

2022 ISSUE TWO

PASMUN TRIBUNE

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE

This year's conference is very special: delegates can make use of a digital notepassing program instead of admins having to run notes back and forth between delegates. The program is developed by PAS alumni that enables participants to "send, receive, and approve notes without the need of paper or being physically present," according to Joey Lin, one of the developers.

The platform was created out of a desire to save paper and promote sustainability. The program aims to make communication between delegates less troublesome, and for chairs and admins to have an easier time monitoring delegates. This program also allows delegates, admins, and chairs to communicate in hybrid and online conferences, which become increasingly common during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Many delegates and chairs have expressed their opinions about the program, stating that it is easy to use and extremely user-friendly. Esther Duann, the UNEP chair, is excited for amendment functions to be added into the program next year, as chairs still have to switch back and forth between the platform and google forms in order to run the conference. Zoe Cheng, a delegate from TAS, also expresses her satisfaction with the program. Even though she has not personally utilized the program prior to PASMUN, she feels that this platform would be "much better for the environment," as her school uses paper notes during conferences.

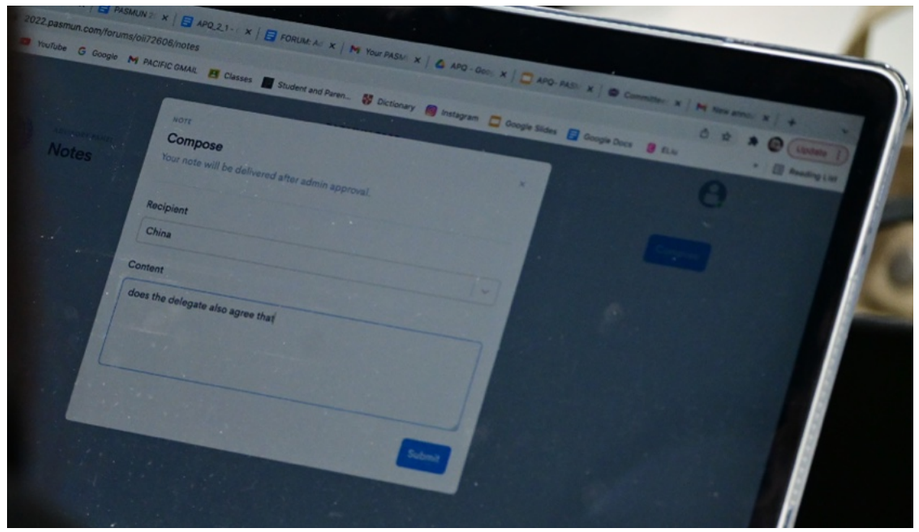
The digital note-passing platform seems to have been extremely successful in this conference, receiving positive comments from delegates and staff alike. Many PASMUN participants have conveyed their wishes to see this platform in future conferences. Hopefully, digital note-passing platforms will become a permanent fixture in PASMUN and other conferences, providing participants with easy communication.

> *"We work with PASMUN to realize its cause of becoming a fully digital, paperless conference, which is increasingly significant especially during these trying times of Covid-19."*
>
> – Joey Lin

NOTE PASSING ELEVATED

Written by: Rachel Lu Edited by: Victoria Lee Layout by: Allison Liu Photograph by: Nina Liu

MUN PAS



Behind THE Scene:

