



Siberia to Sarawak

Tribal peoples of Asia

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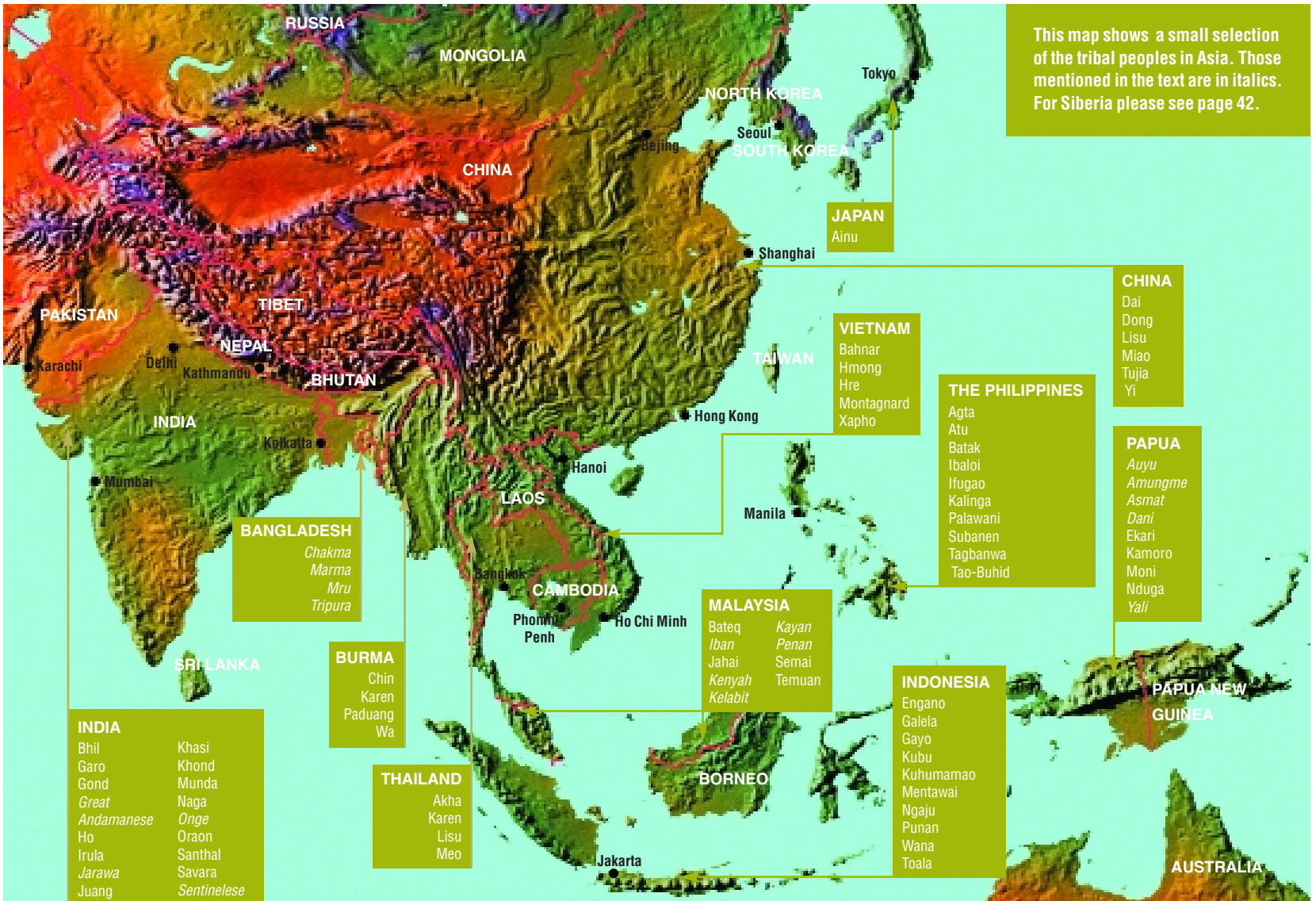


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‘WE CANNOT WAIT, WE CANNOT WAIT FOR THE LAND OF OUR ANCESTORS TO BE DESTROYED, FOR OUR CULTURE TO DIE, OUR CULTURE WHICH IS DEEPLY ROOTED IN NATURE, A LIVING NATURE; WE CANNOT WAIT BECAUSE THERE ARE SO FEW OF US LEFT.’ Udege leader, Siberia, 1998

INTRODUCTION

Who are the tribes of Asia?

Asian tribal peoples, like tribal peoples everywhere, are usually minorities, and see themselves as distinct from the mainstream. They speak their own languages, are largely self-sufficient, and their economies are tightly bound to their intimate relationship with their land. Their culture is different from the mainstream, inherited from their forebears and adapted to their current situation. They have often lived on their land for thousands of years. Beyond this, it is very difficult to generalise about the tribal peoples in Asia. They encompass a huge variety of tribes, living very different ways of life in an incredible diversity of environments. They include herders in arctic Siberia; cultivators in the rugged hills of Thailand and Bangladesh and the forests of Malaysia and Papua; and hunter-gatherers across the continent, from frozen Siberia to the

tropical Andaman Islands. They vary greatly in their level of contact with outsiders: tribal peoples in Sarawak, Borneo, for instance, have been in continuous contact with outsiders since colonisation in the 19th century, while the Sentinelese of the Andaman Islands have no friendly contact with anyone outside the tribe. In some places, such as Papua, there is huge variation in levels of contact even within one country. In most parts of Asia, tribal people are a small minority of the population – but the population of the island of New Guinea is entirely tribal except for the settlers who arrived in the western half, Papua, in the wake of the Indonesian takeover.

Asia is home to tribes who have no contact with outsiders.

Koryak woman, Kamchatka, Siberia

Asian governments justify oppression by claiming tribal peoples are 'primitive'.

Violence

One thing the tribal peoples of Asia do have in common is the oppression and marginalisation they experience. Often they suffer direct violence: some of the worst atrocities against tribal peoples in recent years have taken place in Asia. The continuing genocide against the tribal peoples of Papua – where Indonesian armed forces routinely rape, kill and torture innocent tribal villagers – constitutes the worst current oppression of tribal peoples anywhere in the world. In Burma, tribal people are forced into slave labour and are massacred by the army. In Bangladesh, the Jumma tribal peoples have endured almost thirty years of attempted genocide, which is hopefully now drawing to a close with the recent signing of an agreement with the government.

Tribal peoples in Asia – even the most isolated tribes – have also been victims of wars between others. When Japanese troops bombed and occupied the Andaman Islands from 1942 to 1945,

'In no Asian society should we be prepared to perpetuate the existence of groups which will be fascinating human anachronisms worthy only for the study of 21st century anthropologists.'

Commission for a New Asia, 1995

many isolated tribal people are thought to have died. Armed conflicts have caused huge numbers of deaths of tribal people in Vietnam, Bangladesh and Cambodia in the past, and still do in China, Burma and parts of Indonesia today.

'Development'

Tribal peoples in Asia, even if they escape such direct violence, often fall victim to the rapid economic 'development' of the region and the takeover of their land by multinationals and governments. In most parts of Asia where tribal peoples' land rights are recognised, the government retains the power to overrule these rights in the 'economic interest' of the state. Any development, from logging to dam building, can be justified in this way – leaving no protection for the millions of tribal people who rely on their land for their survival. In Malaysia, for example, 10,000 tribal people have been thrown off their land for a hydroelectric dam which may still never be built. In the Philippines, a third of all land, much of it belonging to tribal peoples, has been claimed by mining companies. Whether it be for oil exploitation in Siberia, logging in Sarawak, or any one of countless other 'developments', tribal



Itel'men girl, Kamchatka, Siberia

peoples' land rights are ignored in favour of economic development – with disastrous consequences for the tribe.

