

Lights go dark for Earth Hour to highlight climate change

March 25 2018



Buckingham Palace in London before it switched off its lights for an hour to mark WWF's Earth Hour to raise awareness about climate change, Saturday March 24, 2018. (Jonathan Brady/PA via AP)

In Paris, the Eiffel Tower went dark. In London, a kaleidoscope of famous sites switched off their lights—Tower Bridge, Big Ben, Piccadilly Circus, Buckingham Palace, the London Eye.

That scene was repeated over and over across the world on Saturday

night: at Sydney's Opera House; at New Delhi's great arch; at Kuala Lumpur's Petronas Towers; at Edinburgh Castle in Scotland; at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate; at St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow; at the Empire State Building in New York.

It lasted for just an hour and its power is purely symbolic. But in countries around the world, at 8:30 p.m., people switched off their lights for Earth Hour, a global call for international unity on the importance of addressing climate change.

Begun in Sydney in 2007, Earth Hour has spread to more than 180 countries, with tens of millions of people joining in, from turning off their own porch lights to letting the grand sites like the Opera House go dark.

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo said 300 Paris buildings observed the blackout to send a "universal message."

These 60 minutes are "an opportunity" to shift "the consumption culture and behavior change toward sustainability," Indian Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan said.



A composite photo of Buckingham Palace in London before and after it switched off its lights for an hour to mark WWF's Earth Hour to raise awareness about climate change, Saturday March 24, 2018. (Jonathan Brady/PA via AP)

All this happens and yet many people, of course, barely notice.

Around India Gate, New Delhi's monument to the Indian dead in World War I, thousands embraced the city's nightly warm-weather ritual Saturday. They bought ice cream and cheap plastic trinkets. They flirted.

Young children rode in electric carts that their parents rented for a few minutes at a stretch.

But for an hour the arch stayed dark, a silent call for change.

In Jordan, the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature arranged 11,440 candles on a hilltop in the capital of Amman, establishing a Guinness World Record for the largest candle mosaic.

The candles spelled the Earth Hour motto of "60+." However, attempts to light the candles largely failed because of wind on the hilltop, which is close to the city's landmark, the Amman Citadel.



In this two photo combination picture, the landmark India Gate monument is seen lit, top, and then the same location in darkness when the lights are turned out for one hour to mark Earth Hour, in New Delhi, India, Saturday, March 24, 2018. Earth Hour was marked worldwide at 8.30 p.m. local time and is a global call to turn off lights for 60 minutes in a bid to highlight the global climate change. (AP Photo/Oinam Anand)



In this two photo combination picture, buildings that house India's seat of power are seen lit, top, and then the same location in darkness when the lights are turned out for one hour to mark Earth Hour, in New Delhi, India, Saturday, March 24, 2018. Earth Hour was marked worldwide at 8.30 p.m. local time and is a global call to turn off lights for 60 minutes in a bid to highlight the global climate change. (AP Photo/Oinam Anand)



In this two photo combination picture, North Block, buildings that house India's seat of power, are seen lit, top, and then the same location in darkness when the lights are turned out for one hour to mark Earth Hour, in New Delhi, India, Saturday, March 24, 2018. Earth Hour was marked worldwide at 8.30 p.m. local time and is a global call to turn off lights for 60 minutes in a bid to highlight the global climate change. (AP Photo/Oinam Anand)



The globe landmark of the country's largest shopping Mall of Asia turns dark to mark Earth Hour, a global event that raises awareness on the need to take action on climate change Saturday, March 24, 2018 in suburban Pasay city southeast of Manila, Philippines. The annual event urges people all over the world to switch off the lights in their homes and workplaces for at least an hour. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)



Filipinos gather at the Cultural Center of the Philippines to take part in an Earth Hour activity, a global even that raises awareness on the need to take action on climate change Saturday, March 24, 2018 in suburban Pasay city southeast of Manila, Philippines. The annual event urges people all over the world to switch off the lights in their homes and workplaces for at least an hour. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)



