

## The only reason we have a 'small boat crisis' is th...

Published: January 12, 2026, 9:58 pm

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The BBC was talking about the need to 'stop the boats' this morning as if this was the biggest issue in UK politics right now. It is not. It is just a three word slogan created by the Tories to describe a political crisis of their own deliberate making.

There need be no small boat crisis in the English Channel. We could let people wishing to apply for asylum in the UK do so outside the country. Or we could provide them with safe passage here so that their application could be considered in this country. But the Tories refuse to do either when both would, overnight, solve both the small boats problem and end the people trafficker's trade. But they want neither such thing. They want this crisis that they have manufactured.

Nor does there need to be a backlog in the processing of asylum application claims in the UK. Recruitment of people to process those claims should not be hard to do. But the government does not want to do that. It would rather there were riots outside hotels where asylum seekers are being housed. That is another crisis that they have chosen to manufacture.

A fast-tracking process for those from countries where people are known to be at risk would also solve most of this issue, allowing attention to be given to the more difficult claims. But again the Tories do not want that. They are refusing to manage so that people suffer instead.

Why are they doing that? There are three reasons.

One is so that they can create a three word slogan that dominates the news agenda even though the NHS, the cost of living crisis, the scandal of high interest rates, pay disputes, the fallout of Brexit, collapsing public services and so much else are all so much more important. And the media, and most especially the BBC, fall for it.

Second, they are doing this to promote fascism. When everything else they are doing is failing - as it is - fascism is their only route to re-election, and so they are going to use it. From now until whenever the election is (presuming that they do not try to cancel it)

we will be battered by messages that promote division and hate of 'the other'. Migrants are one of 'the others'. Expect others to be added to the list, with those claiming benefits the most obvious next target.

Third, they know Labour will play to their tune. Today Yvette Cooper was asked what she was going to do to 'stop the boats' on Radio 4 and she did nothing to challenge the interviewer. Instead she accepted this was the issue without saying it was not and that she wished to discuss other issues. Whilst Labour is so supine the Tories will keep doing this.

Let me be clear then. There need be no small boat crisis. It could be solved by rapid, easy to work out and simple policy changes. So let us stop pretending that Tory manufactured crises are real. They are not. They are its news agenda. But people suffer as a result. That is how callous they are. And this is only the start.