

Isolated Peruvian Indigenous Group Seeks Out Food In Nearby Town



Lima, July 28 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Members of the Mashco-Piro native group of Peru made contact with residents living in the Rio de Madre Amazonian region over the weekend, reported local paper *El Comercio*.

Some residents took footage of the encounter, as the indigenous groups engaged in conversation and asked for yuca, plantains, machetes and ropes on the banks of *Madre de Dios* river. "The agents succeeded in communicating in Yine (an indigenous language), maintaining a dialogue for more than 20 minutes," Cesar Jojaje, the leader of a federation of indigenous people in the region, told the paper.

Then the indigenous members retreated peacefully in the forest. The Peruvian government expressed a week before its intention to make contact with the Mashco-Piro group, breaking with the policy of avoiding contacts with these groups to preserve their survival - as their immune system is not prepared to fight Western diseases, among other reasons.

Despite the formal prohibition – which is not properly reinforced with a system of fines for instance, many villagers, Christian proselytizers and tourists have already made contact with them.

The government justified the decision claiming the group was unexpectedly leaving their enclaves in the Manu National Park in southeastern Peru, seeking food and machetes in recent months, saying state anthropologists will make contact with them to understand the reasons.

Various human rights groups defending native groups, as Fenamad criticized the move saying, "Authorities should restrict boat transit and keep people from approaching," said Fenamad president Klaus Quicque, whose group, however, has approached the indigenous tribe to film them, an action that irritates the members of the Mashco-Piro.

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