

Bangladesh's interim govt mulling to ban ousted ex-PM Hasina's party

PTI, DHAKA: Bangladesh's interim government on Friday said it would take a "quick decision" on banning ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League. The announcement by the interim government chief Professor Muhammad Yunus's office in a statement came after student-led newly floated National Citizen Party (NCP) activists overnight rallied in front of his official residence demanding Hasina's party be disbanded. NCP leadership had spearheaded the massive student-led protests that resulted in the ouster of Hasina on August 5 last. Yunus had taken over on August 8. Those students came together to form the NCP earlier this year.

"The government considers with seriousness the

recent demand raised on behalf of different political parties, organisations and the people to disband Awami League over allegations of autocratic rule and terrorist activities," the interim government statement said.

The govt has established contacts with different political parties and "will take a quick decision in consultation with them," it said.

The NCP set up a make-shift stage near Yunus's official residence 'Jamuna' after midnight Thursday. The party activists also offered Friday prayers at the scene.

The govt statement came as leaders of different Islamist parties and groups such as Jamaat-e-Islam, its student front Islami Chhatra Shibir and Hefazat-e-Islam also joined the rally of the NCP.

INDIA'S SHIELD HOLDS FIRM

BSF said at least seven terrorists were killed and a Rangers post destroyed, in trying to neutralise the bid from across the Indo-Pak International Border in Jammu.

The terrorists were engaged around 11 pm on Thursday in Samba district after a "big group" of terrorists was detected by the "surveillance grid".

This infiltration bid was supported by fire from Pakistan Rangers post Dhandhar, a BSF spokesperson said.

Two more people were killed after Pakistani troops resorted to heavy shelling in areas near the Line of Control (LoC) in J and K, officials said. With this, the death toll due to shelling from across the LoC in the recent days rose to 18.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a high-level meeting with the top defence establishment to take stock of the security situation.

Modi met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, and the three service chiefs and the Chief of Defence Staff to strategise over the future course of action. Earlier in the day, he held interactions with veterans, including former chiefs of the three services, taking their feedback on the current situation.

At a media briefing, Misri slammed Pakistan's provocative and escalatory actions to try and target Indian cities and civilian infrastructure using drones last night.

Most drones were downed using kinetic and non-kinetic means, said Col Sofiya Qureshi of the Army and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh of the Indian Air Force (IAF) at the briefing.

The remarks came amid intensified military action between India and Pakistan following India's strike on nine terror sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) under 'Operation Sindoor' early Wednesday in a powerful retaliation to the Pahalgam massacre on April 22. Twenty-six people, mostly tourists, were killed in the carnage.

The two military officials said Pakistan used its civilian airliners as a "shield" as it did not close its civil airspace during its attempts to attack Indian installations with drones and missiles on May 7, knowing fully well that the strikes would elicit a swift response from India.

"On the night of May 8-9, Pakistan carried out large-scale violations of Indian airspace, attempting to target military infrastructure with 300-400 drones across 36 locations from Leh to Sir Creek," said Singh.

"Indian forces neutralised many drones using kinetic and non-kinetic means. An armed UAV strike on Bhatinda was also thwarted," she said.

India responded by launching drone strikes on four Pakistani air defence sites, destroying a radar, the Wing Commander added.

Singh said the "possible" purpose of the large-scale Pakistani intrusions were to test the air defence systems and gather intelligence.

"Forensic examination of the drone debris is being undertaken. Preliminary reports suggest them to be Asisguard Songar drone of Turkey," she said.

"Pakistan escalated with artillery and drone attacks across the Line of Control, causing casualties. Alarmingly, Pakistan kept its civil airspace open during the assault, endangering civilian flights," she said.

In response to the Pakistani attack, Indian military launched armed drones launched at four air defence sites in Pakistan.

"One of the drones was able to destroy an air defence radar," Singh said.

