



International Commission for the Rights of Aboriginal peoples

I C R A

Commission Internationale pour les Droits des Peuples Indigènes



Dr Manmohan Singh
Prime Minister of India, Prime Minister's Office
South Block, Raisina Hill
New Delhi 110 001
Inde

Paris, 07/06/2007

Dear Sir,

ICRA International and all signatories to the petition for Andaman Islands' Jarawas wish to inform the Indian authorities of their deep concern about the current situation of the Jarawa tribe.

The future of the last 270 representatives of the Jarawa tribe (Andaman Islands' hunter-gatherer tribe) is in jeopardy. The road that runs alongside their territory, which was meant to be shut down in 2002 following a decision of the Supreme Court of India, is being widened, thus allowing outside settlers as well as poachers to invade the Jarawas' territory, and, as a result, over-exploit their resources and exposed them to diseases. Such over-exploitation of the plant and animal kingdoms of the Jarawa rainforest and coastal areas greatly jeopardizes their means of subsistence and they recently experienced another epidemic of measles, even though, in 1999, the Health Authorities of the Andaman Islands had publicly promised to organize regular vaccination campaigns against several diseases, including the measles. When the Jarawas reacts to violence made to them by settlers and poachers, the Government representatives intervene and violence and forced relocations are daily practices on the Jarawas' territory.

In the past, India has made several decisions to protect the Jarawas but unfortunately these decisions have never been taken into account by local government representatives. Today, it has become urgent for the India to allow the Jarawas the right to live freely and safely on their own territory.

We therefore request (as well as all signatories to the petition included) of the highest Indian authorities that:

- . the violence against the Jarawas be brought to an immediate end,
- . the Supreme Court's 2002 decision to close down the road running alongside and inside the Jarawas' territory, be put into effect,
- . the Jarawas' territory be protected, especially from outside settlers and poachers,
- . the Jarawas' right to make their own decisions about their future and the way they want to live on their ancestral grounds be respected,
- . to put into effect the decision of the United Nations' Comity for elimination of racial discrimination which recently exhorted India to shut down the road that runs alongside the Jarawas' territory.

Trusting that the Government of India will take into consideration the concerns expressed in this letter, we remain

Yours very truly,
Hervé Valentin, ICRA International