

Don't Leave Us Alone To Help Banglas, Rohingyas - Langkawi Rep

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LANGKAWI, May 17 (Bernama) -- The United Nations (UN) should come up with effective solutions to deal with the influx of the Bangladeshi and Rohingya illegal immigrants, rather than to put the burden to Malaysia, to solve it alone.

Kuah state assemblyman, Nor Saidi Nayan said it was timely now for the UN, who had all the while been championing global human rights, to reflect their abilities to help the illegal immigrants and not just passing the problems to individual countries to solve.

"I do not want them (the illegal immigrants) to suffer and I have seen them myself. We try as much as we can to help them on humanitarian grounds, but we have our limitations. The UN should find a conclusion to this (situation)," he told Bernama here.

Langkawi had been in the limelight for the last one week after 1,158 Bangladeshis and Rohingyas from Myanmar landed illegally in the resort island last Monday, with the figures reported to be the largest ever to date.

The landing incident occurred after neighbouring Thailand went on a massive crackdown of a large scale human trafficking syndicate following the discovery of over 30 bodies buried in the southern part of the country last week.

Langkawi was shocked just after midnight last Monday by the mass arrival of the illegal immigrants when one of the wooden boats carrying them ran aground at a wave breaker near Pasir Bedengung Beach, on the west side of the island.

While about 200 were rounded up near the beach, over 1,000 more believed to have landed earlier were found at Kampung Kuala Temoyong, about 13 kms away.

The illegal immigrants rounded in Langkawi were transferred in stages to the Belantik Immigration detention centre in Sik, Kedah, in the mainland as the island itself had no facilities to accommodate them.

Following the influx, the enforcement agencies in Langkawi intensified their patrols to avoid more illegal landings as local residents had also expressed their concerns over the security impact of the situation.

Nor Saidi said he shared the sincere intentions shown by a number of parties wanting to help these boat people, whom he felt were victims of circumstances in their homelands and given no choice but to fled to other countries.

He said that personally he had heard the sufferings directly from the illegal immigrants when he met them at the temporary shelters set up by Malaysian authorities in Langkawi

but their requests could not be accommodated by the people here alone.

"Help is help. But what about the reputation of Langkawi as an international tourism destination? This had a very big meaning to us as residents as we also need to keep up with our livelihood. I don't want Langkawi to be known as a hub for illegal immigrants," he said.

He also insisted that this resort island should not be a refuge for any kingpins responsible for the influx of the illegal immigrants and urged the authorities concerned to keep every corners of Langkawi free from the presence of such people.

"Langkawi should not be drawn into any conflict as we are for what we are. As an international tourism destination, we do not want what occurred in Lahad Datu to take place here," he said, referring to the illegal intrusion of Filipino Sulus in Sabah in 2013.

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