



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)  
LEGAL AID BOARD

## **Bangladesh - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Thursday 9 January 2014**

### **Has the Prime Minister – Sheikh Hasina – stayed beyond her term of office**

A report issued in April 2013 by the *United States Department of State* notes that:

“Sheikh Hasina, the leader of the AL, became prime minister in 2009 following the most recent parliamentary elections in 2008...” (United States Department of State (19 April 2013) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012, Bangladesh*, Section 3. Respect for Political Rights: The Right of Citizens to Change Their Government/Elections and Political Participation/Recent Elections).

In January 2014 *BBC News* states:

“Bangladesh's ruling Awami League has won a violent general election whose outcome was never in doubt, after a boycott by the main opposition party” (BBC News (6 January 2014) *Bangladesh's ruling Awami League wins boycotted poll*).

This document also states:

“Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was swift to claim her party had won fairly...Ms Hasina had rejected the opposition's demands for her to step down and set up a neutral government to oversee the poll” (ibid).

It is also pointed out in this report that:

“All elections since 1991 have been held under a neutral caretaker administration to ensure that voting is not fixed. But the Awami League abolished the caretaker system in 2010, arguing that it was no longer necessary” (ibid).

*BBC News* in January 2014 states:

“Bangladesh has traditionally held general elections under a neutral caretaker government to ensure a free and fair process. But the Awami League government amended the constitution and decided to hold elections under an all party government” (BBC News (3 January 2014) Q&A: *Bangladesh general elections*).

In January 2014 *Agence France Presse* in January 2014 notes:

“Bangladesh's newly elected lawmakers took the parliamentary oath on Thursday after an election condemned as a farce by critics, with the country's battling political leaders still locked in a deadly confrontation. Led by Sheikh Hasina, the current prime minister, members of parliament from the ruling Awami League and lawmakers from her allies were sworn in, parliament's spokesman Joynal Abedin told AFP” (Agence France Presse (9 January 2014) *Deadlocked Bangladesh swears in contested parliament*).

This document also points out that:

“A total of 153 Awami League members or allies were elected unopposed as a result of an opposition boycott, imposed over Hasina's decision to change the electoral process” (ibid).

## References

Agence France Presse (9 January 2014) *Deadlocked Bangladesh swears in contested parliament*

<http://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/deadlocked-bangladesh-swears-contested-parliament>

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United States Department of State (19 April 2013) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012, Bangladesh*

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

## Sources Consulted

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Electronic Immigration Network

European Country of Origin Information Network

Freedom House

Google

Human Rights Watch

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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International Crisis Group

IRIN News

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