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Guinea. As we are not sure of the directionality of the pre-Neolithic linguistic spread, the study of the Great Andamanese may open up some surprises, as many linguists believe that modern linguistic evidence can have something to say about early human prehistory.

I am a senior linguist working on the tribal languages of India for last 28 years. I have been duly recognized by the international bodies and have bagged national and international awards for my research on lesser-known languages of the country. I am also an advisor to the UNESCO on language issues.

I would like to request you to grant permission to visit Strait Island for the said research to my team and to me. The duration of the project is three years beginning November 2004 and we would require visiting the Island for two to three months every consecutive year. The exact timing and duration of the stay at the Strait Island may be decided in consultation with you and with Dr. Awaradhi, Director AAJVS, Port Blair.

As this is an important and serious national project of documenting our national heritage, I am sure all cooperation, help and encouragement will be forthcoming from you.

Thanking you,

Sincerely yours,



Arvita Abbi

Project Director: Vanishing Voices of the Great Andamanese)