



New asylum boat kicks off Indonesian "pushed-back" asylum drip-feed

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"The fact that yesterday, in the context of the Migration Amendment Bill going to the Senate for debate, another boat with asylum seekers arrived on Ashmore Reef, should firstly be ample evidence that it is Indonesia, who controls our borders, and secondly that Australia remains responsible for the fate of the "pushed-back" asylum seekers," WA Rights group Project SafeCom said this afternoon.

"Remarks by the Indonesian Foreign Ministry spokesman Mr Desra Percaya on ABC Radio, where he "warns that Australia's failure to endorse the legislation could be interpreted as Australia opening the door to asylum seekers", and that this "could include illegal immigrants who have been in Indonesia for many years and may seek asylum in Australia", should be understood that Indonesia's revenge for the failure of the Bill will be met with a slow opening of the 'sluice gates', where Indonesia releases the many asylum seekers it has been scooping up and holding at bay with Australian dollars while doing Australia's bidding," spokesman Jack H Smit said.

"The Immigration Minister is wrong to suggest that the arrival of the Burmese people on Ashmore Reef has to do with a need for stronger border protection, because it is just Australia's conniving attitude about the rights of asylum seekers, and its arrogance in pushing back asylum seekers coming back to haunt us, that's being triggered here," Mr Smit said.

"And in being stubbornly determined to send these poor people to Nauru, the Minister also should answer whether she intends to make the \$380 million dollar detention centre on Christmas Island into a White Elephant by refusing to use it to its capacity. Clearly, she cannot be taught any conscience considerations as displayed by some of the courageous backbenchers during the last week, but she is also suggesting to waste another couple of millions of dollars while there is clearly no need for that."

"I suggest, bring the Burmese to the mainland, and process them in decency. The Minister needs to stop wasting our taxpayers' dollars and become a humane Minister at the same time," Mr Smit said. "The nonsense about border protection no longer has any currency."

For more information:

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