Integration

Often governments claim, perhaps even believe, that they are acting in the interest of the tribe concerned. There is a widespread perception in Asia that tribal peoples are 'primitive' and 'backward', that another way of life must be imposed upon them, by force if necessary. This is used to justify the theft of their land for big projects, as well as government violence against them. It is also behind efforts to 'assimilate' or 'integrate' a tribe, as for instance in the Andaman Islands. Here the population of the Great Andamanese fell from 5,000 to only 41 in less than 150 years – through disastrous

policies guided by paternalism and the notion that 'progress' lay in settling the tribe and teaching them agriculture rather than hunting and gathering. Survival is now working to ensure that the same fate does not befall other tribes in the Islands.

Most tribal people face many threats at a time. In Papua, for instance, the Amungme and Kamoro tribes have had their land destroyed by the world's biggest copper and gold mine while having to face the threat of death and torture at the hands of Indonesian soldiers, there to 'protect' the mine. In Siberia, the Soviet desire for a homogeneous people led to policies of assimilation – including the removal of tribal children to boarding schools where they were forbidden to speak their own languages – which caused terrible social breakdown and appallingly high rates of



alcoholism and suicide; at the same time, tribal peoples' land was being taken over by the state-run oil and gas industries.

Resistance

But although the problems facing tribal peoples in Asia may appear insurmountable, many tribes have succeeded in resisting the threats and overcoming their problems. For example, the isolated Jarawa of India's Andaman Islands have recently seen a dramatic change in their situation. They faced government plans to settle them by force – which would almost inevitably have wiped them out through disease, depression and despair – while a road through their territory every day brought the danger of disease along with settlers, poachers and loggers. After Survival's campaign, India's supreme court ordered that the road be closed, settlers and encroachers on tribal land

The nomadic Penan in Sarawak, Malaysia, get most of their meat by hunting wild boar. They tend to hunt alone or with one other person.

removed, and all logging in the Islands stopped. This is one of the most dramatic interventions in support of tribal peoples that Survival has seen, but there have been many others.

In 1997, the Jumma people of Bangladesh signed a peace deal with the government. The agreement for the first time acknowledged their land as a 'tribal populated region', and gave the Jummas some control over the government of the region and what happens there.

Although there are still problems with implementation, it was a significant move forward for the Jumma people. A Jumma representative told Survival, 'We take this agreement as a positive step.... We are very grateful to Survival and the international community for

'Their aim was that I'd shut my mouth. But I opened it more! ... I don't know how to read or write but I know the truth. I'm not afraid of anybody. I feel I cannot be defeated.'

Mama Yosepha Alomang, Amungme woman, Papua, 2001

pressuring the Bangladesh government, without them the Bangladesh government would never have come to the negotiation table.' Survival's campaigns have also had success in Indonesia, Papua and Siberia, where tribal peoples have had their lands saved from pulp paper industries, logging, encroachment from outsiders and oil exploitation.

'First peoples'

As well as their problems and struggles, Asia's tribal peoples, like tribal peoples everywhere, share a deep attachment to their territory – often the loss and destruction of their land is at the root of the terrible difficulties they face. Usually they have lived on their land for thousands if not tens of thousands of years, and are what we would call 'indigenous' to that area – that is, they lived there first, inhabiting the territory long before any other peoples or tribes arrived. Using the term 'indigenous' in Asia, however, can be controversial.

In the Americas and Australia, it is simple to say who are the indigenous people: they lived there alone until only the last few hundred years and are easily distinguished from newer arrivals. Today's indigenous people are the descendants of those who survived the

massacres, disease and oppression of colonisation. But Asia has seen successive waves of populations moving through it over most of 100,000 years, so that many Asian peoples have been in a place for thousands of years without being the 'first'. Some countries therefore claim they have no indigenous population, others that everyone is indigenous – these claims are controversial and are contested, particularly by those who feel they have a more concrete claim to be indigenous. Independent estimates reckon Asia to be home to 150 million indigenous people, half the world's total. Many, but not all, of these people are tribal.

The 'Negrito' peoples of Malaysia, India, Thailand, the Philippines and the Andaman Islands are among those Asian peoples most clearly indigenous to their land, and they also live a distinctly tribal way of life. Recent studies suggest that their ancestors arrived during migrations from Africa to Australia and New Guinea as much as 60,000 years ago – making them by far the earliest

Tribes in Asia have succeeded in resisting threats to their lands and lives from both governments and companies.

inhabitants of their lands. They look very different to the more typically Asian peoples who surround them, tending to be smaller and darker, with curly black hair. Some of these Negrito peoples are today among the most isolated tribal peoples on earth.

India officially views all its inhabitants as ‘indigenous’, but does recognise some, the so-called ‘scheduled tribes’, as distinctly tribal. In fact, these tribes are probably the descendants of the region’s original peoples. The ancestors of most of today’s Indians, who are largely fairer-skinned and taller, probably arrived through a series of migrations from the north-east thousands of years ago, pushing the tribes they found into the land they did not want – and perhaps killing many. Today’s so-called ‘untouchables’, or Dalits, may well be descended from tribes who were driven from their land in this way and stripped of every element of their ancestry – except the disdain with which they were treated by outsiders.

There are some Asian tribal peoples who are probably not indigenous in the sense of having been in a place first. For instance, in the Philippines, the Negrito tribes were later joined by ethnically Malay people, who now make up most of the population. Today, mainstream Filipino culture is the product of four centuries of European colonisation. But some Malays have remained isolated from this colonial-influenced society, retaining tribal societies and culture.

These peoples are classed as indigenous along with the few remaining Negrito tribes, more because of their tribal way of life than because of when they arrived. Other tribes – for example some of the hill tribes of Burma and Thailand who migrated from further north, in some cases only in recent centuries – are also not ‘indigenous’ to their current homelands, but clearly do have tribal societies.

Our aim

This book does not attempt to present all of Asia’s tribal peoples. It describes a selection of peoples living very different lives – including the most isolated and those suffering the worst problems – to give an idea of the differences and the similarities between Asian tribal peoples’ lives and experiences.

From the frozen tundra of Siberia to the tropical rainforests of Sarawak, Asia’s tribal peoples are refusing to give in to violent armies, to the destruction of their land and to attempts to destroy them as peoples. Instead they are maintaining vibrant and sustainable lifestyles. This book celebrates them and enables readers to take action in support of tribal peoples – to help them protect their lives, lands, and ways of life and make their own decisions about their futures.

The Asmat live in Papua’s lowlands. The Papuans experience the worst oppression of any tribal peoples in the world today.





NO ONE OUTSIDE THE JARAWA TRIBE SPEAKS THEIR LANGUAGE – SO NO ONE KNOWS WHAT THEY REALLY WANT TO SAY TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD. WHEN WE ARE ABLE TO TALK WITH THEM, THEIR STORY MUST NOT BE ONE OF LOSING THEIR LAND AND THEIR WAY OF LIFE.

ANDAMAN ISLANDS, INDIA

Surviving paradise

The peoples and the islands

The Andaman Islands lie 700 miles off the east coast of India, in the Bay of Bengal. They are made up of 500 separate isles, of which just 27 are inhabited. The Andamans are home to four tribes – the Great Andamanese, Onge, Jarawa and Sentinelese.

