



**The global movement  
for tribal peoples' rights**

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

March 1, 2017

Dear xxx,

**Re: Tourism boycott of Kaziranga National Park**

Survival International is launching a tourism boycott of India's Kaziranga National Park, until its park guards stop shooting people on sight.

A recent [BBC investigation](#) shows how tribal people living around Kaziranga are facing arrest and beatings, torture and death under the Park's notorious shoot on sight policy, which amounts to extrajudicial killing.

Fifty people have been executed there in the last three years, and a tribal man with severe learning disabilities was killed when looking for his lost cattle in 2013. Last year, guards shot and permanently maimed a seven-year old tribal boy as he walked along a path in his village. His father said: "He's changed, he used to be cheerful... In the night he wakes up in pain, and he cries for his mother."

Only a single guard has been killed by poachers over the last thirty years. Guards have effective immunity from prosecution and are encouraged to shoot suspects on sight, not to attempt to arrest and try poachers. The park authorities claim that they have no shoot on sight policy, but this isn't true. One guard said to the BBC that they are: "Fully ordered to shoot them, whenever you see the poachers or *any people* (our emphasis) during night-time we are ordered to shoot them." A report written by a Park Director revealed training slogans for guards such as: "kill the unwanted" and "must obey or get killed."

While tribal people can be killed for entering the park, more than 170,000 tourists are welcomed in each year.

If your company is offering tours to Kaziranga, it is effectively supporting a brutal model of "conservation" which violates one of the most fundamental principles of human rights law - that lethal force may only be used if it is absolutely necessary to save human life. We urge you to cancel further visits to Kaziranga until the authorities confirm that guards will now be required to comply with this principle, and will be prosecuted if they fail to do so.

We believe that this is not only the right thing to do but the least required of tour companies by the UN Guidelines on Business and Human Rights. Under these Guidelines all companies are expected to do what they can to prevent human rights violations committed by other entities to

which they are “linked” by a business relationship, even if the company itself has not played any part in the violations.

Kaziranga depends on the business which the tour companies bring to it, and Park authorities appear to believe that shoot on sight is the best way to protect this business. There is therefore a clear “link” between the tour companies and the gross violations that are now taking place. Tour companies must try to stop further violations by exercising their “leverage” over the Park authorities (to quote the expression used in the Guidelines themselves). This is precisely what we are asking you to do by supporting the boycott.

We hope we can count on your full support and co-operation, and will of course be happy to provide any further information you may require.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Corry".

Stephen Corry  
**Director**