

Indonesian City Struggles with Plastic Pollution

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Category : Science/Environment

Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

- 1. **massive** / **ˈmæsɪv** / (adj) – huge and heavy
Example: Cars cannot pass through the road because of the **massive** tree blocking it.
- 2. **canal** / **kəˈnæl** / (n) – a man-made narrow waterway
Example: People build huge **canals** to help them water the crops in the fields.
- 3. **presumably** / **prɪˈzu mə bli** / (adv) – likely the explanation or outcome of something
Example: The spread of the disease is **presumably** due to the lack of vaccines in the distant city.
- 4. **immediate** / **ɪˈmi di ɪt** / (adj) – done right away without delay
Example: The government’s **immediate** reaction to the waste problem was to order a clean-up operation.
- 5. **deploy** / **dɪˈplɔɪ** / (v) – to send someone to fulfill a certain purpose
Example: The military was **deployed** to the island for relief operations after the storm.

Article

Read the text below.

Massive piles of plastic waste have been accumulating in the waters of Bandung / **ˈbɑːndʊŋ** /, the third largest city in Indonesia.

The West Java Environmental Protection Agency said that huge amounts of plastic bottles and other plastic packaging have been blocking rivers and **canals** in the city. The rapid increase in the country’s plastic waste is **presumably** due to Indonesia’s continuous economic growth. This growth entails changes in people’s lifestyles, such as an increase in the consumption of goods that produce plastic. However, the country’s government is unable to keep up with the increasing amount of waste.

As an **immediate** solution to the growing waste problem, the agency sought the help of the Indonesian army. The government **deployed** soldiers who used nets to remove waste from Bandung’s river. However, the move was ineffective because more plastic waste kept getting washed into the river.

In addition to the cleaning operations involving the military, Bandung’s city officials also encouraged residents to collect plastic waste and bring them to authorities for sorting. Residents who comply can receive some money depending on the amount of plastic waste they bring. Some even segregate plastics into different types because doing so will let them earn more money.

Meanwhile, Bandung is not the only area in Indonesia that is struggling with plastic pollution. Last year, local officials declared a “garbage emergency” in the famous tourist spot, Bali. They sent out 35 trucks and 700 people who were able to collect roughly 100 tons of plastic waste from the beaches.

Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

Discussion A

- In your opinion, is Indonesia’s growing waste problem a reflection of government mismanagement? Explain.

- Do you think the initiatives mentioned in the article should be implemented in all countries? Discuss.

Discussion B

- How can governments in developing countries prevent the rapid increase in plastic waste due to people’s changing lifestyles?

- Do you think it is possible to live in a plastic-free country? Discuss.