

Rohingya plight no longer a domestic issue - PM Najib

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SYDNEY, March 17 (Bernama) -- Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the situation in Rakhine State in Myanmar and suffering of the Rohingya people and their displacement could no longer be considered a domestic issue.

The problem, he stressed, should not be looked through the humanitarian prism alone as it could potentially develop into a serious security threat to the region.

"Rakhine, with thousands of despairing and dejected people who see no hope in their future, can be a fertile ground for radicalisation and recruitment by Daesh affiliated groups," he said.

He said this in his keynote address at the closing of the Counter-Terrorism Conference held in conjunction with the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit here Saturday.

Najib said Malaysia was ready to render assistance in finding a just and durable solution, -just as Malaysia is cooperating with its neighbours in the peace processes in the Southern Philippines and in Southern Thailand.

"We must be vigilant and increase our collaboration, because the collapse of Daesh core territories in Iraq and Syria has forced it to go 'underground' and re-emerge elsewhere, especially in crisis zones where it could grow and operate.

"We must draw lessons from the seizure of Marawi and be extremely concerned that at least 10 militant groups in Mindanao have declared their affiliation to Daesh," he said.

The special summit is being held for two days starting Saturday.

Meanwhile, Myanmar State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi is leading the country's delegation to the summit.

International media have described the atrocity committed by Myanmar security forces against Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine State as one the worst in the history of the republic, with many Rohingyas having fled to Bangladesh and some trapped in the mountains without basic supplies.

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