# Mad Parliament!

## Hasina's new government might face a diplomatic crisis, as the international community has taken a clear stance against the one-sided election of January 5

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Ruling Awami League (AL) chief Sheikh Hasina looks all set to be elected the leader of the AL parliamentary party after an easy two-third majority in the January 5 parliamentary polls. MPs elected through the one-sided election will take oath any day after January 24, after the expiry of the tenure of the current parliament. So, upon her election as the leader of the majority party, she will be appointed by President Abdul Hamid as the new Prime Minister. She will swear in as the premier in two consecutive terms and for the third in her political career. She will have a new life as the PM for five more years. She will then advise the President to convene the new parliament within 30 days since the publication of results of the January 5 election in an official gazette.

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The new parliament will have three types of MPs--154 elected unopposed, 146 elected in friendly contest and 50 to women reserved seats to be indirectly elected. So, it is clear that the parliament will be dominated by MPs elected either unopposed or in an indirect election or in a farcical election. Of course, this will be an abnormal parliament. The government and ruling AL may keep claiming that the new parliament is an elected one. But their claim will remain limited to some technical aspect as the January 5 election is being held only in paper.

But everybody knows that the majority of the people had nothing to say in the January 5 polls as their voting rights have been denied. Sheikh Hasina however did not like to be elected unopposed from two constituencies. Two Jatiya Party men, who were unwilling and unprepared to contest the election, are now challenging her in Gopalganj-3 and Rangpur-6. If both the Jatiya Party men could have been able to withdraw their nomination papers, Hasina would have been elected unopposed. Her government has abolished the caretaker government on grounds that the election time non-partisan caretaker government was formed with unelected people. Will Hasina's new government be able to claim that her new government is elected by the people? The caretaker government's functions were very limited. It did some routine work and had extended all out cooperation to the Election Commission to hold a free and fair parliamentary election in 90 days timeframe. But Hasina's new government will be formed for five years and it will have all the powers necessary to run the country. There will be no strong opposition in the parlia-