All four are what anthropologists call ‘Negrito’, and recent studies suggest that their closest relatives are African. They are believed to have travelled from Africa anything up to 60,000 years ago. As the tribes’ languages are mutually unintelligible, it is thought that they lived isolated lives on reaching the islands. There are, however, similarities in their ways of life, as far as we can tell – very little is known about the lifestyle of the largely uncontacted Jarawa and Sentinelese. We do know that all four

tribes are nomadic hunter-gatherers, hunting wild pig and monitor lizard and catching fish with bows and arrows. They also collect honey, roots and berries from the forest.

The Andaman tribes have a long history of hostility to outsiders – and to each other. The earliest records of the Andamans feature fearful and fabulous descriptions of the tribespeople: Marco Polo, for instance, reported that the inhabitants ‘have heads like that of the dog with teeth and eyes likewise.’

In 1858, the British set up a penal colony in the Andamans – in the 150 years since then, the original tribal inhabitants have suffered sustained attacks from British and then Indian colonisers. Before colonisation, the tribal people altogether numbered around 8,000. Today there are 400 to 800 of them, swamped in the islands’ total population of around 350,000.

Jarawa man



THE 'PERFECT PEOPLE'

The Onge call themselves 'En-iregale' which means 'perfect person'. Onge women paint their husbands with white clay for special occasions such as weddings or celebrations after a successful hunt, and the tribe believes body painting to have medicinal powers to take away pain and repel mosquitoes. Hunting pigs is important in Onge life, with cultural and social as well as practical significance. Boys have to catch a male pig before the initiation rites which make them a man. The influx of outsiders into their area means that few pigs are now found there – many boys are unable to marry as a result.

The islands are now a 'union territory' of India, administered directly by the Indian government in Delhi.

The only remaining rainforest in the Andaman Islands is inhabited by the tribal people. This is no coincidence – without their forest the Andaman tribes cannot survive, and were it not for the presence of these tribes the rainforest would almost certainly have already been destroyed.

Andamanese

When the British first arrived 150 years ago, there were more than 5,000 Great Andamanese. Today, they number 41. The Andamanese were extremely hostile to the British settlers, who cut down their forest, stole their land and killed their game. The tribe was provoked into attack; the British responded violently, killing hundreds. After some years of fighting, the colonisers abandoned these methods for others which proved just as deadly. In the capital, Port Blair, they established the 'Andaman Home', where

they kept captured Andamanese. The tribespeople were treated well and given gifts; then they were taken back to the forest, where it was hoped they would spread the news of their good treatment. The policy worked as planned – but the Andaman Home became not a haven but a tool of genocide. Disease and abuse became rife: of the 150 children born in the home, none survived beyond the age of two. By 1901, only 625 Andamanese remained alive – just 12% of the pre-settlement number. By 1931, there were only 90. In 1970, with fewer than 30 Great Andamanese remaining, the tribe was moved to the tiny Strait Island by the Indian authorities, on whom they have been totally dependent for food, clothing and shelter ever since.

Onge

The Onge tribe now numbers 99 individuals living on Little Andaman, in a reserve less than a third of the size of the land they originally inhabited. They too have experienced dramatic population loss, their numbers dropping



**'I am civilised, and they are not
civilised.'**

Indian lawyer urging forcible settlement
of the Jarawa, 2001

by more than 85% in the hundred years from 1901. Like the Andamanese, the once independent and self-sufficient Onge have been made dependent on the administration. The Indian government established a plantation in which they attempted to force the tribe to work as payment for food and housing – a form of ‘bonded labour’, close to slavery. But the Onge have largely refused to work in the plantation, and the government has had to continue to give them rations.

As with all the Andaman tribes, the Onge, though regarded as ‘primitives’ in need of ‘civilising’, are experts at living in their rainforest home. The Indian Fisheries Department, for instance, once posted an inspector and fishermen with the Onge to teach them modern fishery. The fishermen soon admitted that it was they who had much to learn from the Onge about how to fish in their waters.

Jarawa

‘Jarawa’ means ‘strangers’ or ‘the other people’ in the Andamanese language; the people we call the Jarawa are believed to call themselves ‘Ya-eng-nga’. Unlike the Onge and Great Andamanese, they remained voluntarily isolated from the settlers on their islands for nearly 150 years, hostile to these invaders who encroached upon their land and poached their game. In 1974, the Indian government began holding monthly ‘contact meetings’ with Jarawa groups – but the tribespeople never allowed them to enter their forests or approach them from land, nor did they return the visits.

Jarawa men. The administration ‘befriended’ the Jarawa by bringing gifts such as red cloth and coconuts.

But in late 1998, the Jarawa suddenly began to come out of their forests into Indian settlements, without their bows and arrows. From what little is understood of their language, it appears that pressure from poachers along the coast drove them inland onto the main road and into settlements. This change places them in grave danger. Firstly, they have no immunity to common diseases such as measles and flu, which can therefore be fatal. An epidemic could quite easily wipe out the whole tribe in just a couple of months. Furthermore, they face an even greater risk of losing their land. The other tribes of the Andamans lost almost all their land soon after making friendly contact with outsiders. It is predominantly the Jarawa’s reputation for hostility which has protected their land from invasion by settlers – now they are losing that reputation, their land is increasingly under threat.

Sentinelese

The Sentinelese probably number 50 to 200 people and have no friendly contact with outsiders. They live on their own (47 sq km) island and attack anyone who comes near it. The Indian government has made a number of unsuccessful attempts to befriend them, but at present no attempts at contact are being made. Survival believes this should continue, as the tribe’s right to remain uncontacted



– and their clearly expressed wish to do so – must be respected.

The future

Pressure is now mounting for all the tribes to become assimilated into mainstream Indian society – particularly the Jarawa, who have established limited friendly contact. If forced to leave their land and lead a settled lifestyle the Jarawa would become dependent on the administration; assuming, that is, that they survive the onslaught of disease and despondency invariably brought on by forced settlement. The same could also happen to the Sentinelese. So far, Survival’s campaign for the Jarawa is having a significant impact: the high court has temporarily halted local

government plans to settle the tribe forcibly, while the supreme court of India has ordered that the trunk road which passes through their territory, bringing with it settlers, loggers, poachers and disease, be closed. It has also ordered that all logging in the Andamans cease and all settlers on tribal and forest lands be immediately removed. This adds up to one of the biggest successes in Survival’s history. But we must continue our campaign to ensure that these orders are implemented fully and that the temporary order to halt settlement plans is made permanent. The Andaman tribes must have their rights recognised – to make their own decisions about their way of life, and to own and control their land and forests.



'I HAVE ONLY THE NAME "AMUNGME" LEFT. THE MOUNTAINS, THE RIVERS, THE FORESTS ALL BELONG TO FREEPORT AND THE GOVERNMENT NOW. I HAVE NOTHING.' Amungme elder, 1995

PAPUA, INDONESIA

A brutal invasion

The peoples and the island

Papua – formerly called Irian Jaya by the Indonesians – is the western half of the island of New Guinea. The other half is the independent country of Papua New Guinea. New Guinea is the second largest island in the world, and has an astonishing cultural and linguistic diversity: it contains only 0.01% of the world's population, but contains 15% of the world's known languages.

Papua itself is home to about 2.2 million people. There are 312 tribes, some numbering as few as four people – until a census in 2000 only around 250 tribes were known of, and it is likely that there are others who still have no contact with outsiders. All Papua's tribal people are Melanesians, ethnically, culturally and linguistically distinct from the Malay Indonesians who rule them from Jakarta,

3,000 miles to the west. They do not see themselves as Asians.

