

Bangladesh prime minister slams rich nations for not taking action on climate change

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Sheikh Hasina giving her speech at the general debate session of UNGA (Photo by Awami League)

United Nations, September 25 (RHC)-- Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has attacked rich countries over their failures to take action regarding climate change. "They don't act. They can talk but they don't act," she told AFP on a visit to New York for the United Nations General Assembly.

"The rich countries, the developed countries, this is their responsibility. They should come forward. But we are not getting that much response from them. That is the tragedy," she said. "I know the rich countries; they want to become more rich and rich. They don't bother for others."

Hasina also spoke against the western nations for failing to come up with an annual fund of 100 billion dollars for developing nations to cope with climate change, as it was agreed upon at the Paris accord.

"We want that fund to be raised. Unfortunately we didn't get a good response from the developed countries. Because they are the responsible ones for these damages, they should come forward," she added.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif warned about the issue, saying floods that have swamped one-third of his country could happen elsewhere. Hasina also raised concerns over the impact of Rohingya refugees on the country's economy, security and socio-political security and urged the UN to play an "effective role" in dealing with the Rohingya crisis in the Asian country.

The world lauded Bangladesh in 2017 when about 750,000 Rohingya refugees fled there after the Myanmar government orchestrated a mass genocide against them.

"As long as they are in our country, we feel that it is our duty," Hasina said, but added patience is running thin. "Local people also suffer a lot," she said. "I can't say that they're angry, but they feel uncomfortable." "All the burden is coming upon us. This is a problem."

"It is not possible for us to give them an open space because they have their own country. They want to go back there. So that is the main priority for everybody," Hasina said. "If anybody wants to take them, they can take them," she added. "Why should I object?"

In August, Michelle Bachelet, the UN human rights chief, said that there was growing anti-Rohingya sentiment in Bangladesh. She also said that there was no prospect of sending them back to Myanmar, where the Rohingya are not considered citizens.

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