She said Pakistan also carried out artillery shelling across the LoC using heavy calibre artillery guns and armed drones at Kandhan, Uri, Poonch, Mender, Rajouri, Akur and Udhampur in Jammu and Kashmir area which resulted in some losses and injuries to Indian Army personnel.

"Pakistan Army also suffered major losses in Indian retaliatory firing.

"Additionally, Pakistan's irresponsible behaviour again came to the fore as Pakistan did not close its civil airspace despite it launching a failed unprovoked drone and missile attack on May 7," said Qureshi.

POWER TARIFF HIKE PLAN SPARKS PUBLIC OUTCRY

Speaking at the public hearing, concerned citizens and activists questioned the department's financial management and accountability. Many highlighted the government's failure to recover crores in outstanding dues, monetise idle assets, or address rampant power theft.

Political parties joined the chorus of criticism. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Goa Forward Party (GFP) both denounced the move, calling it unjustified and mismanaged. However, the Congress was missing and did not send a representative to the meeting, raising questions about their commitment to citizen's causes in Goa.

"Particularly alarming is the proposed hike for the low-tension domestic category, which includes substantial increases across various consumption slabs. For example, the rise in the per-unit cost from Rs 1.90 to Rs 1.96 for 0-100 units, along with similar hikes in higher slabs, will place an additional burden on families, especially those with limited or fixed incomes. This escalation will not only stretch household budgets but also reduce disposable income, ultimately curbing consumer spending — a key pillar of our local economy," wrote Vijai Sardesai, GFP President, in a letter to the JERC.

AAP Goa Convenor Amit Palekar accused the BJP government of failing to fulfil its electoral promises, including free gas cylinders and water supply. "Instead of keeping its word, the government is now pushing a 15% power hike in three years and covering up scams like the bunch cabling fiasco," Palekar said.

"The department is functioning more like a bureaucratic setup than a business entity," said activist Mukundraj Mudras. "There's no transparency in how recoveries are made, and honest bill payers are bearing the brunt. The notification for finalising rates for cable operators was issued in 2015, but no effort has made to recover money from the cable operators."

Roland Martins, coordinator of GOACAN, criticised the lack of categorisation clarity, citing the misuse of domestic tariffs by commercial users. "Buildings are used for commercial purposes but billed domestically. The Electricity Department should collect data from the Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department and check the consumption of power in these buildings. People from Delhi are buying apartments in Goa to use them for commercial purposes," he said.

Martins further slammed the department for failing to collect data on power thefts and neglecting audits of tendered projects. "Failed government projects are being funded by consumers, and there is no accountability," he charged, demanding a white paper on steps to recover dues and reduce losses.

Others at the hearing expressed concerns about unauthorised advertisements on electric poles and damage to

public infrastructure going unchecked. "There are advertisement boards hanging from electric poles. An inspection should be carried out and a rate should be fixed to put up those boards. What money does the government get when boards welcoming the Prime Minister, Home Minister or any high profile person is put on the poles? Tree cutting and tree pruning must be made chargeable. There should be separate divisions for recovery and inspection," said one attendee.

The industrial sector echoed similar concerns. Gerard D'Mello from the Goa Chamber of Commerce and Industry warned that the 15% tariff increase would severely impact industries running three shifts. "Such hikes make operations unsustainable for many businesses," he noted.

Participants also pointed out that average household bills are set to rise sharply under the proposed hike. "A consumer who paid Rs 482 for 250 units in 2019-20 will end up paying Rs 750 by 2027," one citizen said, highlighting the growing burden on middle-income households.

GFP also criticised the proposal for threatening Goa's small-scale industries, tourism businesses, and start-ups. "This tariff hike will increase operating costs, leading to job losses and discouraging new investments," a GFP spokesperson said. The party also faulted the department for failing to explain whether the hike stemmed from mismanagement, outdated infrastructure, or excessive power purchase costs.

