



The Hindu - July 20, 2014

NGO petitions against Jarawa tourism in the Andamans

Meena Menon

NEW DELHI: Snaking queues of vehicles on the Andaman Grand Trunk Road has prompted a furious petition by Survival International, which has managed to get over 7,000 signatures so far against Jarawa tourism.

In 2002, the Supreme Court had ordered that the road be closed. Survival International, a global movement which works for tribal rights, said hordes of tourists continue to travel through the road, a part of the Jarawa Reserve, to spot the fast dwindling tribe.

A recent statement by the Bharatiya Janata Party MP from the Andaman Islands Bishnu Pada Ray has added to fears that the road could be widened for tourism.

Sophie Grig, senior campaigner at Survival International said, "Over 7,000 people have already joined Survival's petition and pledged not to visit the Andaman Islands over their outrage at the degrading 'human sa-

faris' to the Jarawa tribe. Yet, MP Bishnu Pada Ray has now announced a major investment in the road through the tribe's reserve. Why is the Indian government investing in this road when the alternative sea route would provide a faster, cheaper and more comfortable means of transport? It's time to let the Jarawa live in peace in their forest without the daily intrusion of hundreds of vehicles through their land."

Ms. Grig explained that the alternative sea route would enable people to travel north or south in the islands without invading the Jarawa's reserve. "But the plans for its implementation are moving forward at a snail's pace and are being stalled at every stage. It appears there is no political will to push it through. Instead of protecting the rights of his most vulnerable constituents, the local MP is pushing crowd-pleasing policies such as widening the road and mainstreaming, which would be disastrous for the Jarawa," she said.

Pe a registered

*As
20.7*

*Jan
24/07/14*
Consul General
Den (M)
pl pickup at home
12/7
23.7.14
lunars
21 Jul