

Bolsonaro's hatred for the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) has been well documented in the ex-army politician's career. He has been on record commenting that after he is done, **there won't be a single centimeter of protected land left** demarcated for indigenous people. He later corrected himself, saying he meant "one milimetre".

President Jair Bolsonaro came to power last November with the backing of the agriculture and mining industries in Brazil. With a severely anti-environment stance coupled with his outspoken disdain for indigenous communities in Brazil, he is largely being blamed by watchdogs and foreign governments for the recent spike in forest fires, deforestation and violence against indigenous communities.

Since Jair Bolsonaro took office last November, he has made his hostility towards the Insitute of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA) quite clear. He **cut the budget of the ministry by 24% and fired the minister**. Bolsonaro was previously fined by the agency for illegal fishing.



"If I'm elected, I'll serve a blow to FUNAI; a blow to the neck. There's no other way. It's not useful anymore"  
Espírito Santo Aug 1, 2018

"In 2019 we're going to rip up Raposa Serra do Sol [Indigenous Territory in Roraima, northern Brazil]. We're going to give all the ranchers guns."  
In Congress, on Jan 21, 2016

"There is no indigenous territory where there aren't minerals. Gold, tin and magnesium are in these lands, especially in the Amazon, the richest area in the world. I'm not getting into this nonsense of defending land for Indians."  
Campo Grande News, April 22, 2015

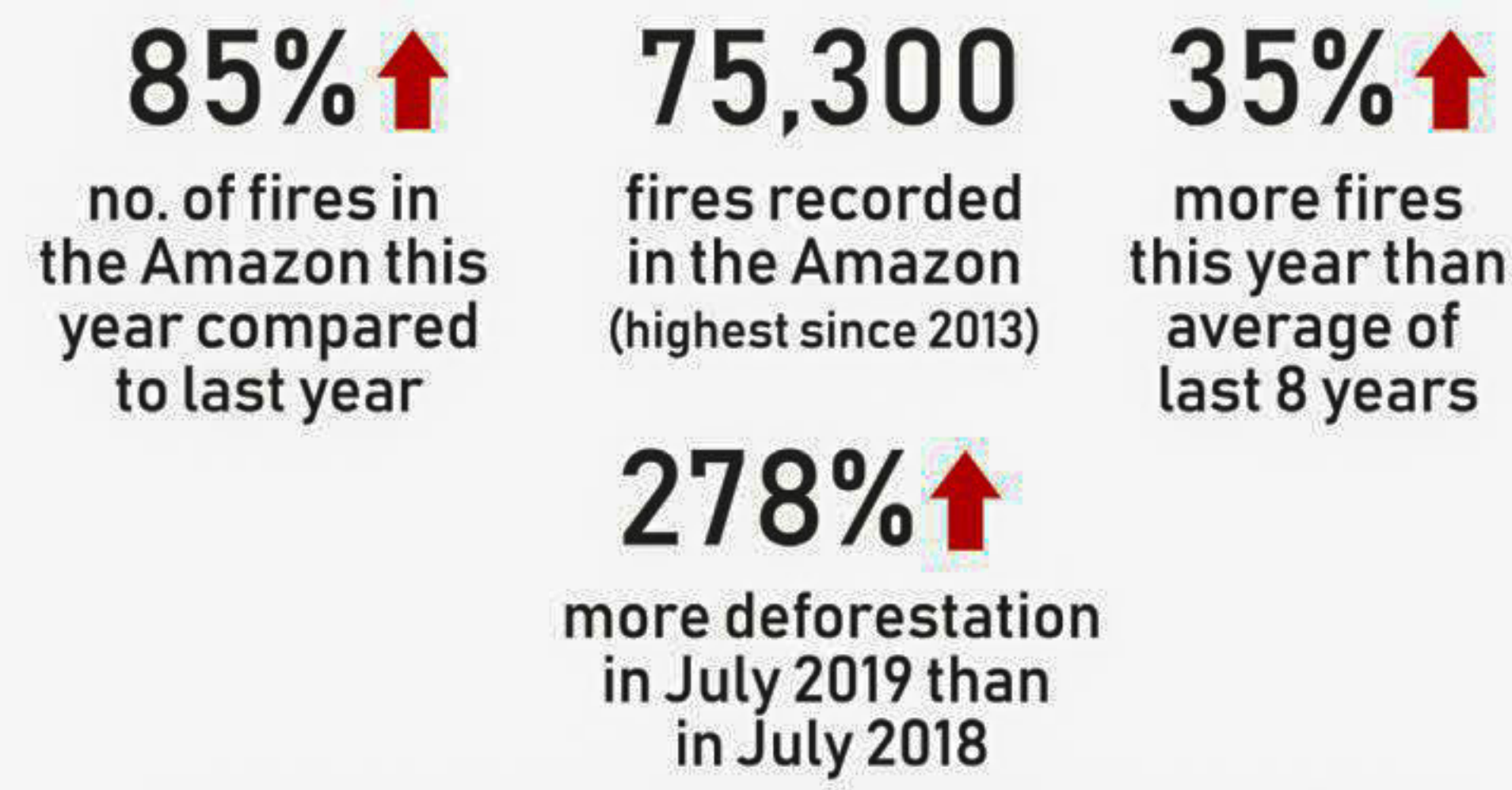


According to a report by Global Witness, Brazil is the worst country in the world for environmental activists - **it is estimated that one activist has been killed every week since 2002**. In the absence of environmental activists, it is largely the Amazon's indigenous tribes that maintain large swathes of the forest. However, **Bolsonaro took away the power of identifying and demarcating land titles for indigenous communities away from FUNAI and handed them to the Ministry of Agriculture**, effectively crippling FUNAI's ability to protect indigenous land rights.

IBAMA regularly conducts patrols and hands out fines to loggers and farmers with the help of military police. With the president removing military police from the patrols, **IBAMA has been handicapped and has handed out 34% less fines for environmental violations** since the start of the year. Around 70 rural farmers, land grabbers and businessmen from the towns of Novo Progresso and Altamira coordinated 'fire day' on the margins of the BR-163, a highway which leads through heavily deforested areas on 5 Aug.

# The Amazon is burning and this is what led to it

Between January and August of 2019:



Between Bolsonaro taking power and the start of the wave of forest fires, nearly 70 indigenous folk have been killed and more injured in attacks by loggers, miners and farmers.

**Suicide rate among the indigenous Guarani Kaiowá people of southern Brazil is the highest in the world, 34 times higher than the Brazilian national average** and statistically higher than any society anywhere in the world.

The Amazon Basin is home to nearly 900,000+ indigenous folk and 350 tribes, many of which are (as of now) uncontacted.



The US-China trade war has pushed the demand for soybean and corn toward's Brazil's agriculture industry, which is Brazil's highest earning sector. Historically, data from the INPE, the Brazilian space agency, shows the **spike in forest fires in the Amazon coincide with soybean planting season** as the farmers in the region clear out old crops by setting fire to them.

**Between January and June 2019, according to the INPE, the loss of forest cover spiked 34% from last year.** After the report was published, **Bolsonaro fired the head of the agency** and disputed the claims of the report.

Infographic: Shaer Reaz

Sources: IBAMA, INPE, Global Witness, Survival International, World Politics Review, Climate Home News, Rio Times Online, The New York Times.