

Armenia Lifts Martial Law Months After Karabakh War

By [AFP](#)

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Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan agreed to lift martial law and hold fresh parliamentary elections to end protests against his handling of the Nagorno-Karabakh war. **Sergei Bobylev / TASS**

Armenia lifted martial law on Wednesday, five months after the end of its brutal war with Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

The decision to lift the order came as part of a deal between Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and the opposition to defuse a political crisis sparked by Armenia's crushing defeat in the six-week conflict.

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Pashinyan's critics have staged regular protests calling on him to resign for his handling of the war since November when he agreed a ceasefire and ceded swathes of territory to

Azerbaijan.

Armenian law says a sitting prime minister cannot be removed during martial law and the move to lift it came after Pashinyan agreed with the opposition to hold fresh parliamentary elections in June to end the protests.

Parliament, which is controlled by Pashinyan's allies voted Wednesday 118 to 1 with one abstention to lift martial law, which was declared Sept. 27, the day clashes erupted in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Parliament speaker and Pashinyan ally Ararat Mirzoyan said Tuesday that the ruling party would back the move "since a deal has been reached between political forces on defusing the internal political situation through snap polls."

Armenia's simmering territorial conflict with Azerbaijan ignited in September into an all-out war that left more than 6,000 people dead.

The ceasefire brokered by Russia saw Pashinyan hand over large parts of Azerbaijan that had been controlled for several decades by Armenian separatists.

They had controlled the ethnic-Armenian region since they broke away from Baku during a war in the early 1990s.

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