Filipino boy scouts use the light of their cellphones as they observe Earth Hour, a global event that raises awareness on the need to take action on climate change Saturday, March 24, 2018 in suburban Pasay city southeast of Manila, Philippines. The annual event urges people all over the world to switch off the lights in their homes and workplaces for at least an hour. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)



A Filipino girl plays with a light toy in observance of Earth Hour, a global event that raises awareness on the need to take action on climate change Saturday, March 24, 2018 in suburban Pasay city southeast of Manila, Philippines. The annual event urges people all over the world to switch off the lights in their homes and workplaces for at least an hour. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)



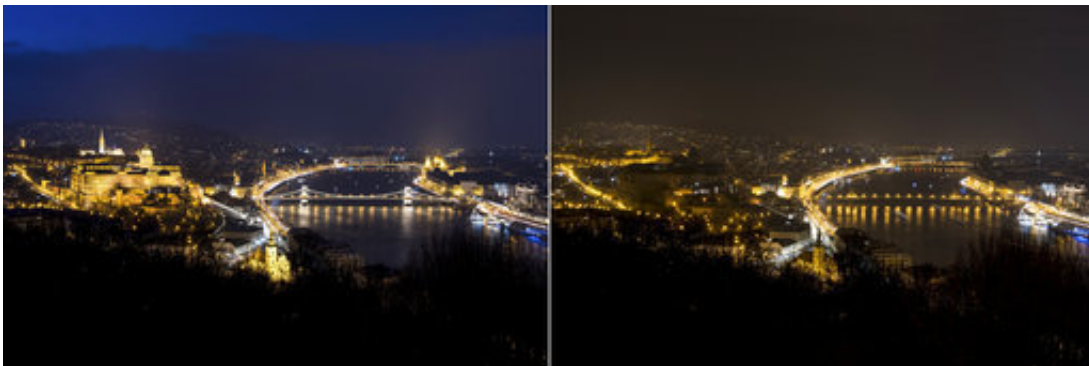
A Filipino is illuminated by the light of her cellphone during Earth Hour, a global event that raises awareness on the need to take action on climate change Saturday, March 24, 2018 in suburban Pasay city southeast of Manila, Philippines. The annual event urges people all over the world to switch off the lights in their homes and workplaces for at least an hour. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)



A view of the Millennium Monument, a landmark of the Hungarian capital with its illumination switched on prior to the Earth Hour event, in Budapest, Hungary, Saturday, March 24, 2018. Earth Hour is a world-wide environmental campaign that is observed on the last Saturday of March every year, and is a global call to turn off the lights for 60 minutes to raise awareness of the danger of global climatic change. (Tamas Kovacs/MTI via AP)



A view of the Millennium Monument, a landmark of the Hungarian capital with its illumination switched off during the Earth Hour event, in Budapest, Hungary, Saturday, March 24, 2018. Earth Hour is a world-wide environmental campaign that is observed on the last Saturday of March every year, and is a global call to turn off the lights for 60 minutes to raise awareness of the danger of global climatic change. (Tamas Kovacs/MTI via AP)



A composite photo showing the Royal Castle of Buda with its illumination switched on, left, and the illumination switched off, right, to mark Earth Hour, in

Budapest, Hungary, Sunday, March 24, 2018. Earth Hour is a world-wide environmental campaign that is observed on the last Saturday of March every year, and is a global call to turn off the lights for 60 minutes to raise awareness of the danger of global climatic change. (Marton Monus/MTI via AP)



Jordanians light candles that form the Earth Hour logo, in an official attempt to be registered in the Guinness Book of Records for the largest candle-shaped World Hour logo, in Amman, Jordan, Saturday, March 24, 2018. (AP Photo/Raad Adayleh)



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Buckingham Palace in London after it switched off its lights for an hour to mark WWF's Earth Hour to raise awareness about climate change, Saturday March 24, 2018. (Jonathan Brady/PA via AP)

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