

## **Rohingya crisis is Asean's acid test**

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**By TigerTalk**

KINIBIZ One week after the plight of the Rohingya finally caught the imagination of the Malaysian public at large, there finally appears to be some relief on the horizon. But the crisis remains the first real test for Asean to prove it is more than just a series of symbolic sound bites.

Desperate images of hungry and tired Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi migrants have appeared on our screens recently. For years they have been bounced from one country's coast to the next like a table tennis ball rather than boats full of human beings. Now, Malaysia and Indonesia will no longer turn boats which arrive on its shores away.

Various leaders of both the countries, and from Thailand have now stated that it is the moral and humane thing to do. And it is good that they have finally realised this.

Make no mistake about it, coming a whole week after the navies of these three countries turned these people back out to sea, it is almost inevitable that inaction and politicking would have caused some among them to perished to hunger, exhaustion or disease.

Nonetheless, perhaps something is better than nothing. And at least the three countries will no longer turn them away.

After a meeting with his Thai and Indonesian counterparts, Malaysia's Foreign Minister Anifah Aman said: "Indonesia and Malaysia agreed to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to those 7,000 irregular migrants still at sea."

"We also agreed to offer them temporary shelter provided that the resettlement and repatriation process will be done in one year by the international community," he added after the meeting near Kuala Lumpur.

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