

Panchayat poll: Brisk voting going on



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Brisk polling is going on in the second phase of panchayat polls to decide the fate of over 26,000 candidates on Wednesday.

A total of 30,40,972 electorates are exercising their franchise to elect 26,724 candidates for this phase, out of which 520 are contesting for the Zila Parishad, 2265 are contesting for the Anchalik Panchayat, 2726 are contesting for the Gaon Panchayat president and 21,213 are contesting for the Gaon Panchayat member.

The state poll panel has appointed 13 observers to ensure that the local poll is conducted in a fair manner. The second phase includes 121 Zila Parishad constituencies, 598 Anchalik Panchayat constituencies, 598 Gaon Panchayat president constituencies and 5980 Gaon Panchayat member constituencies.

The final phase of the Panchayat election will be held on February 12. Counting will take place on February 14 and 15.

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Third citizens' convention in Nazira calls for scientific probe into July 19 floods



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NAZIRA, September 17, 2026 — The third citizens' convention was held in Nazira on Sunday to discuss the devastating floods of July 19 that swept through parts of Sivasagar, Charaideo and Jorhat districts, leaving thousands of families severely affected.

The convention was held at the MC Club auditorium in Nazira under the chairmanship of retired professor Tridip Gogoi.

Participants expressed deep concern over the continuing suffering of flood-affected people, many of whom, after witnessing the sudden deaths of loved ones and the destruction of their lifetime savings, are reportedly struggling with severe mental trauma and a deep sense of insecurity.

Retired principal Dilip Phukan, noted researcher and writer Dilip Kumar Dutta, retired headmaster and social worker Jugo Gogoi, Professor Dr Chandra Aditya Gogoi, Farid Hazarika, Dipak Dutta and Jitendra Chaliha, among others, addressed the gathering.

A major focus of the convention was the need for a scientific investigation into the alleged role of uncontrolled hill cutting, stone and coal mining, and other human activities in aggravating the disaster.

Speakers said the catastrophic flooding of the Dikhow River should be examined, at least in part, as a possible human-induced disaster. They called for a scientific assessment to establish the causes of the flooding and appropriate legal action against those found responsible for any violations, including alleged unrestricted mining.

They also stressed the need to create alternative livelihood opportunities for people dependent on mining, arguing that this would help strengthen efforts against illegal mining.

The convention unanimously adopted an 11-point charter of demands:

1. **Immediate one-time financial assistance of ₹10 lakh** to every completely devastated family, without linking the assistance to complicated documentation.
2. **Deployment of JCBs on a war footing**, under government supervision, to remove sand and silt from houses, schools, offices

and other establishments.

3. **A transparent and corruption-free mechanism** for distributing assistance to schools, colleges and other public institutions, with an all-party committee if necessary.
4. **Adequate compensation** after proper assessment of damage to crops, livestock, business establishments, students' books and other belongings.
5. **Free admission and fee waivers** for students from flood-affected families.
6. **Free food and safe drinking water** for every affected family for at least six months.
7. **Creation of employment opportunities** for unemployed youths in flood-hit villages.
8. **Waiver of loans** taken by affected people and provision of fresh loans to help them rebuild their livelihoods.
9. **All necessary assistance to farmers** to resume cultivation.
10. **Healthcare measures and preventive steps** to check the outbreak of epidemics in flood-affected areas.
11. **Establishment of systems to monitor rivers originating in hill states**, issue timely flood warnings and regulate water flow, along with the creation of a common river authority for the Northeast to protect ecological balance. The convention also called for the formation of an expert committee to scientifically determine the causes of the floods and recommend permanent solutions.

The participants decided to submit a memorandum containing the demands to both the Central and State governments.

The convention further resolved that if the governments fail to take prompt and effective action, a mass movement would be launched in the coming days.

SK Hasan

Freelance journalist, Nazira, Sivasagar district.

BY SK HASAN

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