Our Violinists

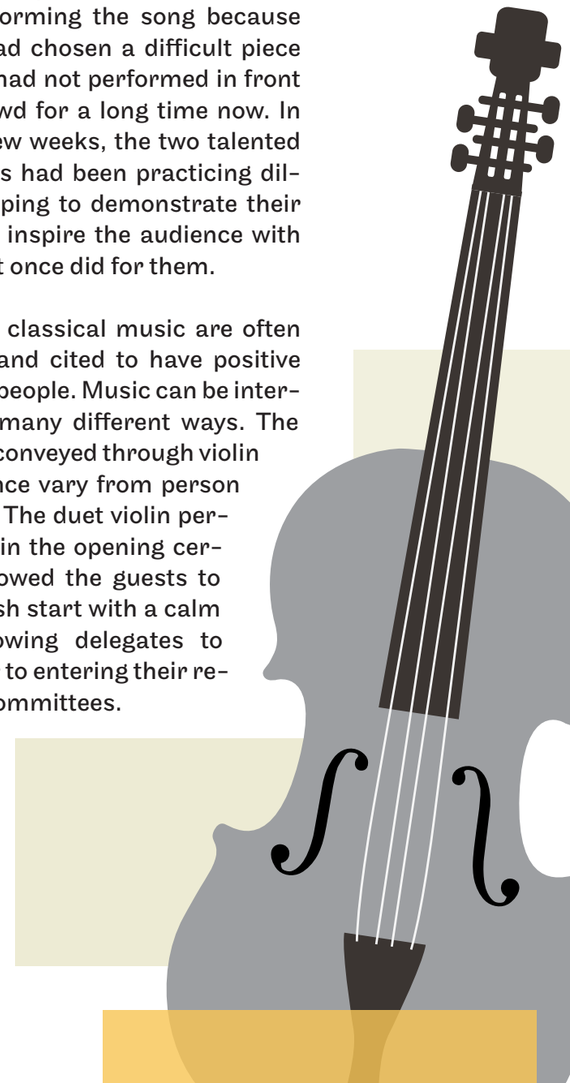
Written by: Iris Chen Edited by: Victoria Lee Layout by: Allison Liu

This year's opening ceremony saw many entertainments and highlights with the most notable being a violin duet by Justin Tang (PAS, 12) and Ian Johnson (HIS, 11). Their adept violin skills pleasantly surprised the guests not only through their perfect synergy throughout the performance but also by the difficulty of the composition itself. The violin performance brought satisfaction and positivity to the audience, setting a smooth and soothing tone for the conference to come.

One of the violin performers, Justin Tang, a current senior from PAS, has been learning the violin for 13 years. Recalling his early experience of violin playing in the Yamaha classroom, Tang remembers that he was mesmerized by the violin teacher next door and asked his mother to book him the class. His experience with the sensational nature of violin made Tang believe that classical music calms people and "can be appreciated in-depth and for pleasure" and our delegates do agree.

Regarding the performance itself at PASMUN 2022, Tang said that he was extremely anxious and nervous while performing the song because the duo had chosen a difficult piece and Tang had not performed in front of the crowd for a long time now. In the past few weeks, the two talented performers had been practicing diligently, hoping to demonstrate their skills, and inspire the audience with music as it once did for them.

Violin and classical music are often regarded and cited to have positive effects on people. Music can be interpreted in many different ways. The emotions conveyed through violin performance vary from person to person. The duet violin performance in the opening ceremony allowed the guests to have a fresh start with a calm mind, allowing delegates to relax prior to entering their respective committees.



Should We Regulate Crypto?

Written by: Iris Chen Edited by: Ariel Lee Layout by: Jocelyn Ho Photograph by: Jessica Kim



The current inflation rate and CPI annual growth rate have been the highest since the 1980s. Prices are on a dramatic rise at an unprecedented speed. Due to the supply chain disruptions and the increasing consumer demand, worldwide inflation is an urgent problem for civilians, business owners, and governments alike. In response to this international issue, Advisory Panel Question (APQ) discusses extensively on this topic. The online chairs of APQ and the delegates engage actively on the issue of regulating cryptocurrency in global commerce.

