

## **Incident should serve as lesson for everyone - Cambodian minister**

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KUCHING, Feb 16 (Bernama) -- The incident involving 47 Malaysians detained the Banteay Mancheay prison in Cambodia should serve as a lesson for everyone, said Cambodian Special Duties Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Othsman Hassan.

He said such mistake should not be repeated in the future as the lucrative salary offered was too good to be true.

"If it is true that such lucrative salary to be paid, certainly the Cambodians will be employed first," he said this during the symbolic handover of 47 detainees from the Cambodian government to the Malaysia and Sarawak governments in Siem Reap today.

Othsman represented the Cambodian government while Malaysia and Sarawak were represented by Sarawak Welfare, Community Wellbeing, Women, Family and Childhood Development Minister Datuk Seri Fatimah Abdullah.

Also present were Santubong MP Datuk Seri Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar, Temporary Charge de Affairs at the Malaysian Embassy in Phnom Penh Ruzaimi Mohamad and director of the Sarawak regional office of the Foreign Ministry Deddy Faisal Ahmad Salleh.

Meanwhile, Fatimah expressed her gratitude to the Cambodian government for providing good cooperation to the Malaysian government during the negotiating process to bring home all the detainees.

"With the power of Almighty Allah we have met with people such as Datuk Othsman and his friends who are sincere in helping us to secure the release of the detainees. As well as the Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan

Azizah Wan Ismail, Sarawak Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg, Foreign Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah and Foreign Ministry secretary-general,” she said.

Fatimah said the Malaysian government was in the midst of arranging the transportation to bring all 47 Malaysians home.

“Initially, we are planning to bring them home in stages, but it is better if all can return home in one group,” she said.

All 47 Malaysians were allowed to return home without trial after Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen approved the release.

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