Papua and its peoples are divided between the highlands and the lowlands. The central mountainous range is home to the highland tribes, sometimes known as the *kotekas* after the hollow gourds which the men wear over their penises. These tribes rear pigs, grow sweet potatoes, hunt, and gather some roots, berries and nuts; they include the Amungme, on whose land the giant Grasberg mine is built, and the Dani of the Baliem valley. The lowland peoples, such as the Asmat and Kamoro, live in the swampy and malarial coastal areas which contain abundant sago palms and game.

History

The Dutch colonised Papua in 1714, but actually had very little presence there. When they handed over their East

Asmat woman, Papua

‘You can kill me, cut off my head if you will, but my body will walk back to that land. It is ours.’ Papuan man sent to prison over a land dispute, 1980s

Indies colony to Indonesia in 1950 they did not include Papua – which has no ethnic or geographical connection with the rest of Indonesia – intending instead to prepare it for its own independence. The Papuans began to choose a name (Papua), a flag and a system of leadership. But Indonesia insisted that the Dutch must hand over their former colony in its entirety – and threatened otherwise to take it by force with support from the Soviet Union. In 1962, under pressure from the US which was fearful of an Indonesian-Soviet alliance, the Dutch agreed to a deal brokered by the United Nations (UN). Under the terms of the deal, the UN would administer ‘West New Guinea’ in preparation for a referendum, called ‘The Act of Free Choice’. In this referendum, the Papuans were supposed to vote either for independence or to become part of Indonesia.

In 1963, the UN handed the territory to the Indonesians, who renamed it Irian Barat, then Irian Jaya, before finally agreeing to the name ‘Papua’ in 2002. In 1969, ‘The Act of Free Choice’ finally took place. It is commonly known in Papua as ‘The Act Free of Choice’, as only 1,025 handpicked Papuans were allowed to vote, some literally with guns at their heads. Unsurprisingly, they voted unanimously to become part of Indonesia.

Papua’s tribal peoples were deeply unhappy at the Indonesian takeover of their land. The Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM – the Free Papua Movement) was formed, an armed independence movement which is still active. It made international headlines in 1996 by taking hostage a group of European and Indonesian scientists for four months: two Indonesians were killed when the hostages were freed by the Indonesian army.

Transmigration

The Indonesian government’s transmigration programme aims to move millions of people from the densely populated central islands of Indonesia into the outer islands, such as Papua. The programme assumes that there are large tracts of unused land on these islands; but in reality these are the homes of tribal peoples who depend on their lands for their survival. The programme also has a more sinister and racist agenda; to ‘Indonesianise’ the tribal peoples. Government officials have spoken of breeding the Papuans out of existence. The governor of Papua has said, ‘[Intermarriage] will give birth to a new generation of people without curly hair, sowing the seeds for greater beauty.’

Although the official transmigration programme has slowed in recent years, spontaneous migration is a grave and

AMUNGME LIFE

The Amungme tribe lives in the central highlands; in their language, their name means ‘the first’ or ‘the real people’. The Amungme, like other tribes in Papua, want to be recognised as a distinct people.

Amungme men and women live in separate houses, the children with the women. Reciprocity is one of the four basic principles of Amungme life. One reason the Amungme are so angered by the mining companies on their land is the lack of reciprocity shown towards them. They have given their land, copper and gold – and have received almost nothing in return. Under Amungme law, land cannot be sold, and its owners are always entitled to its profits – be they sweet potatoes or gold.

The Amungme have many taboos about what can and cannot be destroyed, which effectively conserve their forest. But the mining companies have broken many of them and destroyed much sacred land – including the mountain peaks and glaciers where the Amungme believe their ancestors’ spirits live.



'If you ask whether they agree to move from the area, of course they agree because they are being forced with a gun.'

Amungme leader, about the displacement of his people by the Freeport mine, 1997

continuing problem for Papua's tribal peoples: hundreds of settlers arrive each week by boat, leaving the Papuans ever more marginalised in their own land.

Grasberg

Exploitation of their natural resources is a major problem for the peoples of Papua. The notorious Grasberg mine in the south-central highlands is the largest copper and gold mine in the world, making more than US \$1 million profit per day. The American company Freeport McMoRan owns over 80% of Grasberg; the Indonesian government and British company Rio Tinto also have financial interests in it. The mine has had a devastating impact on both the highland Amungme, whose land it occupies, and the lowland Kamoro, who suffer from the effects of the mine's waste. In the last 35 years, the Amungme have seen their sacred mountains destroyed by the mine, and watched as their relatives are killed by Indonesian soldiers 'defending' it, while the Kamoro have well over 200,000 tons of mining waste pumped into their rivers

each day. Neither tribe has had their rights recognised or received proper compensation.

Freeport has been working in the area since 1967. Since then many Amungme who had been living in the area of the mine have been relocated to lowland villages, where they suffer from diseases such as malaria. Amungme land and forests are also under pressure from the many outsiders who have moved into the area for jobs. Kamoro have also been relocated because of the pollution, which has flooded their rivers and killed not only the fish, but also the sago trees which are their main source of food. Freeport's current expansion of the mine with the help of more than US \$750 million from the British company Rio Tinto spells more disaster for the Amungme and Kamoro.

The mine is seen as a 'vital project' by the government of Indonesia, which provides soldiers to protect it. As a consequence, the area around the mine is now one of the most militarised areas in Indonesia – leading to many terrible human rights violations. Local people believe that Freeport's own security personnel have been involved in the killings, torture and disappearances that have occurred around the mine.

Freeport is currently exploring along almost the entire central mountain range.

New Guinea contains 0.01% of the world's population, but 15% of the world's known languages.

MILITARY

The Indonesian military has a long and shocking history of horrific human rights violations against the Papuans – including murder, rape, massacres and torture. Amongst all the terrible abuse of tribal peoples in the modern world, Indonesia's treatment of the Papuans stands out as the worst for its sheer scale and ferocity.

'Operation Annihilation', launched in 1977, was a violent attack against the peoples of the central highlands. The military bombed villages from planes; others they occupied on the ground, shooting people at random. Tribal leaders thought to be sympathetic to the OPM (Free Papua Movement) were dropped out of helicopters over tribal villages as an 'example'. The rivers were full of bodies, and almost every family in the highlands lost someone to the violence. Many families were wiped out completely.

Today the military operates more subtly, and the army bans all outsiders, including Papuans, from many areas where it is operating. What information it is possible to get suggests that the abuse, although not matching the appalling scale of the late 1970s, is still horrendous. Church and human rights teams find evidence of murder, abduction and torture of innocent people in reprisal for real or imagined sympathy for the independence movement. In areas where the army is operating, hundreds have been known to die from hunger or disease, because they are too scared to leave their hiding places to hunt or gather food. Women and girls as young as three years old have been systematically raped and gang-raped.

In one incident in July 1998, a large group of independence supporters was gathered peacefully around the banned Papuan flag on the island of Biak when the army and police opened fire. Survivors were taken prisoner. Eyewitnesses who escaped reported that people were loaded onto navy ships and taken out to sea where they were shot and then thrown into the sea; women were raped and sexually mutilated before they were thrown overboard. No one knows how many people died: only eight deaths have been confirmed, and three people officially reported missing – many are too afraid to report the disappeared. But soon afterwards, 32 bodies, many badly mutilated and some with their hands tied together, were washed up on the Biak shore. Others will probably never be found.

In total, an estimated 100,000 Papuans have been killed by the Indonesian armed forces since 1963.

RACISM

'In West Papua, the killings are motivated by racism.'

John Rumbiak, Papuan human rights campaigner, 2001

Almost all the atrocities against the Papuans are generated by racism, which is prevalent at every level. Racism is not just offensive to the peoples of Papua, it has been used to justify the theft of their land and the deaths of an estimated 100,000 people. The genocide continues.

