

Construction of new Indonesian capital in Borneo threatens Indigenous lives, rainforest and wildlife



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Jakarta, March 18 (RHC)-- In Indonesia, Indigenous people say construction of the new national capital is pushing them off their land, making them fear for their homes and livelihoods, as the nation prepares to move its seat of government from Jakarta to the east coast of the island of Borneo.

Nusantara is set to be inaugurated as Indonesia's new capital next summer. In 2019, President Joko Widodo announced the move away from Jakarta, which is rapidly sinking into the Java Sea.

Balik tribal chief Sibukdin told reporters: "There is a large forest area in the new capital's construction zone which used to be an arable land and the livelihood of our people. We are not hoping that it will be given back to us, but please do not disturb what we are left with, where we have been living for years. We've had enough. We've had to give in, and we can't let this be taken, too."

The Indonesian government has pledged to build a sustainable, carbon-neutral city, but environmentalists warn its construction will lead to massive deforestation, threatening endangered species.

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