

# Bangladesh crisis: Neighbourhood challenges and lessons for India

[dnaindia.com/analysis/report-bangladesh-crisis-neighbourhood-challenges-and-lessons-for-india-3100567](https://dnaindia.com/analysis/report-bangladesh-crisis-neighbourhood-challenges-and-lessons-for-india-3100567)

HomeAnalysis  
Analysis

There is no doubt that Hasina delivered stellar economic growth, but she also began to face accusations of being increasingly authoritarian



Tridivesh Singh Maini

Updated : Aug 06, 2024, 11:03 AM IST



Sheikh Hasina resigned as Bangladesh PM on August 5, 2024 and fled Bangladesh almost immediately after student protests, which began last month, ultimately turned into a movement calling for her ouster. The Bangladeshi PM got safe passage in India and is likely to seek asylum in the UK.

The dramatic exit of Sheikh Hasina, who was compelled to resign after over 15 years in power, underscores a few points. First, while economic growth in GDP terms and development of physical infrastructure is important for citizens, there can be no trade-off regarding freedoms. Hasina won her fourth term as PM earlier this year in January 2024.

She served as PM first from 1996 to 2001 and then 2009 to 2024. There is no doubt that Hasina delivered stellar economic growth, but she also began to face accusations of being increasingly authoritarian—there were charges of rigging during the January 2024 election and the ruthless suppression of protests proved to be the tipping point for her. The protests were against quotas, for kin of 'Muktijoddhas' -- those who fought in Bangladesh's war of independence in 1971. 300 people were killed in the violent suppression of these protests. On August 4, 2024, 98 people including 14 policemen were killed in anti-government protests which turned violent. Protesters called for Hasina's resignation and some are supposed to have chanted the slogan "down with the autocrat".

## **TRENDING NOW**

---

Growing unemployment (an estimated 18 million Bangladeshi youth are unemployed), rising inflation and the collapse of the South Asian nation's garment sector have also been flagged as reasons for the increasing resentment against Hasina.

Army chief General Waker-uz-Zaman who will assist in getting together an interim government said: "I have met Opposition leaders and we have decided to form an interim government to run this country. I take all responsibility and promise to protect your life and property. Your demands will be fulfilled. Please support us and stop violence. If you work with us, we can move towards a proper solution. We cannot achieve anything through violence."

The US has lauded the army for its restraint, while also pitching for an inclusive government.

### **Hasina's exit and the ramifications for India**

From an Indian point of view, the ouster of Hasina perceived to be Pro-India is not good news. There is a strong belief in New Delhi that the protests were supported by Pakistan and China and an apprehension that both countries will gain a strong foothold in Bangladesh with

the exit of Sheikh Hasina ( the former PM had accused the protests of being supported by the Jamaat-E-Islami and BNP). New Delhi promptly issued a warning along its border with Bangladesh

The US while commending the Bangladesh army for its restraint has called upon it to form an interim government which is "inclusive" and "democratic"

## **Takeaways**

A few points need to be borne in mind. While every country sees its own interests and cultivates leaders who may be friendly, it is important not to invest in one leader -- especially if that leader is not popular at home. Also, while it is true that leaders in the neighbourhood may indulge in posturing and rhetoric, no party when in power can afford to not have good relations with India. A perfect example is Maldives. While initially the President, Mohammed Muizzu, considered to be Pro-China, made anti-India statements. Muizzu visited China soon after taking over as President and called India a bully. He also called for withdrawal of Indian troops from Maldives (India withdrew troops from Maldives well before the May 10, 2024 deadline set by Muizzu).

In March 2024, during a meeting with PM Modi he called India, the closest ally of Maldives and sought debt relief (in May 2024, India provided budget aid to the tune of \$50 million to Maldives). He also attended PM Modi's swearing in ceremony in June 2024 and recently thanked both India and China for helping in easing Maldives' debt repayment. The Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC) along with the Maldives Association of Travel Agents and Tour Operators (MATATO) and the National Hotels and Guest House Association of Maldives (NHGAM) held roadshows in Mumbai, Bengaluru and Delhi with an eye on wooing Indian tourists.

*(The author is a policy analyst and faculty member at the Jindal School of International Affairs, OP Jindal Global University, Sonipat)*

**(Disclaimer: The views expressed above are the author's own and do not reflect those of DNA)**

***Find your daily dose of news & explainers in your WhatsApp. Stay updated, Stay informed- Follow DNA on WhatsApp.***

- Sheikh Haseena
- sheikh hasina news
- sheikh hasina resignation
- Bangladesh news today
- Bangladesh PM
- bangladesh protest reason
- Bangladesh Prime Minister

- what is happening in bangladesh
- bangladesh news today live
- bangladesh latest news
- Bangladesh Government
- Bangladesh riots reasons
- bangladesh deaths
- dhaka