Racist assumptions that the Papuans were too 'primitive' to decide their own future first led the international community to allow Indonesia to manipulate the Papuan vote on independence. This has resulted in more than 30 years of Indonesian oppression and brutality.

'I cannot imagine the US, Japanese, Dutch or Australian governments putting at risk their... relations with Indonesia on a matter of principle involving a relatively small number of very primitive people.' British diplomat, 1968

The racist view that Papuans should be 'bred out of existence' by bringing in 'more civilised' people from outside drives the Indonesian government's devastating transmigration policy, which has thrown Papuans off their lands and threatens to make them a minority in their own country.

'(Transmigration) was probably the only way of getting stone age, primitive and backward people into the mainstream of Indonesian development.'

Mochar Kusamaatmadja, Government minister, Indonesia, 1985

The racist belief that the Papuans are little more than animals is used by Indonesian soldiers to justify the horrific violence they mete out.

'There's nothing we can do. Everyone knows what the army is up to. They kill us like animals. If we protest more people will be murdered.'

Family of murdered youth, Weni Tabuni, 1997

The racist belief in the inferiority of the Papuans enables international companies to ignore their rights to the lands they have lived on for up to 40,000 years.

'Foreign people see us not as human beings, but as creatures that are still in the evolution stage to becoming human beings. Consequently these people, especially the companies and the Indonesian government, treat us like animals, with rough and cruel measures.' Tom Beanal, Amungme Chief, 1999



Dani girl. Her tribe probably suffered more than any other during the Indonesian military's Operation Annihilation in 1977.

Many other tribes fear that they too will lose their land and way of life. Proposed logging, oil-palm plantations, a road across the province and hydroelectric power stations also threaten the lands and livelihoods of the Papuans.

The future

Despite their many problems, there is hope for the peoples of Papua. Local opposition and international campaigns have stopped some of the worst 'development' projects. For example, Survival supported the Auyu people against the building of a Scott Paper pulp project which would have devastated their environment and way of life:

Scott Paper abandoned the project. After many years of campaigning from Survival and other organisations, the World Bank stopped funding the transmigration programme, which has led to a slowdown in the process. The tribal peoples of Papua are organising themselves to stand up against their oppressors. Tribal leaders from all over Papua met in 2000 and formed the 'Presidium Council'. The council, together with other leaders, is pushing for peaceful solutions to Papua's problems.

Altogether, the tribal peoples of Papua are calling increasingly loudly for their right to decide their own future, to be independent from Indonesia and to live on their own lands in peace.



‘THE GOVERNMENT SAYS WE ARE ANIMALS, LIKE ANIMALS IN THE FOREST. WE ARE NOT ANIMALS IN THE FOREST. WE ARE PENAN. HUMANS. I MYSELF KNOW I AM HUMAN.’ Penan man, 1997

SARAWAK, MALAYSIA

Guardians of the forest

The peoples and the island

On the north-west coast of Borneo is Sarawak, the largest of the Malaysian states, rich in natural resources such as gas and oil, and covered with large areas of dense rainforest. This forest is home to about 200,000 tribal people. Many more people of tribal descent live in the towns, making up almost half of Sarawak’s population of 2 million. But more recent arrivals, ethnically Malay, dominate Sarawak’s political hierarchy, while commerce and industry are mainly in the hands of people of Chinese descent.

Most of Sarawak’s tribal peoples live in longhouses and cultivate rice. The largest tribe is the Iban, often called Dayaks, but there are around two dozen other peoples such as the Kayan, Kenyah, and Kelabit, who also live in

settled villages and practise agriculture. A small minority of Sarawak’s tribal peoples are traditionally nomadic hunter-gatherers. Today, the only nomads are from the Penan tribe: most Penan are now settled or semi-settled, growing some crops along with hunting and gathering, but about 300 still lead an entirely nomadic way of life. The land and its resources are vital for the survival of Sarawak’s tribal population. It provides them with their livelihood and also the focus for many of their spiritual beliefs.

The longhouses of the settled tribes are each home to a whole village. Every family occupies a separate room which opens onto a shared verandah. Each longhouse community shares a large area of communal land for hunting and collecting forest produce. The land is also a reserve for future cultivation. Each family has access to enough land

Penan man with jack fruit

to feed itself, and by cultivating a plot of land acquires rights over it.

The settled communities are scattered along the rivers and their tributaries, along which they travel and which provide them with fish. Many

Whatever Penan adults do, they are usually accompanied by children, who learn by watching and copying them. Children are expected to share everything in the same way as adults – one boy was nicknamed ‘Teléé’ (pygmy squirrel) for not sharing one with his friends.

communities practise a form of agriculture called ‘shifting cultivation’. An area of forest is cleared and planted with crops, usually rice, and after two seasons the land is allowed to revert to forest and the farmers clear a new area. Although this system is much criticised, it is generally the only sustainable way of cultivating tropical forest soils.

The nomadic Penan live well back from the main rivers, building their temporary shelters on forested ridge tops. Their

‘There is a saying in Penan — like fish being abandoned by water. That is how the ‘development’ from the government affects us. We do not get anything from it, we cannot even move. We cannot breathe. We die. What we want is our forest. We are not asking for all the forest there is — we only want a little, just enough for our needs.’

Johnny Lalang, Penan man, 2002

territory – crisscrossed by a maze of hunting tracks and trading paths – is defined by streams, rivers, rocks and mountains, all of which they have named. Within this territory, no one is considered to own individually any part of the land, but particular fruit trees and groves of sago palm do have specific owners. The Penan have a gentle and egalitarian society with no hierarchy, in which no one can force anyone to do anything. Children are full members of society, and from a very young age enjoy its privileges and contribute by collecting food, hunting, weaving or gathering firewood. No Penan would ever cut across another’s speech, let alone shout. Sharing is taken for granted: there is no Penan word for ‘thank you’, and a hunter must not eat his game until he has divided it into equal shares and distributed it to all the families in the community.

The Penan rely heavily on sago, a fast-growing wild palm tree. To make flour, they fell trees, shred the pithy wood and filter it to extract the starch. This flour is the Penan’s staple food, and with hunted meat and wild fruit gives the Penan one of the world’s healthiest diets. Gathering and preparing sago is less work than

growing food, giving the nomadic Penan huge amounts of leisure time.

Colonisation

In 1839, an English adventurer called James Brooke arrived in Borneo and established a personal kingdom which he called Sarawak. He founded a dynasty of ‘White Rajahs’, which ended with the Japanese occupation during World War II. In 1946, Sarawak was handed over to British colonial rule, and in 1963 incorporated into the Federation of Malaysian States. Today, Sarawak is still a part of Malaysia.

The current Malaysian government has a policy of settling the nomadic Penan, believing a nomadic life is ‘backward’ and an agricultural existence more ‘developed’. All but about 300 Penan have been settled, and some now live in government-built longhouses, rather than the smaller, temporary homes they

About 300 Penan still lead an entirely nomadic way of life.



build for themselves. But even those who have been settled and are growing some food still rely heavily on hunting and gathering. They have neither the expertise nor the enthusiasm for farming to provide enough food for their families by this method alone. Instead, they still rely very heavily on forest sago, hunted meat and other forest products.

Problems

Since the 1970s, the tribal peoples' land has been taken to make way for 'development' in the form of logging, mining, tourism, dams and oil palm plantations. Thousands have been resettled or forced to move to the towns. They crowd into slum dwellings where poor nutrition, lack of employment and appalling sanitation cause dire problems and reduce the people to abject poverty. Shifting cultivators have been forced off their lands, and the nomadic Penan have been told by the government that they have no rights to any land at all until they 'settle down'. The tribal peoples' way of life and their balanced system of rights and obligations are being destroyed by legal systems imposed from outside and state propaganda about the cultural 'inferiority' of tribal peoples. The few rights the tribes have to their lands can

Sharing is taken for granted in Penan society: there is no Penan word for 'thank you'.

be taken away from them at the whim of the government.

