

# Instituto Socioambiental

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## Brazilian Explorers Contact Mysterious Tribe in Jungle

— CUIABA, Brazil — (UPI) — The Vilas-Boas brothers, renowned Brazilian explorers, are reported on the verge of establishing contact with a tribe of mysterious, tall Indians living in the way of a jungle road project.

Col. Olavo Duarte Mendes, head of the National Indian Foundation's regional headquarters, said Claudio and Orlando Vilas-Boas radioed that first tentative contact with the Kranhacocores Indians had been made on the banks of the River Renato.

"From what they tell me, we believe further contact is imminent," the colonel said. "They are presently at the stage where they are picking up presents."

The Vilas-Boas brothers, who direct the Xingu National Park, a major state-run Indian reserve, were dispatched to make peaceful contact with the Kranhacocores before arrival of the Cuiaba-Santarem highway, a project planned for the middle of the Mato Grosso forest in west-central Brazil.

The pacification team, which has been in the forest for about 10 months, has about 30 members, all of them Indians except for the Vilas-Boas.

The Kranhacocores have never been seen before by a white man but last week Claudio radioed that he had

encountered a Kranhacocore man and woman by the river. No words were exchanged but the brave pointed his bow and arrow at Claudio.

The Indian apparently was testing Claudio's courage. Vilas-Boas reportedly did not flinch and the Indian and his woman faded into the jungle.

The Kranhacocore is a nomadic tribe living in northern Mato Grosso.

The 540-mile Cuiaba-Santarem highway being pushed through the forest by a Brazilian Army engineering battalion will cut the Indian area in two. Brazil has an Indian population of about 100,000, of which perhaps 15,000 still have had no contact with white men.