

Reports Says Bodies of Migrants Washed Ashore in Myanmar



Rangoon, June 4 (RHC)-- Dozens of bodies, believed to be those of Rohingya Muslims and Bangladeshi migrants, have reportedly been washed ashore in Myanmar's western state of Rakhine in May. The Arakan Project said on Wednesday that at least 47 corpses washed up on beaches and the mouths of rivers between May 12 and 24. The group has been monitoring activities in Rakhine for more than a decade.

The bodies might have drowned as the victims tried to swim to shore, Chris Lewa from the group said, adding that some of the corpses have decomposed beyond recognition. The account has been reportedly confirmed by religious leader Ashu Dular and other residents in two villages.

The Rohingya Muslims witness extensive discrimination and restrictions in Myanmar, including controls on their movements, family size and access to jobs. Many of the Muslims now live in camps for the displaced, three years after scores of them lost their lives in acts of violence by extremists from the Buddhist majority. The turmoil forced more people to flee on boats.

Myanmar's government dismisses extensive criticism that its treatment of the Rohingya is one of the reasons behind the current exodus of the migrants. Over 4,600 distressed and hungry people are said to have been recently rescued from the sea in five Southeast Asia countries amid a humanitarian crisis in the region.

According to the United Nations, around half of those migrants have been Rohingya Muslims fleeing Myanmar while the remainder are Bangladeshis, escaping poverty.

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