



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **STA GIVES STATE THUMBS-UP FOR SUCCESS IN COMBATING ILLEGAL LOGGING**

Sarawak Timber Association (STA) applauds the state for its success in combating illegal logging with the confiscation of logs worth RM41.16 million at the close of 2014.

STA congratulates the Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Adenan Satem for his efforts and commitment in walking his talk with intensified actions towards eradicating corrupt practices in the timber industry in recent months. "The enormous increase in value of the seized illegal logs is testimony to Adenan's firm commitment to combat smuggling and illegal logging cases in the state since he took over as Sarawak's Chief Minister last March," STA said in a statement yesterday.

### **RESTORING ORDER AND FAIRNESS**

The eradication of illegal logging will help to restore order and fairness in the timber industry. By rooting out illegal logging activities, the good reputation and integrity of those law abiding timber operators will be restored and enjoy fair competition for the benefit of all stakeholders.

STA appeals to the Chief Minister to consider the current practice of issuing the short term licenses to operators who are not familiar with the state's forestry laws and regulations as well as in managing harvesting operations causing a lot of issues to local communities and the existing operators in the adjacent and/or within logging areas.

STA also reminds the timber industry and its members that illegal underground logging activities (without license or permit) may continue to be rampant and timber logs buyers must resist the temptation to buy these illegal logs at attractive terms because they don't have to pay many costs including part of royalties and levies. Some logs may even be claimed to be native logs.

### **STA CALL FOR PUBLIC TO REPORT ILLEGAL LOGGING ACTIVITIES**

Because of the vastness of timber operation spreading over Sarawak, STA applaud the role of various agencies in combating against illegal logging but also urge the public to exercise their civic rights and report illegal activities, without fear.

### **STA CONDEMNS ILLEGAL LOGGING**

"STA condemns illegal logging activities and any form of corruption and urges members to use only legal timber for manufacturing and trade to maintain the confidence of buyers when they purchase timber and timber products from Sarawak," STA said further in the statement.

STA also revealed that the Association had written a letter to all its member companies on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014 reminding them to abide by the state's forestry laws and regulations and to be mindful of their operations on the ground as well as to report any illegal logging activities found within their license areas to the relevant authorities immediately.

CHAIRMAN

Sarawak Timber Association

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