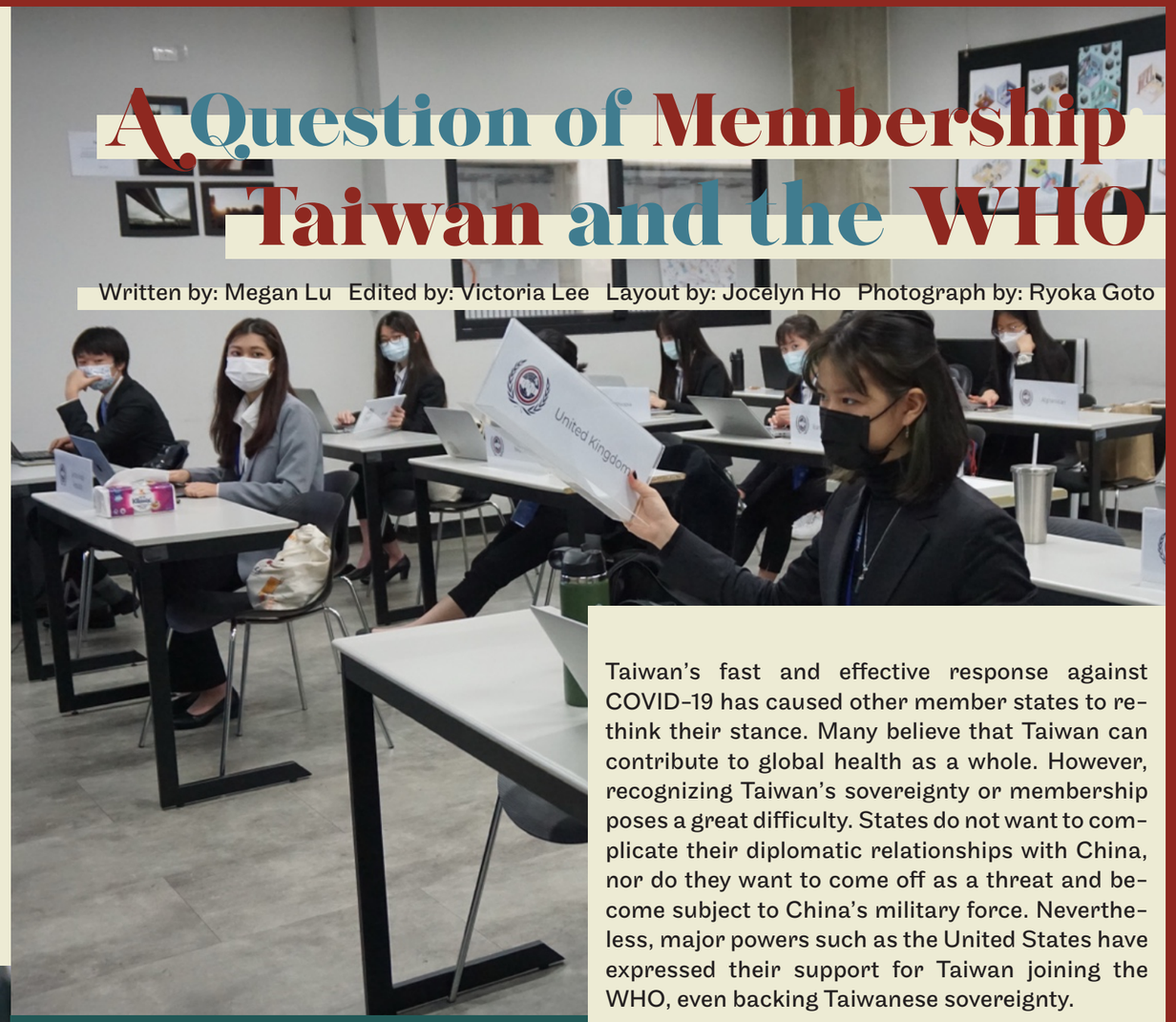
In today's digitalized world, one popular virtual transaction is a cryptocurrency, which is a non-concrete form of blockchain currency that relies on the participants in the exchange instead of central authorities. Cryptocurrency provides a new frontier of autonomous currency such a virtual transaction is not without detrimental effects. Most notably, cryptocurrency takes a toll on both the economy and the environment.

Take Bitcoins as an example. As crypto-mining demands a large amount of electricity and requires extensive computations, it also exploits natural resources and harms environmental sustainability. A similar digital transaction through cryptography is Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) in which images, such as artworks or photographs, can be traded as verified assets. Distinctive features of NFTs are that they cannot be used as a form of currency and there is no identical copy of an NFT. The two examples certainly allow investors to profit from the specialty of these cryptocurrencies, standing out from other widely available ones.

In general, though cryptocurrency is attractive, mainly due to its decentralized aspects, it is vulnerable to illicit financial flows (IFFs) and costs environmentally, raising questions toward the extent of government regulations on cryptocurrency. Government intervention is limited in cryptocurrencies, but several countries already have implemented policies in addressing the fraudulent cases that emerge from the un-regulated cryptocurrencies. Audrey Leu (TAS), a delegate from India, suggests that "it's hard to regulate cryptocurrencies during crime times, but it is easier in regulating the causes of the harms." APQ serves to come up with possible solutions that will prevent IFFs, reach international consensus on environmental concerns, and settle controversies over the right to privacy.

