

Migrant Deaths

The 25th of November 2022 marked the one-year anniversary of the death of 31 mostly Muslim migrants crossing the English Channel in a rubber dinghy.

The deaths have been marked as the worst maritime disaster in the Channel for 30 years. The circumstances of the horrific events are even more disturbing.

Rescue volunteer Charles Devos was one of the first at the scene. His is familiar with the hundreds of flotillas of unseaworthy and overloaded vessels navigating the busy shipping lane shared by hulking freighters. The treacherous weather, waves and currents have claimed many hundreds of lives over the years, but the events of the 27th of November were particularly egregious.

The boat in question became unstable and its occupants knew they were in danger. Mobile phones were used to call for rescue. The boat was in French waters; however, the French authorities did not want to take responsibility for the rescue. The migrants were told to call UK rescue services; however, they insisted that the boat was in French waters and refused any form of assistance.

This inhumane exchange of responsibility “tennis” played out over hours until everyone of the 27 migrants died of hypothermia.

There were 7 women and 3 children on that boat. One of the women was pregnant. None were spared the dignity of a chance of life and were deemed not worthy of assistance.

In the present time of November 2022, ever-increasing numbers of people fleeing conflict or poverty in Afghanistan, Sudan, Iraq, Eritrea and other areas are risking the perilous journey in small, unseaworthy crafts from France, hoping to win asylum or find better opportunities in Britain. The traffickers are merciless and there have been accounts of migrants seeing that the boats are not safe and overloaded. When they refuse to board, they are held at gun point to continue or they will have their children shot. Money before morals is the only motivating factor and value shared by the governments and criminal gangs alike.

The sick nationalistic values are to blame for this disgraceful situation. Migrants are not seen as fellow humans suffering the consequences of colonial wars and economic policies of greed.

Western nations cause the problem in the Muslim lands and expect citizens to sit and wait for death by bombs and starvation. Human rights matters of rainbow flags take greater precedence in the liberal values of the capitalistic nations.

We can only assume more anniversaries of these tragic events in the absence of the Khilafah (Caliphate). It can never be the case that the Ameer of the Khilafah would accept that any human is left to die in need. The superior values of the Sharia prohibit the needless loss of life and one life is more valuable to Allah (swt) than the

whole world. ﴿مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ﴾ **“On that account We ordained for the Children of Isra`il that if any one slew a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he slew the whole humanity: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the whole humanity. Then although there came to them Our messengers with clear (guidance), yet, even after that, many of them continued to commit excesses in the land.”** [TMQ 5:32].

The lives and honor of the Muslim will never see security or value if man-made systems continue to rule. The only valid solution is the complete return to the Khilafah.

Abu Maryam al-Azdi reported: When I went to see Mu`āwiyah, he said: "How good your visit is to us, O father of so-and-so." (This is an idiom used by the Arabs on such occasions). I said: "I will tell you a Hadith that I heard. I heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) say: «مَنْ وَلَّاهُ اللَّهُ عِزًّا وَجَلَّ شَيْئًا مِنْ أَمْرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ» **“If Allah, the Exalted, puts someone in the position of authority over the affairs of Muslims and he secludes himself, not meeting their needs, deficiencies, and poverty, Allah will keep Himself away from him, not fulfilling his needs, deficiencies, and poverty.”** He said: “He appointed a man to meet people’s needs.” [At-Tirmidhi]

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Imrana Mohammad
Member of the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir