

NO RANSOM CALLS FOR FISHERMEN

Statements taken from those who escaped abduction in Lahad Datu

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SABAH police are waiting for phone calls to be made to families of the 10 Bajau Laut fishermen reportedly kidnapped in Lahad Datu waters on Tuesday.

Until phone calls are made, police cannot be sure of the motive behind the alleged kidnappings, said Sabah Police Commissioner Datuk Omar Mammah.

"However, we suspect it is for ransom.

There have been no calls yet (from kidnapers), so I cannot give any updates.

"Police, however, are taking statements from those who survived (the kidnapping incident) to facilitate investigations," he said.

At 2am on Tuesday, gunmen were reported to have boarded two fishing boats with 16 people on board and abducted 10 of them.

This incident reportedly occurred close to the maritime border with the Philippines.

According to the report, the six other fishermen were rescued by the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency.

Omar said kidnap-for-ransom groups had been targeting fishermen, adding that they might make the employers pay for the release of their workers.

On the rescued fishermen, he said no injuries were reported and the gunmen did not fire any shot.



The order for no activities at sea from dusk to dawn is meant for the safety of communities in Beluran, Sandakan, Kinabatangan, Lahad Datu, Kunak, Semporna and Tawau. FILE PIC