One current project, the Bakun dam, will flood an area the size of Singapore and has already displaced 10,000 tribal people who have been given inadequate compensation and poor living conditions in return for their forest homes.

Logging

The logging industry has had the most devastating impact on the lives of Sarawak's tribes. Timber is the single largest source of export revenue for the state government, with the biggest market being Japan, and the control of the timber trade is at the heart of Sarawak's politics. The Malaysian government claims that Sarawak is being logged sustainably – but in fact Sarawak's forests are being destroyed at one of the fastest rates in the world. In 1991, a World Bank report estimated the rate of logging in Sarawak to be four times above the sustainable rate.

As a result, the rivers are silted up, pollution is killing the fish and the game is being scared deeper into the few remaining forests. The resulting malnutrition and water-borne diseases kill tribal people. But they have fiercely resisted this destruction of their land and threat to their lives. After repeated appeals to both federal and state governments, they were forced to adopt more direct methods. Since 1987, men, women and children have repeatedly blockaded the logging roads, sometimes



for long periods, and come into conflict with the logging companies.

The government and the logging companies reacted to these peaceful protests by changing the law to make blockading of roads a criminal offence; hundreds of tribal people have been harassed, arrested and imprisoned as a result. But this has not stopped the blockades. The Penan and other tribal peoples are determined not to let their last remaining forest be destroyed.

The future

Despite the bleak situation in Sarawak there have been some encouraging signs. In the past, logging companies worked freely even on those parts of the tribal

Penan argue so rarely that places where confrontations have taken place are still named after the argument decades later.

lands that had been officially recognised as belonging to tribal people – but blockades have been successful in forcing them off such lands, and some legal cases have gone in the favour of the tribes. In May 2001, in a landmark ruling in a case brought by members of the Iban tribe, a judge finally recognised that tribes like the Iban do actually own their land, and companies have no right to log on it, irrespective of whether the government has given them permits. The tribal peoples of Sarawak hope that their continued resistance to the theft of their land will help them to win back more control over it.



'WE ARE ON THE EVE OF TOTAL ANNIHILATION.'

Upendra Lal Chakma, 1980s

CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS, BANGLADESH

Genocide in the hills

The peoples and the land

The eleven Jumma tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) number 600,000 people altogether. They are the original inhabitants of the Hill Tracts, and their cultures, religions, languages and ethnic origin are entirely different to those of the majority Bengali population of Bangladesh. The Buddhist Chakma and Marma tribes are the largest, numbering 350,000 and 140,000 people each, followed by the Hindu Tripura, of whom there are 60,000. The other tribes number another 50,000 or so people altogether. The Buddhist emphasis on the scriptures has helped give the CHT the highest literacy rates in Bangladesh.

The rugged Chittagong Hill Tracts cover an area of around 13,200 sq km. There is little flat land suitable for intensive

agriculture, so the tribes of the Hill Tracts practise a sophisticated form of 'shifting cultivation' to get the best out of their steep slopes. They clear and burn the surface vegetation before planting a mixture of crops to provide a variety of foods all year round. At the end of the annual cycle the land is left to recover, and the people move on to a new area. Communities need large areas of land, as only a small fraction is in use at any one time. This practice is known locally as 'Jhum cultivating'—hence the name 'Jumma' to refer to the tribes of the area. The system has worked for centuries, and is the only truly sustainable way to farm in the hilly regions.

In 1947, 98% of the population of the CHT was Jumma. Now it is only half, and the Jummas are in danger of becoming a minority in their own land.

Chakma child

'It is only because of your [Survival's] efforts that we have a ray of hope for our survival.' Jumma, 1999

The history

The Jummas have been ruled by outsiders for many years. Under British colonial rule, they enjoyed relative autonomy. At first a superintendent policed the area with three tribal chiefs who were recognised as *rajahs*, or rulers. Then in 1900, the Jummas were formally granted self-government in internal affairs, with the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation, which also prevented non-tribal people from settling in tribal areas.

With Indian independence and partition in 1947, the CHT, along with the rest of Bangladesh, became part of Pakistan – and the Jummas lost much of their autonomy. The Pakistani government allowed Bengali Muslims to move into the CHT and take the best land, causing great resentment amongst the Jummas and driving many into India. In 1964, the Jummas of the CHT lost the right to self-government, although the CHT Regulation was never formally annulled.

In the 1960s, the situation for the Jumma tribes began a slide towards catastrophe. The Kaptai Dam was built by the Pakistani government in the heart of the CHT to generate electricity. It submerged almost half of the most fertile land and displaced one third of the

population. Tribal people were driven into more barren land in the hills, and as many as 40,000 fled to north-east India, where many still live. There they are denied their rights, not accepted as citizens of either India or Bangladesh.

After Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan in 1971, matters worsened. The new government refused the Jummas' request for a return to autonomy, and unleashed violent military raids. Many more tribal people fled in fear to India, and their lands were given to Bengalis who were moved into the CHT. This violence continues today.

In response to these attacks, a Jumma political party, the Jana Samhati Samiti, was formed. Its military wing, the Shanti Bahini, waged a war against government troops. Government retribution attacks and 'counter-insurgency' forced many more Jummas to flee. By 1990, around 57,000 Jummas – 10% – were living in camps in India and about 30,000 were hiding in the forests of the Hill Tracts.

From 1988, many of the Jummas were moved into 'cluster villages' to isolate them from the Shanti Bahini. They were 'guarded' by the military and their movements controlled. Not surprisingly many described these 'villages' as concentration camps.

Bengali settlers

The movement of Bengali settlers into the Chittagong Hill Tracts has been

Chakma mother and child



MRU

The Mru are one of the smaller tribes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. They number around 22,000, and live high up in the hills. Mru men wear loin-cloths and the women short cloth skirts. Both men and women wear their hair long and tied in a high knot; on special occasions, they wear elaborate combs and flowers in it, and the men decorate themselves by colouring their lips red and blackening their teeth. Mru houses stand on stilts to protect them from the monsoon rains and uneven ground. Racist attitudes towards them are common, unfortunately both inside and outside the CHT, for example in the claims that they are the most 'backward' and 'primitive' tribe.

engineered by the government as a way to assimilate the Jummas into Bengali culture. Underway since the late 1940s, it became official policy in 1979 when the 'Bangladeshi Population Transfer Programme' was launched, backed by a larger army presence. The government saw the CHT as empty land onto which it could put landless Bengali poor: settlers were offered cash, Jumma land and food rations as incentives to move to the area. From 1977 to 1987 about 300,000 Bengalis moved into the Hill Tracts.

In the face of protests, the government promised that no more Bengalis would be moved into the CHT. Yet there is still a steady stream of Bengali men going to the area, mostly surreptitiously, and marrying Bengali women already there. Many settlers who were given the best lands in the area are still receiving the rations which they were originally offered as an incentive.

Human rights abuses

The CHT was for a long time closed to outsiders, meaning that many of the human rights abuses that occurred have gone unreported. But in November 1990, an independent body of international experts, the CHT Commission, was invited to the Hill Tracts by the Bangladesh government, which wanted to counter the accusations against it. The plan backfired, as the team discovered overwhelming evidence of human rights abuses.

The commission found that people were regularly tortured and killed, women raped, villages burned and places of worship destroyed. There were over 600 reported serious human rights violations in 1990 alone. The commission was shocked by the number of soldiers in the area – approximately one for every six tribal people – and the constant state of terror in which the Jummas live.

