



5th Bodoland Territorial Council Legislative Assembly Election of 2025: A Shift in the Power Politics of the Autonomous Sub-Region of Assam

Dr. Binoy Musahary¹

ABSTRACT

The Fifth BTCLA election was conducted on 22nd September, 2025 without any major incidents of violence and its result was declared on 26th of the same month. The said election witnessed many changes in the behaviour of the electors with regard to their choice of parties and the candidates. The concerned election is significant in the sense that its outcome will be of immense influence in the ensuing assembly election of 2026 as well. Moreover, addition of more villages in the eastern borders and the subsequent formation of new constituencies will very much depend upon the result of the concerned election. Hence, the act of inclusion of new voters from 81 villages also might have brought about reasonable impacts upon the electoral politics of the concerned sub-region. Indeed, keen interest taken by different national and regional political parties of the sub-region made the concerned election all the more interesting and significant. Pertaining to result, many had speculated that UPPL would come back to power and form the government in collaboration with BJP as part of NDA. While a section of people had even thought that BJP would win many seats and play big brother's role in the coalition government formed either with UPPL or BPF or even with both of them. However, the actual outcome of the election was surprising indeed because it took a u-turn as BPF alone secured absolute majority of 28 seats thereby requiring no coalition partner to form the government.

Keywords: APB, BJP, BPF, INC, NDA, UPPL

Introduction

Much awaited 5th Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) election for forty seats was conducted on 22nd September, 2025 amidst few sporadic incidents of violence. The result of the election was declared on 26th September of the same month amidst delights of some and disappointments for others. The political scenario of the sub-region of Assam has undergone some changes since the previous election of 2020. Many voters of the region belonging to different communities have already altered their party affiliations and actual support bases. The concerned election's

¹ Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Nalbari College, Nalbari (Assam), Bidyapur-781335



significance also lies in the role of the voters of newly inducted villages of Sonitpur and Biswanath districts who managed to cast their votes for the first time since the peace accord. Notably, the voters of the newly inducted villages also brought about reasonable alterations in the political scenario of the sub-region and the outcome of the concerned election. This election is remarkable in the sense that BPF managed to come back to power with absolute majority (28 out of 40 seats) there by needing no further coalition partner. On the other hand, it was surprising indeed for UPPL because of managing to secure only 7 seats to the extent of almost losing its importance in the coalition government formed under the banner of NDA. The result also surprised many analysts' speculations that BJP would play big brother's role and control both the active and prominent parties of the sub-region. Not the least, the outcome of the concerned election is going to be a major influencing factor for the ensuing State Legislative Assembly of 2026 as well.

Objectives of the Study

1. This paper examines the behavior of the electors of BTR with particular reference to the Council election of 2025 and its impact on the future course of politics of the region and the state of Assam.
2. It highlights how the new voters of the newly inducted villages of Sonitpur and Biswanath districts opted for the party and the candidates according to their needs.
3. It wishes to evaluate the possible reasons for the re-emergence of BPF in the power politics of the sub-region and the decline of UPPL in the said election.
4. It also wishes to highlight how the election result has led to the change of partner in the coalition politics of the sub-region of Assam.
5. It intends to assist the electors, leaders, candidates, political analysts, observers and the decision makers of the sub-region in the process of building constructive and harmonious society.

Methodology

This paper is analytical in nature and the relevant data are drawn both from primary and secondary sources. The primary sources of data include Government Documents and Records, Reports of the Election Commission of India and the Election Commission of Assam,



Government Orders and Notifications, Government Press Releases and Election Manifestos of political parties active in the region. Other primary sources comprise discussions with the voters of the sub-region, selected leaders of political parties active in the sub-region, selected primary and Booth level workers of the political parties active in the sub-region, participatory and non-participatory observations by the author. The secondary sources of data are confined to Statistical Handbook of BTR, Newspapers and the Internetretrieves.

