

**Rohingyas: ASEAN Needs To Change Non-Interference Policy - Analysts**  
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BANGI, June 3 (Bernama) -- ASEAN needs to change its policy of non-interference in the domestic issues of its members to resolve the problem of Rohingya oppression in Myanmar, said analysts.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) Strategic Studies and International Relations Programme lecturer Associate Prof Dr D. Ravichandran said the policy was seen as blocking leaders of the organisation from voicing out for fear it would threaten relations among member countries.

He said the time had come for ASEAN leaders to come out of hiding behind the policy and take firmer action against Myanmar to resolve the Rohingya issue as the international community also recognised the struggle of the ethnic group.

"Due to the policy which has been in practice for so long, ASEAN takes a softer approach via a series of discussions which I see as being less effective to solve the issue.

"I also do not see how by being firmer could jeopardise relations among ASEAN countries," he said.

He said this during a panel discussion on the 'Rohingyas: Basic Human Rights Denied' forum organised by the Institute of Ethnic Studies at UKM, here today.

Another panel member, Azmi Abdul Hamid, who is the Malaysian Consultative Council of Islamic Organisations (MAPIM) president, also shared the same view.

He said as ASEAN chairman last year, Myanmar had chosen the theme 'Moving forward in unity towards a peaceful and prosperous community' which was related to peace and prosperity even though it was not translated into actions to protect ethnic Rohingyas.

Therefore, he said ASEAN should take firmer action as the problem brought about by the country had spilled into other countries in the region.

"Myanmar cannot say this is an internal issue as other countries are also involved in the issue. We cannot deny that the Rohingyas are people of ASEAN and their problem is our problem," he said.

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