

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

August 9th is World Indigenous Peoples Day! This is a time to honor the rich cultures, traditions and contributions of Indigenous communities worldwide. There are more than 476 million Indigenous people across more than 90 countries. In America alone, there are 5.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives. They possess a profound connection to their ancestral lands and maintain unique worldviews and ways of life that are deeply intertwined with nature. Many Indigenous people hold invaluable knowledge that has been passed down through generations.

World Indigenous Peoples Day was established by the United Nations in 1994 to raise awareness about Indigenous people and the challenges they face.

The 2024 theme for World Indigenous Peoples Day is “Protecting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact.” There are still around 200 groups of Indigenous Peoples that live in voluntary isolation and initial contact. They remain isolated for many reasons, such as to preserve their culture and language. Though they have the right to remain isolated, they face many challenges. The biggest danger to them is external contact and the exposure to disease. As an isolated group, they lack immunity to diseases that are common to us. Forced contact with the outside world could lead to the destruction of entire societies.

As we celebrate World Indigenous Peoples Day, let us work together to build a more equitable world where their rights and cultures are fully respected and cherished!



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