

China offers to mediate dialogue between Bangladesh, Myanmar

China has expressed its willingness to facilitate a dialogue between Bangladesh and Myanmar to solve the Rohingya refugee crisis.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, on a two-day visit to Bangladesh, met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Saturday. He said Beijing was willing to facilitate the dialogue, acknowledging that the Rohingya crisis was a “big challenge for Bangladesh”. He was quoted by a Hasina aide as telling that China does not want the Rohingya issue to overshadow or slow down the progress of the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar economic corridor initiative.

Ms. Hasina reiterated her call to the international community, including China, to mount pressure on Myanmar to take back its nationals. Earlier, at a meeting with his Bangladeshi counterpart A. H. Mahmud Ali, Mr. Wang said that as a friend of both Bangladesh and Myanmar, Beijing would “not be partial to any side”.

Mr. Wang’s visit came days after the UN revived a resolution on Myanmar that was dropped last year due to the country’s progress on human rights. The UN General Assembly’s Third Committee, which focuses on human rights, called on Myanmar to end operations that have “led to the systematic violation and abuse of human rights” of Rohingya Muslims. A total of 135 countries voted in favour of the resolution and 10, including China, against it, while there were 26 abstentions.

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