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Top Ten World's Worst Polluted Places - Blacksmith Institute Issues Report

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U.S.-based Blacksmith Institute, an independent environmental group, in partnership with Green Cross Switzerland, issued their Top Ten list of the world's most severely polluted places yesterday. The sites lie in seven countries and severely impact the health of more than 12 million people.

"The fact of the matter is that children are sick and dying in these polluted places, and it's not rocket science to fix them," says Richard Fuller, founder and director of Blacksmith Institute.

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The 2007 worst polluted sites are unranked and listed alphabetically, by country: -0- *T Sumgayit, Azerbaijan; Linfen, China; Tianying, China; Sukinda, India; Vapi, India; La Oroya, Peru; Dzerzhinsk, Russia; Norilsk, Russia; Chernobyl, Ukraine; and Kabwe, Zambia. *T

"Worst" List Evolves

The Top Ten list is based on scoring criteria devised by experts from Johns Hopkins University, Harvard University, IIT Delhi, University of Idaho, Mt. Sinai Hospital, and major environmental remediation companies

who comprise Blacksmith Institute's Technical Advisory Board (TAB).

Blacksmith Institute published their first Top Ten report in October 2006. The methodology for the 2007 Top Ten list was refined "to place more weight on the scale and toxicity of the pollution and on the numbers of people at risk," according to the report.

"We received over 40 new site nominations from people around the world as a result of publishing the 2006 list," observes David Hanrahan, Blacksmith's Director of Global Operations.

New Additions to the Top Ten

Among the new sites to appear on the 2007 Top Ten list, Tianying, China, is responsible for half of the country's total output. Lead poisoning stunts children's intellectual development.

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In Vapi, India, more than fifty industrial estates poison the local soils and groundwater with pesticides, PCBs, and heavy metals. In Sukinda, India, twelve mines operate without environmental controls, leaching hexavalent chromium into drinking water.

Sumgayit, Azerbaijan is a former Soviet industrial base polluting the area with heavy metals. Cancer rates in Sumgayit are 22 to 51 percent higher than the national average.

About Blacksmith Institute and Green Cross Switzerland

Blacksmith Institute works around the globe to identify dangerously polluted sites and initiate their clean up. Green Cross Switzerland works to overcome consequential damages caused by industrial and military disasters.

(Photos available at blacksmithinstitute.org)

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