



Another 30 Cambodian men among 65 rescued in Indonesia after being trafficked into work on fishing boats in Thailand were repatriated to the Kingdom yesterday, following the return of 30 such workers last week.

The remaining five workers are set to be repatriated next month, Chiv Phally, deputy director of the anti-human trafficking and juvenile protection department at the Ministry of Interior, said yesterday.

“It was so great for me to see my country again after I left here two years ago,” 33-year-old Mouy Hoeun said upon his arrival at Phnom Penh International Airport yesterday.

Mouy Hoeun said he was sold into work on the fishing boat.

“They forced the workers to work very hard, and they beat us if we didn’t work hard. It was very hard work for us to be the boat workers,” he said, adding that he would see his family on Thursday.

Another worker, 20-year-old Thach Chandy, left Cambodia to work in Thailand a year ago.

“I am very happy to come back to my country after I was cheated to work on the boat for one year, and I want to see my home and my family very much,” he said.

Koy Kuong, spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, yesterday said the ministry was still working with Indonesian authorities and the International Organisation for Migration to repatriate the remaining workers.

Chiv Phally said workers would have their health checked and officials would interview them in order to identify brokers involved and send documentation to relevant provincial courts to request that local prosecutors open investigations.

He said it was difficult to investigate and arrest brokers.

“We really need [workers] to work and cooperate with us, but when they come back, most of

them don't want to cooperate with the police by telling us the identity of the brokers, because most brokers are their relatives or neighbours," he said.

Chiv Phally said some workers went back overseas to work three or four months after they returned to Cambodia.

"We are worried about their security and health and that's why we try to explain to them not to take a chance with a broker," he said, adding that more than 100 workers trafficked onto fishing boats were repatriated from five countries to Cambodia this year.

Runnazar Hang, project manager at IOM, said that another three workers could be repatriated on Wednesday, but he was unsure when the remaining two would return.

Representatives from the Cambodian Embassy in Jakarta could not be reached for comment yesterday.

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