ment to hold the government accountable. Those elected as MPs from other parties will remain loyal to the AL.

How will the new parliament and Hasina government perform after being elected in such a controversial election? The coming days look all set to be more volatile. The BNP-led opposition and other parties will continue to wage street agitation against her government. Different sections of people may continue to criticise the government for its failure to hold a credible parliamentary election. So, her new government with little legitimacy and public support will have to spend much of its strength to face the opposition. Unruly and controversial activities of many MPs and ruling AL men may give Hasina's new government more pain. Their activities might generate more controversy and taint the image of the new government. Many wealth statements published in different newspapers have already shown how they were desperate in the last five years to make money in lawful and unlawful ways. The new parliament and the new government might make the corrupt even more corrupt.



Sheikh Hasina PHOTO: STAR FILE

Hasina's new government moreover might face a diplomatic crisis as the international community has taken a stance against the one-sided January 5 election. The European Union and the US have refused to send observers for this election. Many other countries are set to follow them. They did what they had done in January 2007 as they were against the January 22 one-sided parliamentary polls which were cancelled following the declaration of the State of Emergency. The international community believes that sending observers for the January 5 elections is tantamount to making this election credible. As they took a stance against the election, they might take position against its outcome too.

A number of officials in the diplomatic arena in Dhaka told this correspondent that diplomats stationed in Dhaka have opened discussions amongst themselves to find their next course of action. They will be sending reports on the prevailing situation to their respective countries. The reports they will be sending of course will not favour Hasina's new government. So, it will be difficult for her government to expect cooperation from the international communities and the donor agencies. If so, what will be the fate of the country's various development projects that are funded by donor countries and some international agencies? Will Hasina's new government lead the country towards a grave danger, making the country alienated from the international community? Is it possible for a country to survive alone in the days of globalisation?

In parliamentary democracy, the parliament forms and ends a government. What will the new parliament do if the government faces a tough time both nationally and internationally? Will the parliament help the government to overcome the crisis? Or will the parliament will behave in an abnormal way?

A Note on Mad Parliament: In the UK, the birth place of parliamentary form of government, there was a parliament over 800 years ago which was called 'Mad Parliament'. Its exact name was 'The Oxford Parliament'. But its functions were against the king's absolute power. The parliament started to make laws and regulations to curtail the power of the king in different ways. In this parliament, a group of barons had forced King Henry to accept a new form of government in which power was placed in the hands of the Privy Council, a council of fifteen members who were to supervise ministerial appointments, local administration and the custody of royal castles. Parliament, meanwhile, which was to meet three times a year, would monitor the performance of this council. Such activities infuriated the King and his men. So, they called in the 'Mad Parliament'. But in the history of the evolution of parliamentary democracy, the importance of this parliament is immense.

The writer is Senior Reporter, The Daily Star.