

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

MIXED MARITIME MOVEMENTS

July – September 2015

KEY FIGURES

1,000

Refugees and migrants estimated to have departed from the Bay of Bengal by sea since September 2015

Over **550**

Persons of concern to UNHCR who disembarked in Indonesia in May 2015 and have since spontaneously departed

45%

Proportion of UNHCR's \$13 million Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea Initiative now funded

Mixed maritime movements are by their nature clandestine, making the data on such movements difficult to independently verify. The information in this report is compiled from various sources, including governments, implementing partners, media reports, and hundreds of direct interviews with persons of concern who have undertaken mixed maritime journeys in South-East Asia.

HIGHLIGHTS



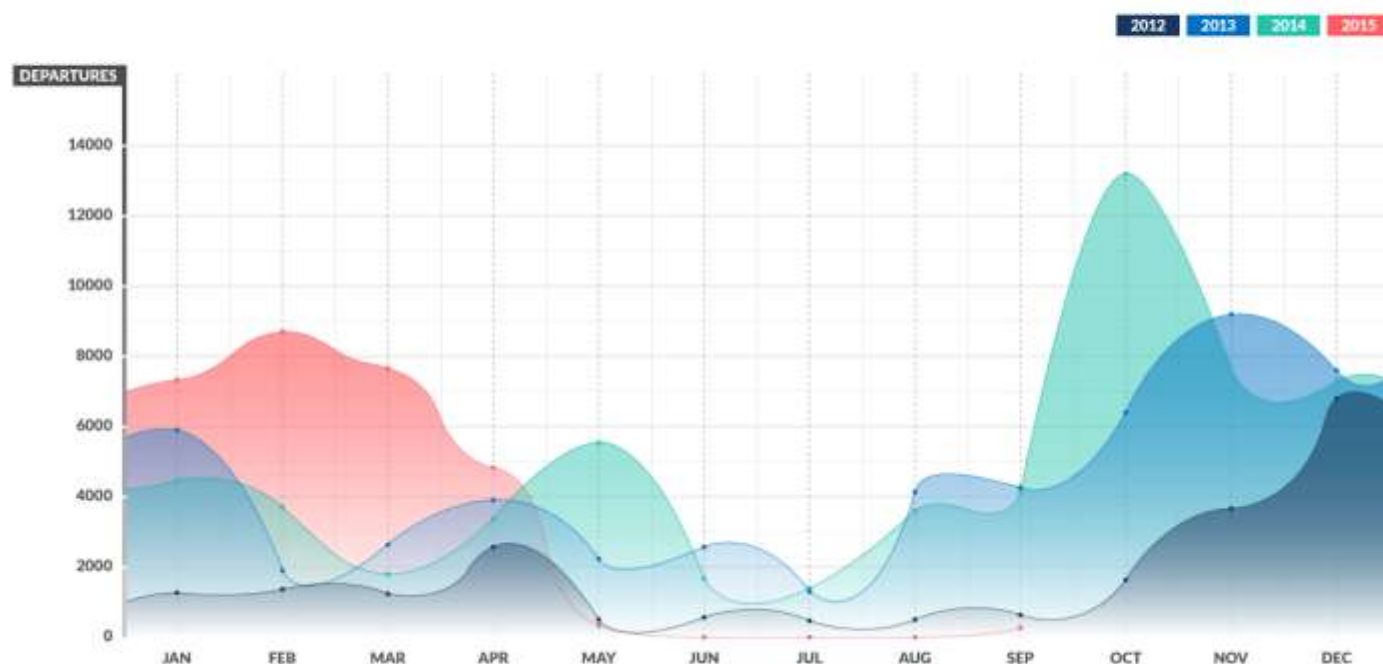
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The remains of nearly 100 refugees and migrants from Myanmar and Bangladesh have been reinterred in graves in Kedah, Malaysia, after they were discovered near smugglers' camps in May.

- Rumours that people smugglers were actively recruiting passengers in Bangladesh and Myanmar began circulating in August, and UNHCR and Arakan Project sources reported isolated departures from the Bay of Bengal since late September of several boats carrying a total of about 1,000 passengers.
- Since July, over 550 persons of concern to UNHCR who disembarked from abandoned smugglers' boats in Indonesia in May are presumed to have spontaneously left the country. UNHCR has confirmed the arrival in Malaysia of about 100 such onward movers.
- From July to September, dozens of persons of concern to UNHCR reportedly crossed overland from Thailand into Malaysia undetected. Following the crackdown on smugglers' jungle camps in the first half of 2015, smugglers were said to be leasing houses in southern Thailand to keep groups of 15-20 people until their passage to Malaysia could be arranged.
- Implementation of the proposals and recommendations put forward at the 29 May 2015 Bangkok Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean is uneven. UNHCR, UNODC, and IOM continue to call on concerned countries in the region to establish a joint task force to drive these proposals and recommendations forward.

Estimated mixed maritime departures from the Bangladesh-Myanmar maritime border (2012-2015)

Source: UNHCR / November 2015



STATUS OF MAY-JULY 2015 DISEMBARKATIONS

Country of disembarkation	Officially disembarked*		Remaining (detained#)		Repatriated Bangladeshis	Rohingya movement
	Rohingya	Bangladeshi	Rohingya	Bangladeshi		
Bangladesh	0	134	Not applicable			
Myanmar	216	846	21	55	731	195 returned home to Rakhine; remaining are ex-Bangladesh
Thailand	87	66	83 (65)	66 (66)	0	4 escaped
Malaysia	372	735	372 (372)	113 (113)	622	~100 confirmed to have arrived from Indonesia
Indonesia	999	821	417	104	673	~550 believed to have left Indonesia

Sources: UNHCR, IOM, media

* At least 700 additional people are believed to have unofficially disembarked in Myanmar

All remaining individuals not detained are being held in enclosed shelters

NEXT STEPS

- A series of upcoming high-level events will provide countries in the region and the international community opportunities to accelerate the implementation of the proposals and recommendations of the 29 May 2015 Bangkok Special Meeting, including by:
 - Protecting people stranded at sea by agreeing to disembark refugees and migrants in distress at sea to places of safety, not detain survivors, and provide some form of temporary protection;
 - Preventing human smuggling and trafficking by strengthening information gathering and sharing, and enhancing legal, affordable, and safe channels of migration; and
 - Addressing the root causes of mixed maritime movements by improving livelihood opportunities in at-risk communities.
- The upcoming events include:
 - **27-28 November 2015 – Jakarta, Indonesia**
Jakarta Declaration Roundtable Meeting on Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Movement of Persons
 - **3-4 December 2015 – Bangkok, Thailand**
Follow up meeting to the 29 May 2015 Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean
 - **3-4 December 2015 – Manila, Philippines**
Bali Process Roundtable on Returns and Reintegration
 - **16-17 December 2015 – Geneva, Switzerland**
UNHCR High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges: Understanding and addressing root causes of displacement
 - **2 February 2016 – Bangkok, Thailand**
Bali Process Senior Officials Meeting
 - **March 2016 – Bali, Indonesia**
Bali Process Ministerial Meeting

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Links:

UNHCR Global Focus – Bay of Bengal Situation: <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/10211>

UNHCR-UNODC-IOM, Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea – Proposals for Action: <http://www.unhcr.org/55682d3b6.html>

UNHCR, Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea Initiative – Enhancing Responses and Seeking Solutions: <http://www.unhcr.org/557ad6a59.html>