

# Int'l attention to Rohingya diverted due to Ukraine war: PM tells Al Jazeera

March 9, 2023

**Online Desk:** Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said the international attention to forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals was diverted to the war in Ukraine and the Ukrainian refugees—a reality that has created the Rohingya situation more difficult to resolve. “The whole focus is now on the war and the refugees from the Ukraine,” she said in an interview with the Qatar-based broadcast station Al Jazeera.

A part of the interview was aired on Wednesday, but its full episode will be run on Saturday (March 11). Al Jazeera journalist Nick Clark interviewed Sheikh Hasina about the future of Rohingya refugees during her just-concluded visit to Qatar. The PM talked about a number of issues, including the situation in the Rohingya camps in Cox’s Bazar, relocation of Rohingya to Bhashan Char, and the future of the Rohingyas from Myanmar. Hasina visited Qatar to attend the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) held in Doha on March 4 last and returned home on Wednesday afternoon.

Hasina said Myanmar is not positive in taking their nationals back to their country despite Dhaka has long been engaging in talks to resolve the issue. She said Bangladesh gave shelter to Rohingyas – the victims of persecution, murder and rape in Myanmar– on humanitarian grounds. “When the Rohingya persecution started in Myanmar and Rohingyas were subjected to torture, murder and rape. we felt sorry for the Rohingyas... after that we opened the border we let them come. Besides, we provide shelter and treatment for all of them from the humanitarian side,” she said.

She said simultaneously Bangladesh started talks with Myanmar and tell them that the displaced people should be repatriated. “Unfortunately, they are not responding positively. These people should go back to their own land,” she went on. The PM said: “The international community is exerting pressure on Myanmar. But it is really difficult. We arranged accommodation for them in a separate place. Bhashan Char is a good place, a good place to live (in) ... We have arranged good accommodation and excellent facilities for children there.”

On living conditions in the Rohingya camps and the loss of shelters of more than 12,000 Rohingyas in the fire, she said “actually the situation in the Cox’s Bazar Rohingya camps is not very good.” The Rohingyas are fighting with each other, and they are engaged in different types of criminal activities including drugs, arms, and human trafficking, said the Prime Minister.