Study Area

The present study is confined to the electoral activities and results pertaining to the BTR election of 2025 comprising five districts of Assam such as Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, Tamulpur Udalguri and newly inducted villages of Sonitpur and Biswanath. The Council's total area consists of 9,688 square kilometers excluding the new areas of Sonitpur and Biswanath districts. As per the census of 2011, BTR has a total population of 31,51,047 out of which 1,75,632 are Scheduled Castes and 10,55,732 Scheduled Tribes. As per the electoral roll of BTR election 2025 (inclusive of newly inducted villagers), the total number of voters in the region comprise 26,57,937 out of which 13,23,399 are males, 13,34,521 females and 17 others. The main voters of BTR who casted their votes in as many as 3,359 polling stations are the Bodos, Asomiya Hindus, Koch-Rajbanshis, Muslims, Bengali Hindus, Adivasis, Santhals, Nepalis and Biharis.

Table: 01
BTCLA Constituencies

Consti tuency Nos	CLA No. & Names	District	Constitue ncy Nos	CLA No. & Names	District
01	Parbatjhora (ST)	Kokrajhar	21	Salbari (ST)	-do-
02	Guma (Open)	-do-	22	Koklbari (ST)	-do-
03	Srirampur (Non ST)	-do-	23	Dihira (Open)	-do-
04	Jamduar (ST)	-do-	24	Mushalpur (ST)	-do-
05	Soraibil (ST)	-do-	25	Baganpara (ST)	-do-
06	Kachugaon (ST)	-do-	26	Darangajuli (ST)	Tamulpur
07	Dotma (ST)	-do-	27	Nagriajuli (Non ST)	-do-
08	Fakiragram (Non ST)	-do-	28	Goibari (ST)	-do-
09	Banargaon (ST)	-do-	29	SuklaiSerfang (ST)	-do-
10	Deborgaon (ST)	-do-	30	Goreswar (ST)	-do-
11	Baukhungri (ST)	-do-	31	Khoirabari (ST)	Udalguri
12	Salakati (ST)	-do-	32	Bhergaon (ST)	-do-
13	Chirang (ST)	Chirang	33	NonwiSerfang (Open)	-do-
14	Chirang Duars (ST)	-do-	34	Khaling Duar (ST)	-do-
15	Kajalgaon (ST)	-do-	35	Mwdwibari (Non ST)	-do-



16	Nichima (ST)	-do-	36	Harisngnga(ST)	-do-
17	Subhaijar (ST)	-do-	37	Dwhnsri (ST)	-do-
18	Manas Serfang (ST)	-do-	38	Bhairabkunda (ST)	-do-
19	Thuribari (Open)	-do-	39	PasnwiSerfang (ST)	-do-
20	Mathanguri (Open)	Baksa	40	Rowta (ST)	-do-

Source: Election Commission of India, 2025

Voting Behavior in the BTCLA Election of 2025

Preparations by different political parties in the region continued in multipronged ways much before the actual start of the council election. Parties of the region such as the BJP, INC, UPPL, BPF and GSP remained active throughout the period from previous Council (2020), Assembly (2021) and the Parliamentary (2024) elections until the start of the recently concluded council election of 2025. Formation of Alternative Party of Bodoland (APB) by the 1st week of April, 2025 and its role in the concerned election made the political scenario of the sub-region unpredictable and more interesting.

Remote Preparations: Hectic preparations by concerned parties witnessed joining and exodus of leaders and supporters from one party to another. Frequent joining ceremonies organized by different political parties of the region almost became order of the day. BPF and GSP secretly joined hands to get rid of BJP-UPPL alliance government and to form their own despite past disagreements. On the other hand, UPPL and BJP tried to convince the voters of the region by carrying out developmental activities, through implementation of Third Bodo Peace Accord of 27th January, 2020, release and rehabilitation of jailed NDFB leaders and members, compensation to the family members of those killed during the long period of turmoil and for the establishment of lasting peace in the region. UPPL and BJP despite ruling partners of the council made hectic preparations to contest in as many seats as possible on their own without making any pre-poll alliance. Both the parties tried to convince the voters of the region as much as possible through various schemes and assurances. Prior to the election, sixteen prominent Bodo organizations, led by ABSU and BSS jointly appealed for the unification of the two major regional political parties-UPPL and BPF by 9th August 2025. They set a deadline of 12th August for both parties to hold talks with them and by 10th August, UPPL, led by BTC CEM met the organization and welcomed the move. The Unification drive was put on hold due to lack of positive response from BPF and the same was suspended for time being and left the door open for future discussions. BPF on the other hand, toughened its muscle to contest the said election on its own and became the first party to declare the first list of candidates (22 in



