

Press Release

The Lack of Durable Solutions to the Rohingya Crisis

The South China Morning Post reported on 10th November that the UN has warned that Southeast Asia risks “another humanitarian disaster” if sea crossings by desperate refugees continue unchecked. The deaths of at least 21 people, including several children, in a boat accident off Malaysia's coast have reignited fears of a renewed surge in perilous sea crossings by refugees fleeing conflict in Myanmar and worsening conditions in neighbouring Bangladesh. There were 12 bodies found in Malaysia and nine in neighbouring Thailand — according to the regional head of Malaysia's maritime agency, Romli Mustafa.

Rights groups and international agencies warn the tragedy is a sign of what may lie ahead in the coming months, as calmer and more navigable seas approach (post - Monsoon, every year around October to December) from Rakhine and Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar, where hundreds of thousands of Rohingya crowd one of the world's largest refugee camps. The United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR, estimates that around 7,800 Rohingya attempted sea crossings from Myanmar and Bangladesh in 2024, with more than 650 reported dead or missing – the highest toll since 2015. “Food shortages, restrictions on movement, and rising insecurity have made life unbearable. Many see the sea as their last escape,” the Rohingya Rights Advocacy Network told This Week in Asia, adding that smugglers now charge up to US\$3,000 per person for passage to Malaysia or Indonesia.

These overlapping crises – persecution in Myanmar, hopelessness in camps and **lack of durable solutions** from ASEAN countries as the regional order – are forcing people to take perilous sea journeys again and many never reach their destination.

For almost two decades, the current order lacks a sustainable solution for the Rakhine crisis, instead allowing the Rohingya's suffering to be controlled by recurring monsoons. This unsustainable solution arises because the authorities (including ASEAN Muslim countries, ASEAN, and the UN) offer only half-hearted solutions, citing a lack of responsibility, such as the limits of their authority, national security, or their own economic interests. They chose to stay in the comfort zone of the old order, namely secular capitalism which encapsulates the false notion of nationalism.

Moreover, these rulers ignore sustainable alternative solutions, because none of these rulers are willing to adopt the paradigm of Islam, because they have lost their Islamic mission, goals and aspirations as the best Ummah in accordance with the guidance of Allah and His Messenger. In fact, it is very clear that Islam has effective and sustainable solutions, according to the word of Allah Ta'ala: **وَإِنْ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمْ** **النَّصْرُ** **“And if they seek help of you for the religion, then you must help.”** [TQS. Al-Anfal: 72].

Islam commands the Muslim rulers of Indonesia, Malaysia and Bangladesh to immediately take emergency relief measures for Rohingya refugees. These measures include: (1) opening the country's borders to Rohingya refugees, (2) sending rescue missions to those still adrift at sea, (3) protecting and taking care of all their needs, (4) exerting political pressure on the oppressive regime of Myanmar to stop all their injustice and brutality against Rohingya Muslims and (5) the final step is if political pressure is ignored, then the mobilization of military forces must be carried out to uphold the honor of Islam and Muslims!

However, all these measures can be effective if Muslim rulers step out of their comfort zone, namely, moving away from the secular capitalist order towards an Islamic order that has long been seen as a threat to the old order. This order will be led by the Khilafah (Caliphate) system which will use all its tools and means, mobilizing all its efforts, both political, economic, and military, to protect Muslims from oppression, and to defend their blood and honor; regardless of their location and whatever the cost. This is because the Khilafah is a principled state, based on the noble moral values of Islam that place the honor of human life in a high place, which obliges to protect the blood of Muslims, rather than simply acting based on selfish national interests or economic gain, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said **«إِنَّمَا الْإِمَامُ جُنَّةٌ يُقَاتِلُ مِن وَرَائِهِ وَيُقَاتِلُ بِهِ»** **“Indeed, an imam (leader) is a shield, the people will fight behind him and take refuge with him”** (Muslim)

Women's Section
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