In April 1992, Survival reported that an estimated 1,200 tribal people were burnt alive in their homes by the military in the 'cluster village' of Logang. In November 1993, the military and Bengali settlers joined together to attack a peaceful demonstration in Naniachar – more than 100 Jummas were massacred and up to 500 injured.

Due in part to pressure from Survival, the situation improved after 1993. But abuses – including disappearances, killings, and rape by soldiers – still took place. Kalpana Chakma, 23, leader of the Jumma organisation the Hill Women's Federation, was abducted from her home by security forces in June 1996; she is still missing. An official enquiry has not publicised its findings.

The future

Negotiations between the Jana Samhati Samiti and the army began in 1992 and resulted in a long ceasefire between the military and the Shanti Bahini. But many violations were reported, and the army maintained its heavy presence in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

In December 1997 the Jummas signed a peace deal with the Bangladesh government. It includes the setting up of a regional council led by Jummas to administer the CHT, and gives them some control over their land. The deal is not an end to the problems of the Jummas, but was seen by most as a significant move forward. A Jumma representative told Survival that it was a 'positive step' and that the Bangladesh government 'would never have come to the negotiation table' without pressure from Survival and other organisations.

But the government has failed to realise many of the promises it made to the Jummas. The army still has a huge, dominant presence in the CHT and settlers are still armed and supported by the military. Many of the Jummas who returned from the refugee camps have not yet had their land returned to them. Survival is maintaining pressure on the government of Bangladesh.

The Mru live in thatched bamboo houses raised on stilts, usually remote from other Jumma tribes.



SIBERIA, RUSSIA

Tribes of the frozen north

The peoples and the land

Siberia is a land of long, bitterly cold winters where temperatures reach as low as -70°C . It is home to 30 distinct tribes, the ‘northern indigenous peoples’, who range in number from under 200 (the Oroks) to as many as 34,000 (the Nenets); together they number more than 200,000 people. Two larger indigenous peoples, the Sakha (formerly known as Yakuts) and Komi, have their own republics within the Russian state. The origins of these tribes are distant and complex. Their languages belong to many different linguistic families; some speak languages with no similarities to any other; none are related to Russian.

Russia’s indigenous peoples live in three distinct climatic zones: tundra (arctic plain), forest tundra (where a few stubby trees manage to grow), and taiga

(coniferous forest). The forest tundra and taiga are home to bears, elk, foxes and birds. The Udege, in the far south-east, share their land with bears and the rare Siberian tiger, which is sacred to them. Further north, in the tundra, it is so cold that very few species of animal or plant can survive, leaving only reindeer, arctic foxes, lichen and a few species of bird and fish. The ecosystem is so fragile that it can take more than 50 years for a tree to grow head high.

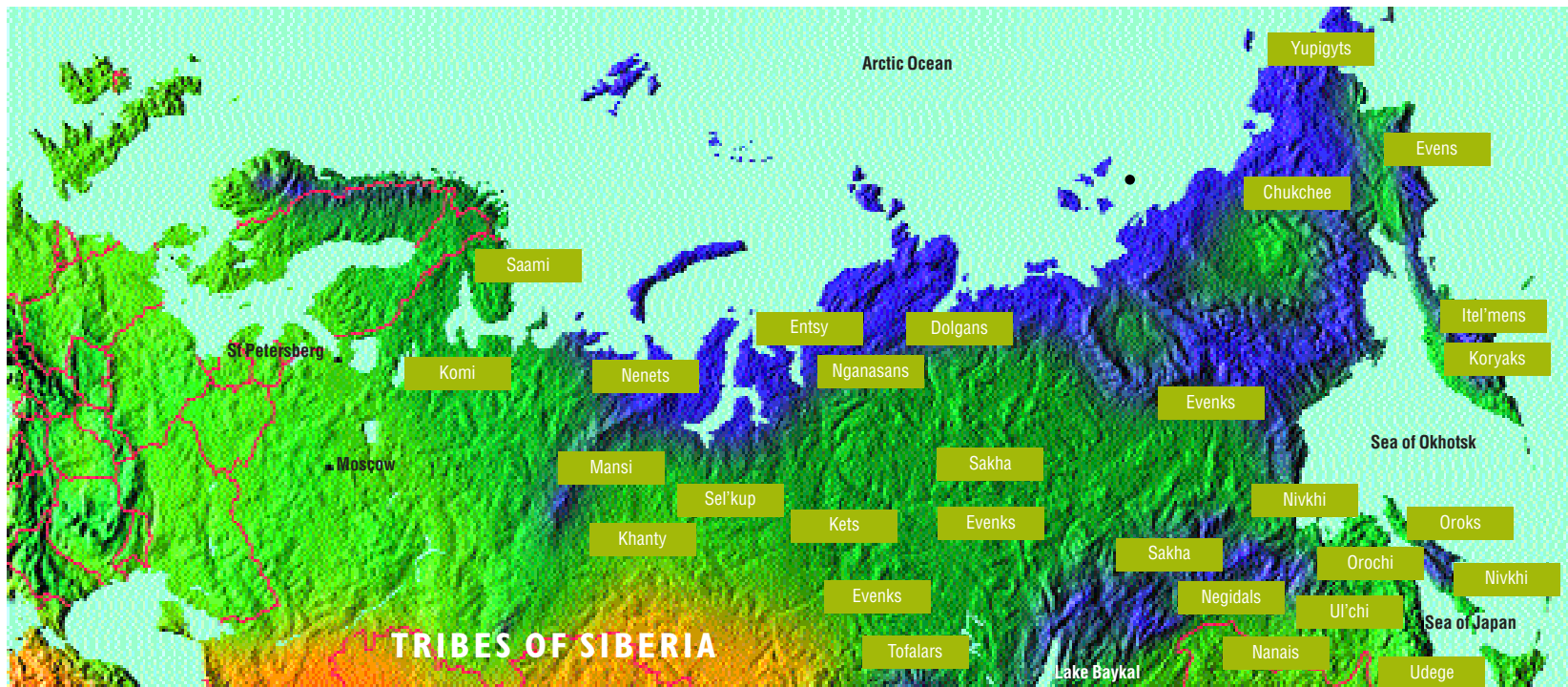
The tribal peoples in the tundra are reindeer-herders, while those in the forest or by the sea live by herding, hunting and fishing. The reindeer-

The tribal peoples of Siberia live in an area which covers 58% of Russia.

Chukchee reindeer herders, Kamchatka

**‘O GODS, DELIVER MY LAND FROM OIL!
O GODS, PUT THE LAND BACK IN MY HANDS!’**

Yeremai Alpin, Khanty poet and writer, 1989



TRIBES OF SIBERIA

herders are nomads, and follow the reindeer around their land in a cyclical pattern. They make their houses, called *chum*, from reindeer skins, and take them with them as they move from place to place. The hunters live in permanent or semi-permanent settlements. Their houses are made from wood and insulated with earth and moss; often they are sunken into the ground for extra warmth. In the past, these peoples would move around between up to five different settlements in separate hunting grounds, but many now stay in the same

place all the time. Today only 10% of the tribal people live a nomadic or semi-nomadic life, compared to 70% just 30 years ago. Most of the others live in Soviet-style settlements, where almost half the population are involved in herding, fishing and hunting.

History

In the 1930s and 1940s, the Soviet authorities took over much tribal land for state-run industries. The tribes lost their reindeer pastures and fishing sites, and

with them food and their way of life. Industrialisation brought migrants to Siberia, making the indigenous peoples a minority in their own land. The arrivals were paid more for the same work and had a far higher standard of living – a disparity which continues today.