While Chief Electrical Engineer Stephen Fernandes defended the proposal, saying it was a short-term plan and that consumer categories had been realigned for clarity, the justification did little to quell the anger of the public. The Electricity Department has cited rising power demand and infrastructure costs as the reason behind the hike.

“There's no transparency in how recoveries are made, and honest bill payers are bearing the brunt. The notification for finalising rates for cable operators was issued in 2015, but no effort has made to recover money from the cable operators —Mukundraj Mudras, Activist

POPE LEO XIV CELEBRATES HIS FIRST MASS

Leo will be formally installed as pope at a Mass on May 18, the Vatican said Friday, and will preside over his first general audience May 21.

Leo had asked all heads of Vatican offices, who technically lost their jobs with the death of Pope Francis, to return to work until further notice, according to the Vatican. It said he wanted to take time for "reflection, prayer and dialogue" before taking any further decisions on confirming them definitively.

A Mass that may suggest his priorities

Two women delivered the readings of Scripture at the start of the Mass, perhaps an indication of Leo's intention to continue Francis' focus on expanding women's role in the church. As a cardinal, Leo put into practice one of Francis' most revolutionary reforms by having three women serve on the Vatican board that vets bishop nominations.

Speaking in near-perfect Italian, Leo lamented that the Christian faith in many parts of the world is "considered absurd," mocked or opposed in the face of temptations such as money, success and power. He complained that in many places Jesus is misunderstood, "reduced to a kind of charismatic leader or superman".

"This is true not only among non-believers but also among many baptised Christians, who thus end up living, at this level, in a state of practical atheism," he said. "A lack of faith is often tragically accompanied by the loss of meaning in life, the neglect of mercy, appalling violations of human dignity, the crisis of the family and so many other wounds that afflict our society."

The cardinals applauded as the Mass concluded. Leo was seen wearing simple black shoes — eschewing, as Francis did, the red loafers of the papacy preferred by some traditionalist popes.

Francis had his eye on the new pope

Francis, the first Latin American pope, clearly had his eye on Prevost and in many ways saw him as his heir apparent. He sent Prevost, who had spent years as a missionary in Peru, to take over a complicated diocese there in 2014. Francis brought Prevost to the Vatican in 2023 to head of the Vatican's powerful Dicastery for Bishops, which vets bishop nominations around the world and is one of the most important jobs in church governance.

Since arriving in Rome, Prevost had kept a low public profile but was well known to the men who count, and respected by those who worked with him. Significantly, he presided over one of the most revolutionary reforms Francis made, when he added three women to the voting bloc that decides which bishop nominations to forward to the pope.

In a 2023 interview with Vatican News, the then-cardinal said the women had enriched the process and reaffirmed the need for the laity to have a greater role in the church. **An Augustinian pope**

The last pope to take the name Leo was an Italian who led the church from 1878 to 1903. Leo XIII softened the church's confrontational stance toward modernity, especially science and politics, and laid the foundation for modern Catholic social thought. His most famous encyclical — a high-level papal teaching — addressed workers' rights and capitalism at the beginning of the industrial revolution and was highlighted by the Vatican in explaining the new pope's choice of name.

The previous Leo also had close ties to the Augustinian order: He rebuilt an ancient Augustinian church and convent near his hometown of Carpineto, outside Rome, that is still in use by the order today.

Vatican watchers said Prevost's decision to name himself Leo was particularly significant given the Leo XIII's legacy of social justice and reform, suggesting continuity with some of Francis' chief concerns. Specifically, Leo cited one of Francis' key priorities of making the Catholic Church more attentive to lay people and inclusive.

"He is continuing a lot of Francis' ministry," said Natalia Imperatori-Lee, the chair of religious studies at Manhattan University in the Bronx. She added that his election could send a message to the US church, which has been badly divided between conservatives and progressives, with much of the opposition to Francis coming from there. "I think it is going to be exciting to see a different kind of American Catholicism in Rome," Imperatori-Lee said.

