

'Solve the Rohingya issue at its source - Myanmar'

MalaysiaKini.com

May 28, 2015

By Zikri Kamarulzaman

Malaysia, Asean, the UN and the international community can put a stop to the trafficking of Rohingyas and their deaths by pressuring Myanmar to address and solve the Rohingya issue at home, a refugee said.

"This problem can't be solved here. It must be solved in Myanmar because this is a Myanmar problem. If you can solve the Rohingya issue there, everything will be okay," ethnic Rohingya refugee Sayed Mahamad told reporters at Parliament lobby today.

He said this when asked to comment on the multiple graves of trafficked people, believed to be either Rohingyas or Bangladeshis near the Malaysian border with Thailand.

Sayed, a UN-certified refugee who has been living in Malaysia for four years, said one of the things Myanmar could do to solve the problem was to stop the violence against Rohingyas in the Rakhine state.

"After they slaughtered the Rohingyas in 2012, this led to high levels of human trafficking. Rohingyas had to flee to other countries because they didn't have security.

"They don't have rights. They do not have education rights nor economic rights. They are human beings and it is their right to stay in the world," he said adding that Myanmar should also grant Rohingyas citizenship.

Rohingyas are Muslim, the majority of whom live in the Rakhine state. Descended from Bangladeshi migrants, they claim to have been living in that area for hundreds of years but have not been granted citizenship by either Myanmar or Bangladesh.

Thousands have been fleeing to neighbouring Asean countries in a desperate bid to escape ethnic cleansing by rampaging Myanmar Buddhist communities,

Many make the journey by sea where they have been stranded on packed vessels pending approval for them to land.

More opportunities needed

Following the latest wave of these refugees, Malaysia and Indonesia have agreed to let these 'boat people' come to shore and be moved to camps.

Sayed, the principal of a school for Rohingya children in Seri Kembangan, Selangor had come to Parliament together with Ethnic Rohingya Committee of Arakan (Erca) Malaysia chairperson Mohd Rafique Khairul Bashar to give a presentation on the Rohingya refugees situation to Pakatan Rakyat lawmakers.

This coincided with Pakatan forming an anti-Rohingya trafficking committee, chaired by opposition leader Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail (photo).

"I respect the Malaysian government's attempts (to help us) and the locals' help us (too). (I hope they will) give us more opportunities here so we can work and learn here," he appealed.

Mohd Rafique, who has been in Malaysia for 19 years, hopes the Malaysian government will especially provide aid for Knowledge Garden Learning Centre which only has five teachers for its 110 Rohingya underprivileged children.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source : <http://www.malysiakini.com/news/299997>