

Climate protests rock London and Paris as activists are arrested



London, April 20 (RHC)-- Over 100 climate change protesters were arrested Friday in London, as part of the 'Extinction Rebellion' days of action that seeks to draw attention to climate change.

Friday represented day five of the group's direct action protests. The 100 people arrested brings the total number to 682 detained this week. This action had protesters planting a makeshift boat in the middle of Oxford Circus, London's busiest shopping strip. The boat was named the 'Berta Caceres' boat, in honor of the Honduran environmental activist who was murdered for her activism against extractive companies.

The 'Extinction Rebellion' group seeks to organize direct action, and their website states that they are "an international movement that uses non-violent civil disobedience to achieve radical change in order to minimise the risk of human extinction and ecological collapse."

They list three demands, the first being that governments reveal the 'truth' about the severity of climate change. Second, for action be taken so as to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2025. Thirdly, that a 'citizens assembly' be formed to oversee 'climate and ecological justice.'

The group has a strategy of maximizing the number of arrests so as to capture public attention. All activists are instructed to lie on the ground, meaning that an arrest would require 4 police officers. London's police force have complained that they are being overstretched, with many working 12 hour

shifts to deal with protesters.

The protest group's branch in France organized similar actions in Paris, where over 2,000 took part in a sit in, thought to be one of the largest acts of civil disobedience seen in the French capital. One of the organizers commented: "Through this action of extraordinary civil disobedience, the French climate movement denounces the toxic alliance that Emmanuel Macron and his government maintain with the large companies whose activity accelerates climate change."

Previous actions have included stripping naked and gluing themselves to the public gallery in the House of Commons, the U.K.'s parliament, while MPs were in session.

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