Leo said in a 2023 interview with Vatican News that the polarisation in the church was a wound that needed to be healed.

"Divisions and polemics in the church do not help anything. We bishops especially must accelerate this movement towards unity, towards communion in the church," he said.

Leo's brother, John Prevost, was so shocked that his brother had been elected pope that he missed several phone calls from Leo during an interview Thursday with The Associated Press.

John Prevost described his brother, a fan of Wordle, as being very concerned for the poor and those who don't have a voice. He said he expects him to be a "second Pope Francis".

"He's not going to be real far left and he's not going to be real far right," he added. "Kind of right down the middle."

Looking ahead

In his first hours as pope, Leo went back to his old apartment in the Sant'Uffizio Palace to see colleagues, according to selfies posted to social media. Vatican Media also showed him in the moments after his election praying in the Pauline Chapel before emerging on the loggia of St Peter's Basilica to greet Rome and the world.

On Sunday, he is set to deliver his first noon blessing from the loggia and attend an audience with the media on Monday in the Vatican auditorium, Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said.

Beyond that, his first foreign trip could be at the end of May: Francis had been invited to travel to Turkey to commemorate the 1,700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea, a landmark event in Christian history and an important moment in Catholic-Orthodox relations.

FOND MEMORIES OF POPE'S PRIOR VISITS TO INDIA

There, he celebrated Holy Mass at Mary Queen of Help of Christians Parish in Mariyapuram and St Antony's Shrine in Edakochi. On April 22, he concelebrated the ordination of six Augustinian deacons to the priesthood at St Francis Xavier's Church, Kathrikadavu, Kaloor, alongside the late Archbishop Daniel Acharuparambil.

He returned in October 2006 to participate in the Asia-Pacific Meeting of the Order of St Augustine, again residing at the Augustinian house in Mariyapuram from October 3 to 6. In addition to his duties, he celebrated Mass and made a pastoral visit to Shenbagam School in Pollachi (Diocese of Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu), and St Thomas Parish, Thalappuzha, in the Archdiocese of Calicut, Kerala.

Those who accompanied him during these visits recall a man of exceptional humility. "He was incredibly simple, down-to-earth and always willing to adapt," said Fr Jacob Mullassery, OSA. "He never asked for special treatment—he travelled in modest vehicles and stayed in rooms with basic amenities. His humility deeply touched all of us."

Fr Metro Xavier, OSA, who had several personal encounters with Pope Leo XIV, described him as a man "profoundly rooted in prayer." He added, "He spent long hours in silent Eucharistic Adoration and had a deep love for the Church and its Magisterium."

Reacting to his election as Pope, Fr Wilson Injerappu, OSA, Regional Vicar of the Augustinian Order in India, said, "We are filled with immense joy. To have an Augustinian as the Holy Father is a great blessing for us. It's also a reminder of our duty to support him through our prayers and sacrifices."

CHURCH OF GOA WELCOMES POPE LEO XIV

Responding to the Holy Father's first words—an invitation to peace, dialogue, and the fearless sharing of God's love with all—the Archdiocese pledged its faithful obedience and support to the Vicar of Christ.

"May the Lord God, Shepherd and Ruler of all the faithful, look favourably on His servant Pope Leo XIV whom He has set at the head of his Church as Her shepherd and grant, that by word and example, he may be of service to those over whom he presides. Amen," said the Archdiocese on Friday.

LORD I AM COMING HOME

BRIAN AGNELO
RAUL DA SILVA
Shirvodem/ Navelim
Born: 28/10/1989
Died: 08/05/2025

Beloved Son
of late **Pedro J M Da Silva/**
Brigida Moraes
Loving brother/ brother-in-law of
Belinda/ Neville
Uncle of Nashlan and Brielle

Funeral Cortege will leave his residence Today
10.05.2025 at 4.15pm to Our Lady of Rosary
Church, Navelim for mass followed by burial.