A Question of Membership Taiwan and the WHO

Written by: Megan Lu Edited by: Victoria Lee Layout by: Jocelyn Ho Photograph by: Ryoka Goto



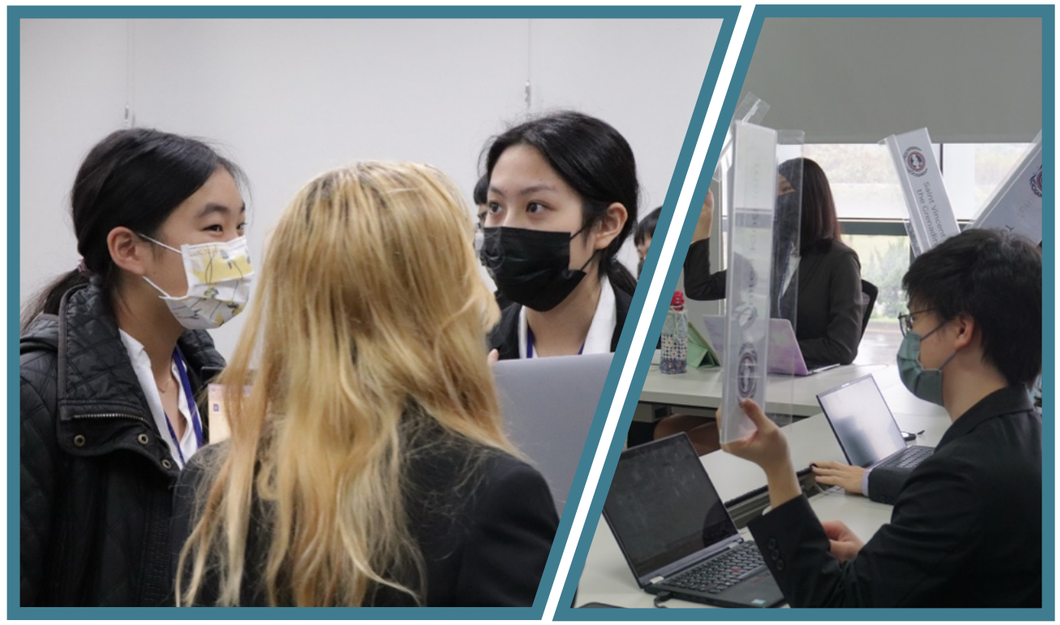
Whether or not Taiwan should participate in the World Health Organization (WHO), either as an observer or a full member, has long been a controversial issue. The questions of membership in the WHO and Taiwanese sovereignty are deeply connected, and the issue has raised tension between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC), otherwise known as Taiwan.

The PRC believes that the ROC is not a sovereign state, and should be one with China. They have enforced the One-China Policy, dating back to 1992, stating that only one China can be recognized. As the PRC believes Taiwan belongs with China as a "breakaway province," Taiwan has no need for membership in the WHO.

Taiwan's fast and effective response against COVID-19 has caused other member states to rethink their stance. Many believe that Taiwan can contribute to global health as a whole. However, recognizing Taiwan's sovereignty or membership poses a great difficulty. States do not want to complicate their diplomatic relationships with China, nor do they want to come off as a threat and become subject to China's military force. Nevertheless, major powers such as the United States have expressed their support for Taiwan joining the WHO, even backing Taiwanese sovereignty.

Currently, Taiwan is under the rule of Tsai Ing-wen, a Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) member. The DPP firmly advocates for Taiwan as its own state, as Taiwan currently governs itself and shows autonomy. With increasing nationalistic ideals on the island, many citizens prefer to identify themselves as Taiwanese instead of Chinese, setting themselves apart from the PRC.

Despite rising tensions, the international community can recognize the PRC as the only "China" in order to follow the One-China Policy. The ROC can then revise its name and separate themselves from China, becoming its own autonomous state. Still, the ROC cannot directly declare their sovereignty or statehood, but continue keeping peace in order to lessen China's pressure upon the island.



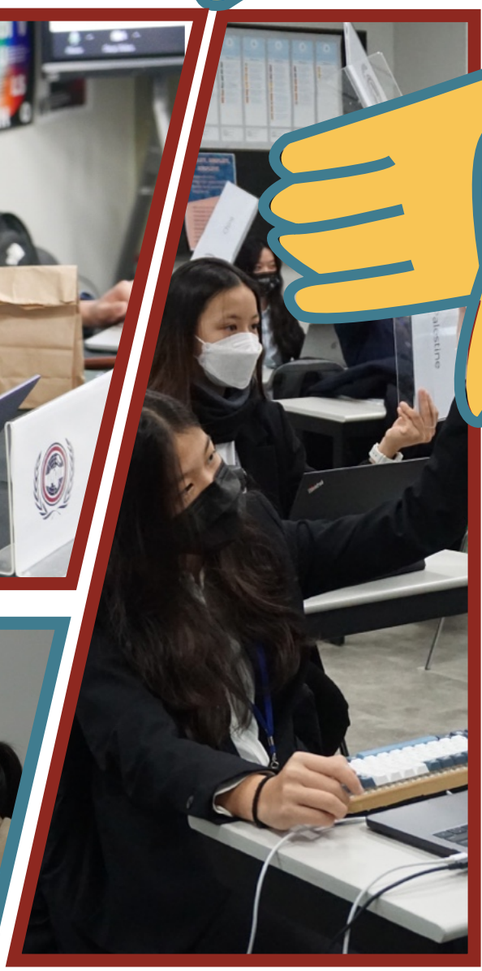


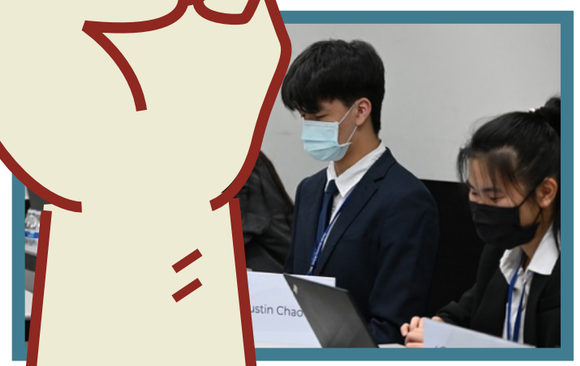
Layout by: Allison Liu
Photographs by:
Nina Liu
Ryoka Goto
Jessica Kim
Ingrid Li
Judy chao













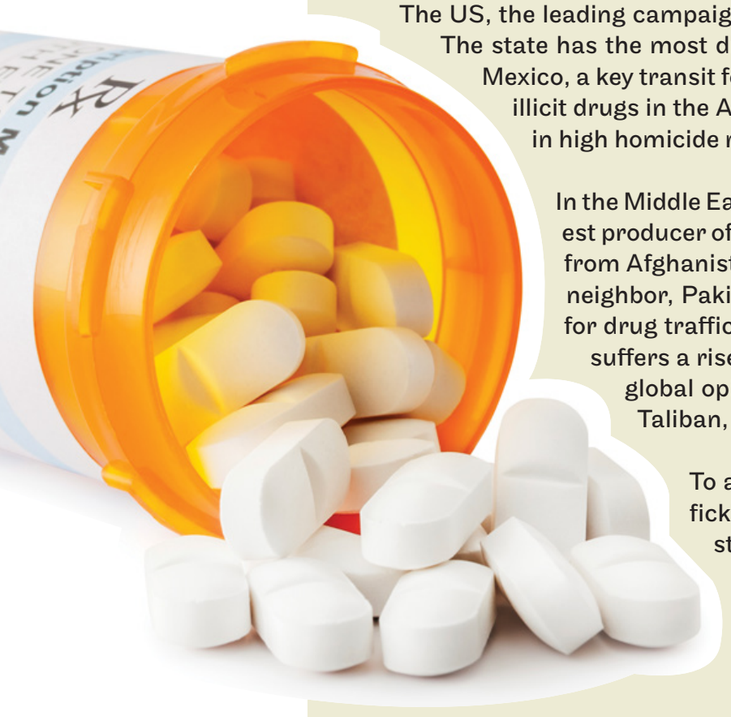




Transitional Opiates

Written by: Lea Lu Edited by: Ariel Lee Layout by: Zoe Liu Photographs by: Judy Chao

Transnational opiates trafficking has long been a source of contention. Attempts to combat them have not only failed but resulted in additional setbacks, harming those they intended to protect. In 2019, 22 people out of 100,000 died from opioid overdoses in the United States (US) alone. In 2017, an estimated 115,000 people died from drug overdoses. Extremism, terrorism, and corruption are the primary drivers of opiate trafficking. They fund themselves by actively supporting the drug trade through destabilizing areas with key trade routes. A weakened political system keeps the traffickers alive as delivering illegal substances to various markets becomes easier. This mutual relationship between the two puts countries such as Afghanistan under grave danger considering its current conflict with the Taliban.



