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FISHERMEN ALLEGE ABUSE OF DEEP-SEA LICENCES

KUALA TERENGGANU, April 23 (Bernama) -- The Terengganu Fishermen's Foundation has alleged that deep-sea fishing licences have been issued to irrelevant firms and is asking the Agriculture Ministry to review the issuance of these permits.

Speaking to reporters here today, foundation chairman Hassan Ismail claimed that such licences were given to companies totally unrelated to the fishing business which in turn lease them to foreign trawler operators.

"We learnt that of late several deep-sea fishing licences were issued to such companies which rent out the permits to foreign fishermen," he said.

Hassan also claimed there were irregularities in the issuance of the licences which, he said, should only be given to operators using locally-made deep-sea trawlers.

He claimed that the non-fishery related companies given the licences were using used foreign-made boats and that these boats landed about 80 per cent of their catch in Thailand.

The foundation was drafting a memorandum on the matter to be forwarded to the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Agriculture Minister Datuk Amar Sulaiman Daud, he said. -- Bernama

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