

Crew repatriation to cost B900,000

THE Government will spend some 900,000 baht to bring back 125 Thai fishermen from Burma. Deputy Foreign Minister Prapass Limpabandhu said yesterday.

The Thais will be released from a prison in Tarawaddy and the money requested by the deputy minister and approved by the Cabinet will be spent on their air tickets, food and other expenses.

Burmese authorities released seven Thai fishermen from Victoria Point (Kawthaung) and allowed them to return to Ranong province yesterday.

Provincial immigration

officials did not detain the fishermen, but required that they produce evidence of their Thai nationality to local authorities within 15 days, sources said.

They were released after the owner of a trawler upon which some of the fishermen served had assured authorities that they were Thais.

Unlike the Burmese, Vietnam has charged \$500 for the freedom of an arrested Thai fisherman, and is asking \$1,000 for future releases, sources said.

This amount does not include air tickets, food and other expenses.

BP840907

01/10/88/25/10003