number) much before the actual date of election was announced (by 4th of August). UPPL became the second party to declare the first list of candidates (18 in number) by the 21st of August. INC also did not remain silent spectator and remained active alongside other political parties and on many occasions blamed BJP and BPF of keeping secret alliance. In the meantime, newly formed Alternative Party of Bodoland (APB) formed on 2nd April 2025 under the leadership of Dr. Anjali Probha Daimari also became very active and put candidates in as many as 25 BTCLA seats. The new party's candidates took away several voters and supporters from the existing parties' especially of UPPL. Amidst such twists and turns, the date of conducting BTR election was announced by the State Election Commission on 26th of August that the poll would take place on 22nd and counting on 26th August 2025 respectively.

Actual start and Result of the Election: Last date of nomination took place on 9th September, scrutiny and result of validly nominated candidates on 4th September and the last date of withdrawal of candidature on 6th September. Finally, the long awaited election was held on 22nd of September 2025 without much of untoward incidents and the counting for the same took place on 26th of the same month and year. Many had speculated that UPPL would manage to win enough seats to form the government single handed and even if not at least to become major ruling partner of the coalition government by winning single largest majority. However, despite ardent efforts and high level of confidence, it managed to win only 7 seats which meant loss of five seats compared to previous council election of 2020. BJP on the other hand, was also very much confident of winning enough seats to play big brother's role in the coalition government to be formed with any of the two regional parties or with both under the banner of NDA. But to the great dismay of the party and the candidates, it managed to win only 5 seats there by indicating loss of at least 4 seats of its previous election. Surprisingly, BPF managed to win 28 seats there by requiring no coalition partner at all to form the government. However, taking into consideration of its present financial position and for future prospects, the party leadership chose to join the NDA coalition government with initial reluctance. But after proper introspection, BPF decided to join the NDA with the condition that UPPL should no longer be part of the coalition government. However, after thorough discussion with Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and through self-reflection, the BPF leadership decided to be part of the coalition government despite the continuance of the inclusion of UPPL in the BJP-led NDA alliance.



Table: 02
Result of BTR Election, 2025

Name of the Constituency	Winner Candidates	Party	Name of the Constituency	Winner Candidates	Party
1-Parbatjhora (ST)	Moon Moon Brahma	BPF	21-Salbari (ST)	Diganta Goyary	BPF
2-Guma (Open)	Md. Antaj Ali	BPF	22-Koklbari (ST)	Mantu Boro	UPPL
3-Srirampur (Non-ST)	Wilson Hasda	UPPL	23-Dihira (Open)	Agustus Tigga	BPF
4-Jamduar (ST)	William Narzary	BPF	24-Mushalpur (ST)	Rakesh Brahma	UPPL
5-Saraibil (ST)	Mritunjoy Narzary	BPF	25-Baganpara (ST)	Rekharani Das Boro	BJP
6-Kachugaon (ST)	Rabiram Narzary	BPF	26-Darangajuli (ST)	Bijit Gwra Narzary	BJP
7-Fakiragram (Non-ST)	Md. Azamul Hoque	BPF	27-Nagriji (Non ST)	Lakhi Das	BJP
8-Dotma (ST)	Prakash Basumatary	BPF	28-Goibari (ST)	Pramod Boro	UPPL
9-Banargaon (ST)	Jubiraj Basumatary	BPF	29-Suklai Serfang (ST)	Ganesh Kachary	BPF
10-Debargaon (ST)	Hagrama Mohilary	BPF	30-Goreswar (ST)	Maheswar Basumatary	BPF
11-Baukhungri (ST)	Dhaneswar Goyary	BPF	31-Khoirabari (ST)	Lwmsrao dwimary	BPF
12-Salakati (ST)	Derhasat Basumatary	BPF	32-Bhergaon (ST)	Daobaisa Boro	UPPL
13-Chirang (ST)	Sukursing Muchahary	BPF	33-Nonwi Serfang (Open)	Paul Toppo	BPF
14-Chirang Duars (ST)	Khampa Borgoyari	UPPL	34-Khaling Duar (ST)	Arjun Daimary	BJP
15-Kajalgaon (ST)	Paniram Brahma	BPF	35-Mwdwibari (Non ST)	Diganta Barua	BJP
16-Nichima (ST)	James Basumatary	BPF	36-Harisngaha (ST)	Trideep Daimary	BPF
17-Subhaijar (ST)	Dhiraj Borgoyary	BPF	37-Dwhnsri (ST)	Fresh Muchahary	BPF
18-Manas Serfang (ST)	Dhananjay Basumatary	UPPL	38-Bhairabkunda (ST)	Rihon Daimary	BPF
19-Thuribari (Open)	Khalilur Rahman	BPF	39-Pasnwi Serfang (ST)	Sham Chundi	BPF
20-Mathanguri (Open)	Begom Akhtara Ahmed	BPF	40-Rowta (ST)	Charan Boro	BPF
Party wise winners					
BPF: 28	UPPL: 07	BJP: 05	Total: 28+7+5=40		

