

Gov't told to cut ties with Myanmar instead of showing heroics

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Instead of the ruling party's show of heroics at yesterday's Rohingya rally, the government should cut diplomatic ties with Myanmar, said Amanah Youth.

"The government wants to show itself as a hero, but is willingly shirking its responsibility as the government of the day in this issue by holding a rally, aided by certain quarters.

"However, we want to stress, the government should take stronger actions to champion the cause of the Rohingya Muslims, not just hold rallies," said Youth chief Mohd Sany Hamzan in a statement today.

He said among such concrete actions would be to cut diplomatic ties with Myanmar and close down its embassy in Malaysia.

"This is necessary, and will send a strong signal to the government led by Aung San Suu Kyi," he said.

His call echoes former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who yesterday [criticised](#) Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak for holding rallies instead of cutting ties with Myanmar.

He noted it was not the government's place to hold protest rallies, but to act.

Mahathir questioned what the point of such a display was, asking, "Who is he demonstrating to?"

Mohd Sany meanwhile said the UN, Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) and Asean have all failed their duties, and have all washed their hands and placed their own interests before that of the persecuted Rohingya.

Amanah, he said, was also disappointed the government failed to address the issue during the recently-concluded Parliament sitting.

"Instead, it was even more disappointing that the motion under 19(a) to debate the issue of the Rohingya massacre in Myanmar brought by Kuala Terengganu MP Raja Kamarul Bahrin Shah was rejected," he said.

'Hollow and opportunistic'

Klang MP Charles Santiago also called the Najib rally, which was attended by PAS leaders president Abdul Hadi Awang and Youth chief Nik Abduh Nik Aziz, "hollow and opportunistic".

He said the show of protest was "welcomed" and congratulated Wisma Putra's statement

that the crisis was of regional concern and not just a domestic Myanmar affair.

However, said Santiago, Malaysia is in a position to do far more.

"Malaysia has an added responsibility as it was instrumental in bringing Myanmar back to the Asean fold.

"So it can certainly demand Myanmar expulsion, if calls to stop the violence against the Rohingya go unheeded.

"We can moot an initiative for an arms embargo to Myanmar, while keeping diplomatic channels open to ensure continuing dialogues," said the DAP lawmaker in a statement today.

He noted Najib has yet to initiate discussions about recognising the rights of the Rohingya as refugees.

Malaysia, he said, should also lobby other Asean countries to reprimand Myanmar.

"Or the rally would be nothing but Najib playing to the gallery to look appealing to the Muslim voters or deflecting the thorny issues plaguing him."

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