

**Three Fishermen May Have Been Kidnapped For Ransom - Zahid
Bernama
Sept 11, 2016**

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 11 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi believes the kidnapping incident involving three fishing boat crew members at Pom Pom Island in Semporna last night was a case of 'kidnap for ransom'.

Zahid said the group involved in the kidnapping incident was believed to be based in the Philippines Islands situated close to Malaysia.

"Though the area is under surveillance, they move about below the detection of the radar. I have contacted the Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESScom) and Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) to monitor the entire 1,700km distance of the Eastern Sabah Security Zone (ESSZone)," he said.

The Deputy Prime Minister was speaking to reporters after opening the Parti Makkal Sakti Malaysia's eighth Annual General Meeting, here today.

Ahmad Zahid who is also the Home Minister said the three crew members were not Malaysians but held permanent resident status.

"However, the authorities will continue to work with the Philippines authorities and Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein had already discussed the matter with his counterpart and I have spoken to my counterpart while Inspector General of Police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar has also spoken to his counterpart," he said.

ESScom today confirmed that three fishermen from a fishing boat were kidnapped by a group at the Pom Pom Island in Semporna, last night.

Meanwhile, ESSCom commissioner Datuk Wan Abdul Bari Wan Abdul Khalid when contacted said a report was received at 1.59am.

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