” We asked each staff member and child to paint and write their names at the base of each pencil to give them a real sense of ownership over the building. As you can see from the photos, the children are extremely proud of their pencils – the white pencils have been saved for the new children which will join our programme in January 2018. During the mornings, it operates as a Learning Support Centre which provides educational support to 56 children from the Methodist School with learning difficulties.

Please visit www.sosafrica.com to find out more.



The Education Centre’s new “pencil fence”



**YOUR
COMMENTS**

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