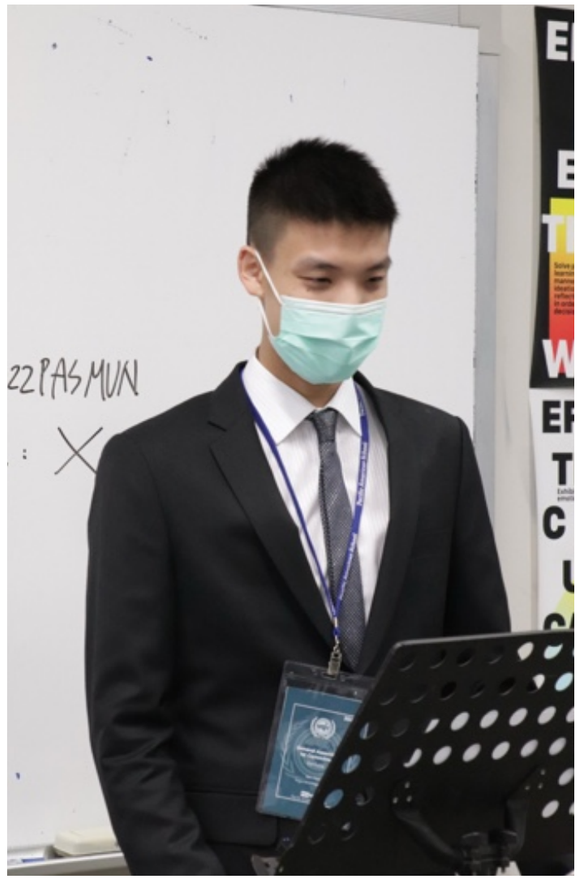
The US, the leading campaign against global drug trafficking, has dedicated the most resources to combat criminal groups. The state has the most drug users in the world, and the majority of its supplies come from Mexico and South America. Mexico, a key transit for drug trafficking from South America to the US and Canada, has the most significant source of illicit drugs in the Americas. Its cartels are exceptionally powerful, clashing with the Mexican government, resulting in high homicide rates.

In the Middle East, Iran has built one of the strongest counter-narcotics enforcement. Despite this, it is the greatest producer of opiates, accounting for more than half of all opiates globally. It is the vital route for the drug trade from Afghanistan to Europe. Because of this, nations seek to cooperate with Iran to reduce the flow of drugs. Its neighbor, Pakistan, is also a key transit for drugs to enter foreign markets. It is similar to Iran in its penalties for drug trafficking which includes the process of cultivation, manufacture, and marketing. Yet, the nation still suffers a rise in drug use and widespread corruption. Afghanistan, which accounts for approximately 85% of global opium production, is in disarray. The Afghan government is unable to grant assistance unless the Taliban, an alleged terrorist organization, recognizes it.

To address these concerns, the War on Drugs has developed policies and laws to combat drug trafficking. However, its attempt to limit drug supply increased the prices of narcotics and illicit substances, leading to a spike in crime rates. It also resulted in an upsurge in alternative drug usage practices, which destabilized a number of regions. To avoid arrest, many people turned to drug injections, which raised the prevalence of overdose and blood-borne infections. Furthermore, the US government has spent trillions of dollars with little to no results, with drug trafficking cartels remaining largely intact.

The large majority consider the War on Drugs a failure. It failed to eradicate the global drug trade and, despite its attempts, brought in a new surge of opioid misuse through abusing pharmaceutical licensing. Furthermore, ineffective policies continue to be enacted, producing widespread destabilization in communities throughout the world. Anti-Muslim rhetoric grows more prevalent in the western world while anti-western rhetorics persist in areas targeted by western forces.

The situation can be improved by legalizing particular drugs and creating individual caveats for each. The government can also invest in public services as the citizens are inextricably linked with the states' stabilities. Furthermore, international organizations' work should highlight the drug agenda. Long-term goals and strategies should be shared by individual states and international organizations. Finally, the government can prioritize structural development in vulnerable areas to provide alternatives to poppy cultivation. The international community is still eagerly working towards the eradication of transnational opiates.





