

Two NS camps in Kedah to house Rohingya refugees

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Two national service training camps in Kedah have been identified as temporary shelter for the Rohingya migrants who have landed in Malaysia, said Defence Minister Hishammuddin Hussein.

These were the Rimba Taqwa Camp in Sik and the Youth Recreation Camp in Baling, he told reporters after watching a demonstration of the Malaysian Armed Forces' firepower at the Syed Sirajuddin Camp here. Also present was Chief of Defence Forces Gen Zulkifeli Mohd Zin.

Hishammuddin (photo) said, however, that these camps, each of which could accommodate 400 people, were only a short-term measure until a permanent solution could be found for the Rohingya migrants.

"For the long-term solution, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia have to find a way to share the accommodation of the migrants. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees must also help out.

"The UNHCR champions human rights but if no other country wants to accept the Rohingya migrants, Malaysia cannot be left to undertake the responsibility alone.

"It is futile to champion human rights but not lift a finger to help," he said.

Hishammuddin said the Royal Malaysian Navy had deployed four of its vessels - KD Kasturi, KD Lekir, KD Ledang and KD Laksamana Tun Abdul Jamil - with 350 personnel on a search-and-rescue mission to provide aid to Rohingya migrants in boats at sea near Malaysia.

"Collaboration through the National Blue Ocean Strategy between the Malaysian Armed Forces and the Royal Malaysia Police will be able to eliminate cross-border human trafficking, particularly involving the Rohingya community," he said.

Hishammuddin spoke of the importance of maintaining the country's geopolitical stability and prosperity, warning that any adversary could take advantage of turmoil.

- Bernama

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