

**Pontian Fishermen Get Amnesty From President Susilo  
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PUTRAJAYA, Jan 5 (Bernama) -- Six fishermen from Pontian, Johor were released by the Indonesian authorities yesterday after serving eight months' jail after they were granted amnesty by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

The six, who were arrested along with an Indonesian by the Indonesian authorities for allegedly fishing in Indonesian waters on March 3, are expected to arrive home tomorrow, said Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Ahmad Maslan.

He said the Malaysian Consulate in Pekan Baru, Indonesia was making arrangements to ferry the fishermen to the Bandar Hilir Melaka jetty and they were expected to arrive at about 2pm.

The pardon was granted after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak raised the issue with Susilo when they met recently, Ahmad told reporters here Thursday.

The seven fishermen were sentenced to two years' jail and fined Indonesian Rupiah 1 million (RM342,838), in default six months' jail, for fishing in Indonesian waters and the sentence was upheld by the Court of Appeals on May 5.

However, Ahmad said on Aug 9, the Jakarta Supreme Court had the sentence increased to four years before Susilo pardoned them on Dec 24 and had the sentence reduced by three years and three months to enable them to be released yesterday.

"On behalf of the fishermen's families, I would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the prime minister, President Susilo, Wisma Putra, the Malaysian Embassy in Jakarta, the Indonesia Embassy in Kuala Lumpur and all those involved in this process.

"This augurs well in enhancing our bilateral relations with Indonesia and let us learn a lesson from this episode," he said.

Meanwhile, housewife Nor Aisyah Jamari, 37, who welcomed the release of her husband, Redzuan Aris, 36, said she was lost for words to describe her joy.

"In fact, my father-in-law, who is hospitalised for a heart attack, got better after he was told of the news," she added.

Nor Aisyah said her life was in disarray after her husband's arrest as she had to raise three children aged between 10 and 14 years and thanked the government and Ahmad for extending help, including financial aid.

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