

R G E 02-06 00218 EG141

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Mahathir - forest 3 London (reopens)

Commenting on the Kuala Lumpur conference, reporter Bradshaw said: +Dr Mahathir is feted with hints of active political support for the case he wants the South to put at Rio, even from less aggressive nations like Brazil.

+For once the Americans and the British - mere observers here - are sidelined. From three continents, from Africa, from South America, and from India, the same effusive response.+

Interviewed during a conference break, Mark Griffith, a delegate from Barbados, said of Dr Mahathir's speech: +It is the type of speech that more Third World leaders should give. And I think he has done a lot to reinforce the Southern position which we need to do at this point.+

In Sarawak, the Panaroma team visited two Penan colonies, one resettled, while another lived on the forest's edge.

Speaking through interpreters, one resettled Penan said that they preferred their new settled life to roaming the forest as primitive nomads, while another, a headman of a group living off the forest, said that if the leaders meeting in Rio could put a stop to the logging in his area, his heart would be filled with happiness because logging destroyed the forest.
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▼02/06/19-29MST

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Mahathir -, forest 4 London

When asked about his reaction to the campaign in the North to save the Penan; Dr Mahathir replied that the North should first take care of their own backyard and do something about the people who sleep in Hyde Park (in London) at night, and some of the blacks +who are being discriminated against +.

+So you see this environmental desire to save the Penan as a new form of colonialism?; Bradshaw asked.

+Oh yes it is, it is the same as the sudden interest in human rights, in democracy and all that - a desire to teach this rather backward people the finer points of living,+ Dr Mahathir replied.

Another heated exchange took place after reporter Bradshaw prefaced another part of the interview with the comment that the prospect of reconciling logging and protecting bioiversity at Rio now seemed remote, and that all -aspects, of forestry - another key test of the Earth Summit's success - seemed certain to be dashed +by the Malaysian logic?.

The camera then turned to Dr Mahathir, who said 'that since most of the countries which were going to participate in the forestry convention did not have any forest, +it is our forest they are going to talk about, not theirs+. -- more

▼02/06/19-34MST

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Mahathir - forest 5 London

+It's a waste of time for us,+ he concluded. Bradshaw: +Well, it may be a waste of time for you, but with respect, the future of the planet is at stake, and isn't it?+

Dr Mahathir: +The future of the planet is at stake but we are not the ones to be totally responsible for the future of the planet.+

Bradshaw: +But you are the one who are standing in the way of an agreement.+

Dr Mahathir: +No, we are not. There are lots of things that you do not want to do, and you insist on not doing, and yet you expect us to do and sacrifice our wealth in order to support the rest of the world. You are asking the poor to support the rich? What kind of logic is that?+

In the same programme, Malaysia's Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, referred to at one stage as the Minister for Logging, compared the West's attitude of prescribing simple solutions, for the South as similar to the Nazi's whose simple solutions brought disaster to Europe and the world.

In reply to a question about the Penan, he invited Prince Charles (who was said to be sympathetic to their plight) to spend two years in the Sarawak national park to see if he preferred the jungle or Buckingham Palace. -- more

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Mahathir - forest 6 (last) London

Malaysia's view on the West's opportunism in advocating the preservation of biodiversity found support from Cik Vandana Shiva, of the environment group Third World Network, who had attended the conference in Kuala Lumpur.

+Basically, behind the biodiversity conflict is a conflict over who will control this future raw material, and whether that biodiversity will be able to sustain life in the Third World or will it only sustain profits for Northern corporations,+ she told Panorama.

This view was contradicted by the most unrelenting critic of the South in the programme, Britain's former ambassador to the United Nations, Sir Crispin Tickell.

Sir Crispin, who was unofficial environment adviser to Puan Thatcher, and now to Prime Minister John Major, dismissed it as a +crude misrepresentation of what's happening.+

Me retorted to accusations that the North were eco-imperialists by accusing the +elites+ in the South as latter-day colonialists by imposing their will on the people who live in the forest, -- Bernama

▼02/06/19-38MST