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BRUNO MANSER FUND, BASEL / SWITZERLAND

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Penan hunter violently attacked as communities set up road blockade to protect their rainforests

Lee Ling Group must stop violence in the Upper Limbang - Community rights must be respected

LONG SEBAYANG, SARAWAK, MALAYSIA. A Penan hunter has been violently attacked by a logging company official at a timber road blockade in Sarawak, East Malaysia. This has been reported this morning by Penan community sources.

According to our sources, a Penan named Aking Anung from Long Keneng was yesterday attacked by Ah New, a timber company official employed by a sub-contractor of the Malaysian Lee Ling timber group. Ah New had reportedly tried to attack the Penan hunter with a "parang" (bush knife). According to the Penan, Aking avoided being hurt by running away. He later lodged a police report in Limbang.

The incident took place at a newly erected timber road blockade near a timber camp at Long Sebayang in Sarawak's Upper Limbang region. The blockade had been set up jointly by Penan, Lun Bawang and Tabun natives in an attempt to prevent their land from being re-logged and converted into plantations by Lee Ling and its subcontractors.

"Our communities need support and we ask you to spread this news worldwide", a community spokesman said. The Bruno Manser Fund asks the Lee Ling Group to stop its violence immediately and to respect the native communities' customary rights in the Upper Limbang region.

Lee Ling Timber and the plantation company, Limba Jaya Timber, form part of the Lee Ling Group, which has its headquarters in Kuching, the state capital of Sarawak. The group is owned by the Tiang family and has been partly incorporated in Quality Concrete Sdn Bhd., which is listed on the Kuala Lumpur stock exchange. Quality Concrete is linked to the family of Sarawak Chief Minister Taib Mahmud. One of Taib's sisters, Raziah Mahmud, is a member of the company's Board of Directors

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