Source: Election Commission of India, 2025



Findings

The study has led to the revelation of following facts:

It is revealed that UPPL was very confident of winning single largest majority if not absolute and come back to power either single handed or in collaboration with BJP as part of NDA. The party leaders and supporters had expected the result to turn in their favours as was the case with the previous BTCLA (2020), MLA(2021) and the HPC (2024) elections. But the concerned election caused sudden shift of power from BJP-UPPL coalition government to BJP-BPF alliance under the banner of NDA.

Many Bodo people had voted for UPPL with the hope that area extension would be materialized, higher and technical institutions promised through the peace accord of 2020 could be implemented in letter and spirit. They also thought that continuance of peace and harmony returned after years of turmoil and achievement of all round development in the region through various schemes and projects inclusive of Bodofa Super 50 Mission could be possible only through UPPL.

BJP also had high expectation of playing big brother's role in the coalition government that was to be formed with the support of both UPPL and BPF. The party high command had entrusted many of its primary and booth level activists to work hard and achieve the cherished goal. In this perspective, the party designed its own internal plans and policies and left no stone unturned to execute them at the cost of its ruling partner UPPL.

The BPF leaders and supporters played active role for trying to come back to power by any means after a gap of nearly five years. Perhaps, the party was not sure of winning such a huge number of seats to the extent of requiring no coalition partner in forming the government. Thus, winning of such a huge number of seats was a point of great rejoicing for BPF leadership and supporters and a matter of surprise and concern for other parties at large.

Many supporters of GSP, Koch-Rajbongshi, Adivasi and Muslim communities voted for BPF with various interests of their own. Some Koch-Rajbongshis and Adivasis voted BPF to power with the hope of getting land rights and ST status in BTR and Assam. Many Muslim voters favoured BPF to UPPL because of the latter's closeness and support to BJP led NDA government and the promise by the former to grant land rights within BTR.

Many Bodo Christian voters extended their supports towards the BPF due to unhappiness with the policies and activities of BJP-UPPL coalition government. Many voters from the Christian



community became suspicious of the policies and activities of the BJP-led NDA government and hence decided to vote for BPF which they perceived was more liberal and tolerant towards religious minorities.

Many party workers of primary and booth level workers of UPPL were not happy with Paramod Boro led UPPL government because of not getting financial and other short term benefits which used to be availed during the time of BPF. Hence, UPPL leadership's failure to appease the ordinary Bodo and non-Bodo voters and inability to understand the long term plans of the former by the latter also became one of the reasons for BPF's thumping victory.

