

Myanmar should solve Rohingya issue internally, says DPM
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By Melati A. Jalil

Myanmar should deal with the Rohingya people internally instead of forcing it on other Asean states, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

He said the Rohingya refugees posed issues of national security for Malaysia; at the same time it was also a humanitarian issue.

"The Cabinet has discussed this and we have directed Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman together with his counterparts from Indonesia and Thailand to communicate with the Myanmar government and their foreign minister to discuss this matter."

"This is under the responsibility of Myanmar government, don't they have any humanity to solve this problem internally, instead of passing the burden to Asean countries," he said reporters after a golf event in Selangor .

"How can we determine that their arrival can be controlled, it will be a big burden for our country as it has been reported that there are thousands fleeing Myanmar."

He said Malaysia has to be careful not to send the wrong signal to the refugees to avoid the saga of the Vietnamese boat people in the late 70s.

"Past experience should be a lesson to us, what's important is we want this matter to be handled wisely with cooperation with international bodies like UNHCR," he said without elaborating his remark on the Vietnamese boat people.

More than 1,000 Rohingya refugees, who are described by United Nations as one of the most persecuted minorities in their home nation, landed in Langkawi by boat recently after being stranded at sea for months.

The government, however, has refused to acknowledge them as refugees, and turned away another boat carrying 800 others.

Thousands of Rohingyas are believed to be stranded at sea after being abandoned on boats by their traffickers. They are reported to have been lacking basic amenities for months now.

The Indonesian government has also towed away some of the boats carrying Rohingya and Bangladeshi refugees from waters off the coast of Aceh to international waters. – May 17, 2015.

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