

‘Bangladesh’s commitment to prevent genocide rooted in own painful history’: Sheikh Hasina

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Online Desk: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Saturday called upon the international community to redouble their efforts in creating a safe and conducive environment in Myanmar where the Rohingyas can return and live with other communities in peace and dignity.

The prime minister made the call in a message on the occasion of the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime and the 75th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

She said, “On the occasion of the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime and the 75th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Bangladesh joins the international community in paying its solemn tribute to the victims of genocide throughout the history of the world and reiterates its firm commitment to prevent all acts of genocide and end impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators.”

“Our commitment to the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide stems from our own painful history. On 25 March 1971, the Pakistan occupation forces unleashed a genocidal campaign against the innocent civilians of erstwhile East Pakistan to suppress our aspiration for freedom. Three million innocent people were brutally killed by the occupation forces and their local collaborators during our 9-month-long War of Liberation. Over two hundred thousand women were subjected to sexual violence and severe torture, and 10 million people were forcibly displaced across the border,” the message reads.

She also said in the message, “The pain and trauma we suffered in 1971 motivated us to seek an end to genocide anywhere and demand justice for the victims of this heinous crime. We have redeemed our promise by holding some of the key perpetrators of the 1971 genocide accountable. As a manifestation of our deep respect for the victims and to uphold our commitment to preventing this scourge, we observe 25 March as ‘Genocide Day’ in Bangladesh. We call upon the international community to support our efforts and recognize the 1971 genocide.”

“As we observe the 75th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, we are deeply concerned by the continuation of acts of genocide in many parts of the world. The scale and gravity of Israeli aggression in Gaza and the killing of Palestinian civilians remind us of similar painful histories that we must not allow to repeat. In our own neighborhood, we were appalled to see how the Rohingya Muslims had been subjected to systematic persecution and atrocities. As a host country to over a million Rohingya victims, we call upon the international community to redouble their efforts in creating a safe and conducive environment in Myanmar where the Rohingyas can return and live with other communities in peace and dignity,” the premier said.

She said, “We are also concerned by the surge of xenophobia, racism, and hate speech against ethnic and religious minorities in various parts of the world that are posing vulnerable people at severe risks of genocide. We urge the States, the United Nations, and other stakeholders to continue to raise awareness of those risks, prevent the occurrence of genocide, and condemn them unequivocally when those risks become visible.”

Calling upon the international community to mobilize collective strength in preventing genocide, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, “I take this opportunity to reiterate our unflinching commitment to preventing genocide and similar crimes, and I call upon the international community to mobilize our collective strength

in preventing such crimes, including promoting a culture of peace and non-violence all over the world.”