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PRESS RELEASE

Hearing of Civil Suit against the Police and Government of Malaysia Adjourned to April, 2006

MIRI - The Miri Sessions Court this afternoon adjourned the Civil Case filed by some 42 Ibans from 4 longhouses in Sungai Teru, Tinjar, Baram, Sarawak to 3rd April, 2006.

The 42 Ibans comprising 9 women and 33 men had filed the suit against one, Inspector Norazam of the Police Field Force 12 Battalion Miri and the Malaysian Government in 1997 claiming damages for wrongful arrest, false imprisonment and malicious prosecution.

Thirty two of the Ibans were arrested by the Police and Police Field Force led by Inspector Norazam at Jambatan Sungai Bong, Ulu Teru allegedly for using criminal force against a group of surveyors from Land and Survey Department Miri assigned to conduct survey works at the Sungai Bong area on the 25th June, 1997 while the other 10 were arrested allegedly for theft of 2 caterpillars and 6 drums of diesel of a logging company. However, until today none of the Ibans had been charged by the police for the alleged offences.

The Ibans had called altogether 9 witnesses in support of their claims and the Defendants will be calling 7 witnesses in their defence in April, 2006.

The case was presided by Sessions Judge Tuan Timothy Finlayson Joel. The Plaintiffs were represented by Mr. Harrison Ngau and Mr. Kalweet Singh Sandhu while Federal Counsel from Kuching Encik Nik Mohamad represented the Defendants.

A similar case filed by 6 Penans from Sungai Apoh, Tutoh, Baram against the police and the Malaysian Government was settled out of court last year whereby the 6 Penans Plaintiffs were paid RM35,000.00 plus cost by the Defendants. The Penans were represented by Mr. M.S. Sandhu and Mr. Harrison Ngau while Mr. Robert Pasang Alam who is a Deputy Public Prosecutor based in Miri represented the Police and the Malaysian Government.

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