

# Dr Mahathir to Manser: Let Renans try out new life

RIO DE JANEIRO, Mon. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today met the so-called Penan lover Bruno Manser, and told him that the Penans must be given a choice to experience living in a proper settlement.

The Prime Minister told the Swiss that the Penans could opt to live in the jungles after this experience.

Said Dr Mahathir of the meeting with Manser at hotel Meridien where he is staying:

"Manser wants the Penans to go back into the jungle.

"I pointed out that the blacks were dragged out of the jungles in Africa and forcibly taken to America where they were badly treated (as slaves).

"When they were freed, they did not choose to return to the jungles."

Similarly, Dr Mahathir said the Renans must be given a choice to stay in settled areas where they could enjoy all the amenities and social services.

"We are not dragging them out of the jungles as happened to the blacks," he said, adding that if given the chance, the Penans would prefer to experience life outside the jungles.

But Manser wants them to stay in the jungles, claiming that this is their choice.

Asked about the interest in Penans and the logging in Sarawak by western NGOs, Dr Mahathir said the Malaysian message was not getting to them.

People in the North have a certain missionary zeal which urges them to tell the South how they should conduct themselves.

"This is the old white

man's burden kind of mentality which unfortunately still exists," Dr Mahathir said.

The Prime Minister met Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tarek Aziz on Saturday.

Briefing Malaysian newsmen on the talks yesterday, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Badawi said Aziz told Dr Mahathir of the plight of his people due to sanctions following the war with the United States and its allies.

He told Dr Mahathir that the trade sanctions were hurting innocent people like the sick and children.

Iraq wants medicine and food and also to sell its oil to raise revenue to care for its people.

Dr Mahathir replied Malaysia agreed that Iraq be allowed to bring in the necessary supplies on humanitarian grounds.