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PM's plea to Japan over Rohingyas

SEEKING HELP:

International solution to crisis required, says Najib



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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak yesterday made an impassioned plea to his Japanese counterpart, Shinzo Abe, to assist in addressing the Rohingya and Myanmar boat people issue.

At a joint conference after holding an hour of bilateral talks with Abe, Najib said any form of assistance from Japan would "certainly be very much welcomed".

"We believe that while we look for an Asean solution, it is an international problem that requires an international solution," said the prime minister, who is on a three-day official visit here.

"Therefore, anything that Japan can do to help us alleviate this

problem would certainly be very much welcomed."

His appeal came after thanking Abe for his support for Malaysia as Asean chair.

In a joint statement released yesterday, Abe lauded Malaysia's efforts in reaching an agreement with Indonesia to provide humanitarian assistance to 7,000 irregular migrants at sea and offer them temporary shelter, provided the international community resettled and repatriated them within one year.

Tens of thousands of migrants from Myanmar, mainly from the Rohingya Muslim minority, and those from Bangladesh have been making dangerous sea crossings.

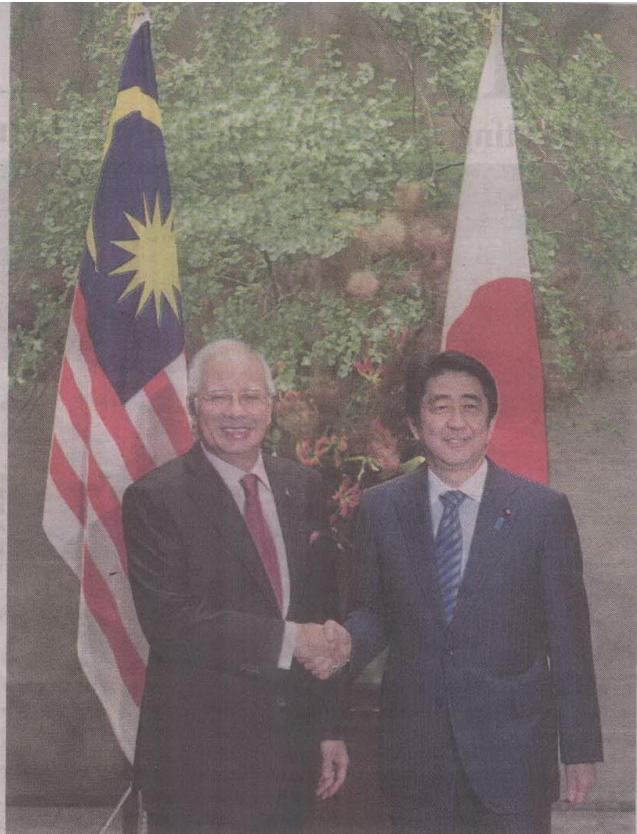
The Rohingyas, described by the United Nations as being one of the worst-persecuted minorities, have been fleeing deadly communal unrest in western Myanmar since 2012.

On bilateral ties, Malaysia and Japan yesterday announced that they had elevated their relationship to a "strategic partnership".

Under the partnership, the countries would enhance cooperation in five areas.

The first is boosting investment via the Look East Policy 2.0 (LEP 2.0) and economic cooperation.

Other than the high-speed rail project, another highlight under this area of cooperation is a new cost-sharing training programme



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak meeting his Japanese counterpart, Shinzo Abe, at the Prime Minister's Office in Tokyo yesterday. Bernama pic

under LEP 2.0.

Abe said the programme would be launched for Japan to train 500 Malaysians over the next five years.

Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to promote the liberalisation of trade and investment, and regional economic integration.

The second sector is strengthening their contributions to regional and international agendas, including fortifying Japan-Asean relations and the East Asia Summit, which will celebrate its 10th anniversary this year.

Other than the boat people issue,

Najib and Abe also reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace and security over the South China Sea.

Malaysia and Japan will step up cooperation to achieve global peace and stability, to attain prosperity.

The fourth area is enhancing maritime cooperation, and ensuring security and safety in maritime zones, while the last area of cooperation involves people-to-people and cultural exchanges.

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