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Assam ready to go to polls on Thursday



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Assam is all set for the second and final phase of Lok Sabha voting on Thursday in 11 of the 14 Parliamentary constituencies. According to information, polling officials along with materials have already reached their respective polling centres. Elections are set to be held in Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Kaliabor, Nagaon, Tezpur, Lakhimpur, Guwahati, Mangaldoi, Barpeta, Dhubri and Kokrajhar.

The state went to the first phase of polling in three seats...Silchar, Karimganj and Autonomous District in Assam April 16 with heavy polling recorded. An estimated 14.73 million voters are eligible to exercise their franchise in the second phase in which 121 candidates are in the fray.

The ruling Congress party is locked in a direct fight with the opposition combine of the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), while for at least two seats it would be a triangular contest with the Asom United Democratic Front (AUDF) also emerging as a political force to be reckoned with.

The BJP has renominated one out of its two sitting MPs with Rajen Gohain contesting from Nagaon while its other MP Narayan Borkotoky from Mangaldoi is not contesting but its state unit president Ramen Deka is making a bid to retain the seat for the party.

The AGP, on the other hand, has renominated both its sitting mps-- Sarbananda Sonowal from Dibrugarh and Dr Arun Sarmah from Lakhimpur. BJP's Kokrajhar candidate S K Swismuthiary is seeking a fourth term in Parliament and had contested the 2004 polls as an Independent.

The Congress has also given tickets to three former MPs who contested the last polls but lost--Paban Singh Ghatowar from Dibrugarh, Ranee Narah from Lakhimpur and Madhab Rajbongshi from Mangaldoi. BJP's Bijoya Chakravorty, who had won the 1999 polls and went on to become a union minister but was denied a ticket in 2004 in favour of Assam's cultural icon Dr Bhupen Hazarika, has been given the ticket for the prestigious Gauhati seat.

Two former Rajya Sabha MPs--U G Brahma of Bodoland Peoples' Progressive forum (BPPF) and Dhruvad Borgohain (cpi)- are contesting from Kokrajhar and Jorhat parliamentary seats. AUDF President Badruddin Ajmal, sitting MLA from south Salmara in Dhubri, and his brother Sirajuddin Ajmal, MLA from Jamunamukh and Nagaon, are contesting from two seats each. The

party president is contesting from Dhubri and Silchar, which went to polls in the first phase while his brother is contesting from Nagaon and Kaliabor. CPI's Dhrupad Borgohain, sitting MLA from Nazira, is contesting from Jorhat and Congress's captain Robin Bordoloi, sitting MLA from Gauhati (east), is the party candidate for Gauhati parliamentary seat.



editor

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