Relatives & friends kindly accept this as the only intimation.

Cosy's Ads, Chinchinim, Navelim, 9850473904

RETURNED TO THE LORD

EDGAR LOPES
Born 11-10-1948 Died 08-05-2025

Beloved husband of Julie Lopes.
Returned to the Lord peacefully.
Funeral cortege will leave his Milroc Woods residence Old Goa at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, 10th May 2025, for an Eucharistic Celebration for his soul, at the **Se Cathedral, Old Goa**, followed by burial.
You were a wonderful blessing to us all.
His sorrowful sons, daughter, daughter-in-laws, son-in-law and grandchildren.
Friends & relatives kindly accept this as the only intimation.

RETURNED TO THE LORD

CATARINA ANICIA FERNANDES
Born: 30.12.1943 Died: 08.05.2025

-: COMBA - MARGAO -:
Beloved wife of late **Augusto Pereira.**
Loving mother / mother-in-law of **Peter (Conny), Trini / Baty, Sydney / Evonne and Ana.**
Dearest grandmother of **Tristan, Trisha, Stacey, Cyrus, Emily, Aramita.**
Passed away peacefully.
Funeral cortege will leave her residence at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, 10th May 2025 (TODAY) to Our Lady of Grace Church, Margao, for Eucharistic Celebration, followed by burial at Margao Cemetery.
Relatives and friends kindly accept this as the only intimation.

Returned To The Lord

Hazel Rebello
Bahrain/ Old Goa
Born: 14-09-1949 Died: 08-05-2025

Beloved wife of John Rebello.
Mother/mother-in-law of Melroy/Seema, Melissa/Francis & Melinda.
Grandmother of Starlette, Starlon & late Bryce.
Sister of John Braz/ Martha, Damian/Beulah, late Bentic/Alice, Dommic/Yvonne.

Funeral cortege will leave her residence at 2:45pm on **Saturday 10th May 2025 to St. Peter's Church, Bainguinim, Old Goa** for Eucharistic celebration followed by burial.

Relative & friends kindly accept this as only intimation.
GOAN RITES 9822136397

TWELFTH DAY REMEMBRANCE

LATE SOU. SEEMA RAMESH NAIK
Fondly remembered by her husband **Shri. Ramesh V. Naik**
Daughter/Son-in-law: **Reshma/ Gopalkrishna Kerkar, Late Ashlesha Ramesh Naik & Dr. Leena/Laximan (Ravi) Raul.**
Grandchildren: **Poonit, Naail & Gauri & the staff of Bona Steel Industries & Asha Steel Industries, Velim- Salcete**
The bereaved family would like to sincerely thank **Dr. Rajeshwar Naik & all the Doctors, Nurses & Staff of Royal Hospital, Margao** for the dedicated care.

RETURNED TO THE LORD
Filomena Desouza
A mother to all, so gentle, so kind,
With a smiling face and a welcoming mind.
In every heart, your love will stay.
Quietly missed every day.

Beloved wife of late **Camilo Jose De' Souza,**
loving mother/ mother-in-law of
Adriano and Ellena.
Cherished grandmother of **Avelna.**

The funeral will take place at 3.30pm sharp on
May 10th 2025 at St. Francis Xavier Church, Chicalim, Goa
Cosy's Ads, Chinchinim, Navelim, 9850473904

In cherished memory of

LUZIA LIDIA DE MELO e VAS
AMBAJIM - FATORDA

(Ex- Teacher Fr. Agnel Multipurpose H.S. School, Verna)

There will be a **Eucharistic Celebration** for the soul of our beloved **Luzia Lidia De Melo e Vas** on **Saturday, 10th May 2025 (Today)** at 8:00 am at **Holy Spirit Church, Margao.**
Offered by her sorrowful husband Menon, daughter Nadia & family.

Rebello Publicity & Funeral Services Margao 9822383992