From 1950 to the mid-1980s, the authorities tried to suppress all ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences – even to the point of destroying languages and cultures. Shamans were killed. Children were sent to schools which did not teach

their own languages, and some were punished for speaking them. In many communities now, young people, who speak only Russian, cannot talk with their own grandparents, who speak only their own indigenous language.

Meanwhile, the government cleared many tribal villages, forcing the people into larger official settlements. Different tribes' communities were amalgamated in an attempt to turn the country into a homogeneous Soviet state. Tribal peoples' means of providing for

Land ownership rights are the key to Siberia's tribal peoples gaining control of their future.

themselves were stolen from them, as nomads were made to settle in areas that were impractical for hunting or grazing, and restrictions were imposed on hunting and fishing. Instead people became dependent on the state for subsidies and salaries. This loss of the tribal peoples' own ways of life led to despair, alcoholism and high suicide rates – problems that still today plague the peoples of the north.

With the collapse of Soviet communism, the infrastructure that supported the large state enterprises broke down and with it went salaries and subsidies. Many people have now returned to subsistence herding and hunting to survive.

Pollution & health

In western Siberia, pollution from the oil and gas industries has affected vast areas of tribal land. Huge flares burn off excess gas day and night, and oil often gets into the rivers, killing the fish and plant life. Forests have been cut down and reindeer pastures have been devastated. The delicate ecosystem of the tundra will take generations to recover.

Industry has also destroyed sacred sites. The Khanty watched in horror as their

sacred riverbed, a fish spawning ground on the river Sob, was dug up to mine gravel. Now the fish can no longer breed there, destroying both the Khanty's livelihood and way of life. In the south-east, the Udege's forests are under threat from loggers, while in the north-east the Evenks', Evens' and Yukagirs' lands are contaminated by radiation from failed nuclear tests.

Such pollution has ravaged the health of Siberia's tribal peoples. Radiation from the nuclear testing in the early 1970s has caused very high levels of cancers; tuberculosis and other respiratory illnesses are rife, and made worse by poor living conditions. Child mortality is nearly twice the national average. The Tchita Evenk are a typical case: one in every five of their children is infected with tuberculosis; half have a neurological disorder. Birth rates are decreasing and life expectancy for the tribal peoples is 18 years less than for the rest of the Russian population.

Land rights

The issue of indigenous land rights is complicated in Russia, as there is almost no legal land ownership. The Soviet government saw no value in land, or its resources, unless it was utilised in a way they understood. The Land Legislation Act of 1968 made all land – including tribal peoples' land – available free of charge to communal farms and enterprises. The concept of awarding compensation to indigenous people for damages caused to their land by such

DEMITRI'S STORY As told to Survival, 2000

'I was born in 1963 in the place where there is now Pokachi town. When I was 11 years old a company came to our land and tested it for oil, then they built the town. They didn't come and talk to us about it. Lots of machines came onto our land and workers too. Before the workers came, a lot of families lived on the land and they all herded reindeer. But when the oil workers came we lost lots of reindeer; the oil workers would eat them. We never got any compensation for lost reindeer or for our land. The oil people brought in vodka and gave it in exchange for fish or meat or furs. Before the oil people came we only had vodka maybe once a year.

My father died and we had to move. The other families welcomed us; relations between families were better than now – there was more land to share, and the land was beautiful. Sometimes we lived in *chum* [reindeer skin tents] and sometimes in winter we used log houses as they are warmer.

I was forced to leave my family and community to go to boarding school. We all were. Of the 27 people in my class at school only six or seven are alive now. At least two hanged themselves, and many others died of drink-related incidents. I am 37 years old now.

I live on a land which is rich in oil but I don't even have petrol for my skidoo. People say a lot of beautiful words about it being a rich region but in reality the Khanty are very poor. There are no benefits from the oil companies, no positive things. The oil companies say that they have brought civilisation to the Khanty, energy and so on. But if there were no oil workers the Khanty could do everything without these comfortable things.

It is difficult to speak to the director of the oil companies in his office, it is easier to see a king than the employers of the oil companies.'

Demetri Aipin, Khanty reindeer herder, hunter and fisherman



things as oil pollution is only slowly emerging, and the issue of their land ownership rights has not yet been addressed fully. A law passed in 1999 decreed that most issues concerning tribal peoples should be resolved at regional level, meaning that they are heavily dependent on the whim of particular local governments for the recognition of their rights.

The future

In 1990, the first congress of the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) took place in Moscow, its goal 'to unite all our strengths in order to survive.' Its demands, aimed at greater control over land and resources, have yet to be met – tribal land rights are still not recognised, companies do not properly consult the indigenous peoples before they take their resources from their land, and the ILO convention on tribal and indigenous peoples has yet to be ratified.

Chukchee children, Chukotka

But since the foundation of RAIPON, things have improved and important concessions are being won. Logging and oil companies, and particularly the Russian authorities, have been susceptible to international pressure and Survival's campaigns have had a number of successes. Following a Survival campaign, logging was stopped on Udege land in 1992. In 1999, a few months after Survival asked its supporters to write to the governor of the region, a five year moratorium on oil and gas exploration was ordered on the land of the Yugan Khanty.

As with tribal peoples all over Asia, and the rest of the world, recognition of land ownership rights is the real key to Siberia's tribal peoples gaining control over their land and their lives. When concerned individuals around the world are prepared to take action, the tribal peoples of Siberia – and the rest of Asia – have a chance to have their land rights recognised and thus a real hope for their future.

'I don't want anything, only my land. Give me my land back where I can graze my reindeer, hunt game and catch fish. Give me my land where my deer are not attacked by stray dogs, where my hunting trails are not trampled down by poachers or fouled up by vehicles, where the rivers and lakes have no oil slicks. I want land where my home, my sanctuary and graveyard can remain inviolable. I want land where I could not be robbed of my clothes or boots in broad daylight. Give me my own land, not someone else's. Just a tiny patch of my own land.' Khanty elder, 1989

Survival

Survival International is a worldwide organisation supporting tribal peoples. It stands for their right to decide their own future and helps them protect their lives, lands and human rights. Survival is the only international organisation dedicated to campaigning for tribal peoples and works closely with hundreds of tribal organisations and communities in over 30 countries.

In order to maintain its integrity and independence, Survival does not accept money from any national government, or from any company which violates tribal peoples' rights. This ensures it retains a powerful and independent voice, and makes it reliant on individual supporters who provide nearly all of its funds. Survival has supporters in over 90 countries.

Survival is a registered charity, founded in 1969 in London, where it has its head office. It also has offices in France, Italy and Spain. Survival's staff and governing committee are drawn from many nationalities.

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NO WAR
NO NUCLEAR
NO DRUG ABUSE
NO CASTE SYSTEM
NO CORRUPTION
NO POLLUTION
NO OVERPOPULATION
NO NEED FOR WARMS



AND PEOPLE CALL THEM UNCIVILISED. They are the people a white man's feeble mind has decided are the savages of the world. In the Indian forest, they are the people who are the most civilised of all. They are the people who are the most civilised of all.

The people of the world are not savages. They are the people who are the most civilised of all. They are the people who are the most civilised of all. They are the people who are the most civilised of all.





**'LAND IS OUR LIFE AND BLOOD – WITHOUT OUR FOREST
WE CANNOT SURVIVE.'**

Penan man, Sarawak, Malaysia

**'OUR LAND IS EVERYTHING TO US. OUR LIFE AND OUR
FUTURE COME ONLY FROM THE LAND.'**

Amungme leader, Papua, Indonesia



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