Climate Change, Deforestation, and The Amazon (UNEP)

Written by: Rachel Lu
Edited by: Ariel Lee
Layout by: Anneena Lin

The Amazon rainforest is known as one of the largest carbon sinks on Earth. It accounts for 20% of the world's oxygen and is home to around 3 million species of organisms. Located in South America, the Amazon spans nine countries. In a time when human activity puts out a huge amount of emissions, it is more important than ever to conserve rainforests. To effectively combat global warming, we need to protect our carbon sinks.

Deforestation in the Amazon poses a huge problem mostly due to the Brazilian government. Jair Bolsonaro, president of Brazil, has deemed economic interests more important than the preservation of the Amazon. Other businesses such as forestry practices, livestock ranching, and agribusinesses have also played a role in the deforestation of the rainforest. In November 2021, the Amazon rainforest started to produce carbon emissions for the first time in history. As trees die, the carbon dioxide they store gets released into the air, contributing to greenhouse gas levels. The amount of trees dying in recent years have increased by a significant amount, making the amount of carbon dioxide they emit much more problematic.

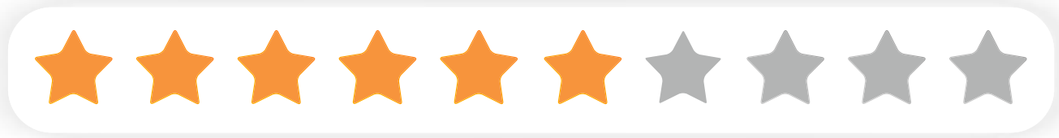
The main causes of deforestation include cattle ranching and wildfires. Cattle ranching is an easy investment, as cleared land has a much higher price than forested ones. However, clearing large amounts of land means the death of many trees. Wildfires are naturally a phenomenon that rainforests are able to deal with. However, human activity has made wildfires much higher in intensity making it harder for rainforests to endure. This leads to even more deforestation.

Illegal activities such as cutting down trees and ranching land are very much prevalent in the rainforest, as they bring in lots of profit. According to Lyn Yoo (TAS), the delegate of the United Kingdom, one of the most important solutions is to "implement many policies and laws...to build more security around the Amazon Rainforest."

FOOD REVIEW

Written by: Chris Chen Edited by: Victoria Lee Layout by: Anneena Lin





Tomato Eggs:
This was nothing like the tomato eggs that you'd see in Chinese restaurants. The texture was runny and watery to the point where it was difficult to pick up with chopsticks. The first bite was very acidic. After about 10 bites you get used to the acidic taste but the texture remains problematic.

Skinny Bak Choy Thing:
This had a sweet vegetable taste by itself but was too bland for my liking. I had to dip it into the acidic tomato eggs for flavor. Nevertheless, health is wealth so I ate it.

Broccoli:
Before we talk about broccoli, let's talk about the thing underneath it. Why was there a weird white thing underneath my broccoli? Anyways, the broccoli itself wasn't overcooked so it was pretty good.

Chicken:
It was a very flavorful and moist chicken. However, it was hard to eat without looking like a Neanderthal.

Rice and Corn:
It's rice and corn, what else do you want me to say.

5/10

Fried Pork Cutlet:
The meat is soggy and oily. I couldn't figure out that it was pork until the 4th bite. The only flavor comes from pepper seasoning. But I'll eat it.

Tofu:
It's the best part of the meal. The sauce gives it a mellow tinge and was really nice.

Bok Choy:
It was way too bland. Definitely needs more seasoning. Again, health is wealth so I finished it.

Curry Potato Sticks:
Much of the curry flavor is lost and so it's basically a plain potato.

Ground Pork on Rice:
This was probably the worst part of the meal because it was overly salty which makes the overall flavor of the meal unbalanced. It pairs nicely with the bland bo-choy.

6/10



Editor in Chief

Zoe Liu

Head Editor

Victoria Lee

Text Editor

Ariel Lee

Reporter

Megan Lu

Rachel Lu

Lea Lu

Chris Chen

Iris Chen

Layout

Anneena Lin

Jocelyn Ho

Allison Liu

Photographer

Judy Chao

Nina Liu

Ryoka Goto

Jessica Kim

Ingrid Li

Videographer

Danny Hung