



## MALAYSIAN TIMBER CERTIFICATION COUNCIL

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The Editor,  
The Star,  
Menara Star,  
15 Jalan 16/11,  
46350 Petaling Jaya.

Dear Sir,

I would like to refer to the article entitled *Suhakam finds conflicting views* (Star Two, 16 March) to comment on some of the findings by SUHAKAM as reported in the article, as they relate to the blockade by the Penan community in Long Benalih, which is located in the Sela'an-Linau Forest Management Unit (FMU) certified under the MTCC scheme.

With regard to the consultations between the State government, the timber company and the Penans, the villages located within the FMU (including Long Benalih) are represented in the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Liaison Committee for the FMU which was established as the forum to discuss the issues and concerns of the native communities, including the Penans, and to ensure the effective implementation of identified community projects in the FMU. The Committee is chaired by Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) and has held a total of 13 meetings since its formation. The 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee held on 21 June 2006 was attended by the heads/representatives from 6 native communities including the Tuai Kampung of Long Benalih. Attempts to resolve the blockade amicably were further taken by the Resident of Miri Division Mr. Ose Murang, who made a working visit to Long Lellang, Long Main and Long Benalih on 20-23 September 2006. In addition, YB Mr. Nelson Balang Rining (ADUN Ba' Kelalan) also made a working visit to these villages on 12-15 November 2006. These developments clearly show that the consultation process has been taking place.

With regard to the concern of the Penans of the effect of timber harvesting operations on the forest resources, under SFM practices certified under the MTCC scheme, the harvesting operations must incorporate Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) measures which ensure that the harvested forest continue to contain resources of sufficient quantity and quality to meet the needs of the forest-dependent communities such as the Penans. From experience, the limited opening of the forest canopy following a harvesting operation which incorporates RIL measures will result in an increase in the number of browsing animals, thereby increasing the food sources of the Penans. On the other hand, the fear of water pollution and damage to the forest is valid. The practice of SFM (which timber certification helps to ensure) can avoid or minimize such negative impacts.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

**Chew Lye Teng**  
Chief Executive Officer

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