

BRAZIL: TOP OFFICIALS ACCUSED OF GENOCIDE OF INDIANS

SURVIVAL INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

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A former state governor and a former top policeman are among the accused in Brazil's first ever investigation into the genocide of an uncontacted Indian tribe.

Twenty-nine people are being detained in Operation Rio Pardo, the investigation into the genocide of the uncontacted Rio Pardo Indians. In the last decade, the Indians' land has been invaded by land grabbers and logging companies.

Brazilian TV showed in November the first known images of the Indians. No-one outside the tribe knows who they are or what language they speak.

The government's Indian affairs department, FUNAI, has found camps inside the territory with land measuring equipment, and bombs and ammunition to intimidate the Indians. The invaders admit to finding thirty hurriedly abandoned Indian shelters.

The former governor of Mato Grosso state, Wilmar Peres de Farias, and former elite police commander Roberto de Almeida Gil are among the public figures implicated in the affair.

Speaking from the city of Cuiabá, public prosecutor Mario Lucio Avelar told Survival he believed there were sufficient grounds to prosecute for genocide. According to the UN, the crime of genocide can mean, 'Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part'.

Survival's director Stephen Corry said today, 'It's shocking that in the twenty-first century, with so many of Brazil's tribes gone forever, those remaining are still in danger of genocide.'

Brazil must take immediate action to recognise and protect the land of the Rio Pardo Indians, before it is too late.'

For more information call Miriam Ross on +44 20 7687 8734 or email mr@survival-international.org

To read this press release online visit <http://survival-international.org/news.php?id=1258>

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First People of the Kalahari have been given The Right Livelihood Award, known as the alternative Nobel prize, in recognition of their 'resolute resistance against eviction from their ancestral lands, and for upholding the right to their traditional way of life'.

We help tribal peoples defend their lives, protect their lands and determine their own futures.

Survival International
6 Charterhouse Buildings
London EC1M 7ET
UK

Tel: 020 7687 8700

Fax: 020 7687 8701

<http://www.survival-international.org>