



**BRIMAS**

**BORNEO RESOURCES INSTITUTE MALAYSIA**

Lot 1046, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Shang Garden Shoplot  
Jalan Bulan Sabit  
98000 Miri, Sarawak  
MALAYSIA

Postal Address:

P.O.Box 1065  
98008 Miri  
Sarawak.  
Tel: 085 423044  
Fax: 085 438580  
Email: bri@tm.net.my

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## **PRESS STATEMENT**

**Borneo Resources Institute Malaysia (BRIMAS)** refutes allegation that some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are using Penans to block logging roads in order to carry out illegal logging in the Penan area in Sarawak.

In Kuching yesterday, at a seminar called 'Combating Organised Crime: Strategies, Legal Instruments and Effective Policing' the Miri Resident Ose Murang alleged that NGOs are involving in illegal logging within the Penan area. BRIMAS is shocked with such allegation and doubtful if there is any truth to it at all. It is in the public interest to know those NGOs involved in Illegal logging, if any, the Miri Resident should not be shy to name and reveal the identity of those NGOs.

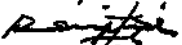
As far as BRIMAS is concerned, we are unaware of any NGOs that has involved and carried out illegal logging activity in any of the Penan areas in Sarawak. The Penans have been relying on government for development projects such as schools, medical clinics, agricultural supplies, housing and building materials etc. Even most Penans have no birth certificates, myKad and other official documents. The Penans are really in great need for government assistance as they are in deep hardship due to the impacts that most of their forest had been badly devastated by logging operation. The building of road by government to any of the Penan villages, if there is any plan at all, is supported by the Penan. The Penan has made it clearly known over and over again in their letters, petitions

and memorandums to the Governments and even SUHAKAM that they support government development projects but not logging within their customary rights land area.

Over past months, we noticed that the Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) through its enforcement unit, SAPU has made numerous of arrests and confiscated timber logs of those involved in illegal logging all over Sarawak. It is to BRIMAS surprises that SAPU has not made any arrest on the so called NGOs illegal logging. If the alleged illegal logging is within the Penan areas in upper Baram, will it be that simple for the logging trucks to haul and transport the timber logs over a distance of more than 200KM of logging roads. If any, they were allowed to use the logging roads for transporting illegal timbers than that could be with the involvement and collaboration of those timber companies in upper Baram.

The State Attorney-General (SAG) has also making unfounded allegation that some NGOs and related groups are stealing or gaining control of natural resources for personal use or monetary gains and deprived government of timber royalty. Rather than making baseless allegation against NGOs, the SAG should work closely with the SFC and relevant government law enforcement agencies to go all out after the logging culprits and wipe out organised illegal logging operators that are rampant and widespread all over the State.

BRIMAS calls upon the relevant enforcement authorities to carry out investigation with regard to the allegations. BRIMAS urges the authorities to take the allegation seriously as it is made by high ranking State government officers. We hope that they will give their full cooperation to the authority that is tasks to carry out the investigation. BRIMAS also support the authorities to come up with relevant mechanism and measures that totally curbs and wipe out any illegal logging activities in order to safeguard the state resources as well as the protection and conservation of forest in Sarawak.

Thank you.  
  
Raymond Abin  
Programme Director.  
BRIMAS