

Around 250 Missing After Rohingya Boat Capsizes in Andaman Sea

The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have expressed deep concern after reports that approximately 250 people, including Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi nationals, are missing at sea following a boat capsizing in the Andaman Sea.

According to a joint statement, the overcrowded trawler had departed from Teknaf in southern Bangladesh and was heading towards Malaysia when it reportedly sank amid heavy winds and rough sea conditions.

The agencies described the incident as a tragic reminder of the ongoing humanitarian crisis facing the Rohingya population. Years of displacement, coupled with limited access to education, livelihoods, and shrinking humanitarian assistance in refugee camps, continue to push many to undertake dangerous journeys by sea.

UNHCR and IOM also highlighted that persistent violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State has dimmed hopes for a safe and voluntary return of Rohingya refugees in the near future. As a result, many are increasingly vulnerable to exploitation by human traffickers and smuggling networks, often driven by promises of better economic opportunities abroad.

"The Andaman Sea continues to claim lives of those undertaking perilous journeys in search of safety and dignity," the statement said.

The organizations urged the international community to strengthen support and maintain funding for life-saving assistance to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, as well as for

host communities.

Marking the Bengali New Year, the agencies noted that the tragedy underscores the urgent need to address the root causes of displacement in Myanmar and to create conditions conducive for the safe, voluntary, and dignified return of Rohingya refugees.

They warned that without coordinated global action, more lives will be lost along dangerous migration routes.