Many small and big contractors who had undertaken schemes during the BPF rule were denied of their bills due to one pretext or the other. Many of them had repeatedly approached and appealed Pramod Boro led UPPL government to negotiate. On being denied, they worked hard day and night to defame and dethrone the UPPL by any means.

Many YouTube and social media agents also played key roles in helping UPPL and BJP to get defeated in multipronged ways. They worked hard to defame the principles and activities of BJP-UPPL government and turned the minds of ordinary voters in favour of BPF. Many Bodo voters also believed that bringing back stable and strong BPF led government under the leadership of Hagrama Mahilary could alone rescue BTC which was created after the sacrifice of thousands of lives.

Many ordinary voters of BTR belonging to different communities feared about the eviction notices constantly served to them. People living in government and kash lands were convinced that bringing back BPF to power was the only alternative left for them and hence worked against BJP and UPPL candidates. Another reason for dissatisfaction towards UPPL was allegation that Bodo tribals are getting evicted from their own lands from the forest lands of BTR. Attempt to hand over land measuring 3,600 bighas belonging to Bodos, Garos and Rabhas to Adani Group for setting up thermal power project in Parbatjhora's Basbari area also brought about defamation upon the UPPL led government in BTR.

The issue of empowering Deputy Commissioners of BTR and lessening the powers of elected MCLAs and Executive Members also defamed Pramod Boro led UPPL government. Many Bodo voters were made to believe that Paramod Boro was no longer capable of restoring the



powers over sixteen departments which were granted to the Sixth Scheduled administration through BTC accord of 2003.

Several former NDFB leaders and members especially those siding with BPF convinced Bodo voters to vote in favour of the latter. They alleged that BTR accord was not the one which NDFB had actually wanted and considered it as mere betrayal by Pramod Boro and ABSU leadership. Non-withdrawal of cases of Ranjan Daimary and few other cadres of former NDFB also became another point of displeasure towards the accord and the role of the UPPL government.

ABSU leadership's direct and open support towards UPPL party also displeased certain Bodo and non-Bodo voters and made them to cast their valuable votes for BPF rather than the former. Social media and YouTube carried out several negative posts regarding the student organization's involvement in politics and led astray the ordinary voters from UPPL.

The newly formed Alternative Party of Bodoland (APB) formed on 2nd April 2025 under the leadership of Dr. Anjali Probha Daimari also took away many voters otherwise would have voted for UPPL. The new party in collaboration with the United-Forum of Ex-NDFB leadership campaigned for its own candidates but ultimately appealed its supporters to vote in favour of BPF. Thus, the new party played certain roles in drifting away several voters and supporters from UPPL.

UPPL and its leadership were also responsible for its own downfall due to over confidence and failure to please the ordinary voters forming majority in the council. Many primary and boot level workers of UPPL were displeased over their inability to gain any financial benefits and could not fully dedicate themselves for the cause of their party. It is also revealed that majority of the schemes were manipulated by few close friends and relatives of UPPL representatives and hence other voters and general public turned away from it and took u-turns during the time of election.

Allegation of failure to utilize the allocated funds amounting to about 200-300 crores annually due to poor execution and administrative inefficiencies by Pramod Boro led government also became one of the reasons for dissatisfaction towards the party concerned. Many contractors, BPF workers and observers were of the opinion that pending bills could be cleared with the amount returned without utilization. Hence, they projected such move as nothing but administrative failure on the part of the UPPL government.



The study has also revealed that certain sections of BPF voters expressed dissatisfaction over the issue of joining hands with BJP when it could have managed to form government on its own. However, BPF leaders have justified the same in the sense that both state and central governments are in the hands of BJP-led NDA and hence they are left with no other option but to rely on the concerned authorities for their various needs.

Suggestions

It is wise on the part of the ruling BPF party to continue the legacy of the previous government and work for the welfare of the people irrespective of party affiliations. In this perspective, BJP government has got big role to play given the fact that accord was signed between the agitating Bodo groups and the former's governments at the state and the centre.

The process of accord implementation initiated by the previous government should be carried out without any biases. Area extension and inclusion of more villages, establishment of refuted institutions, release of jailed NDFB cadres and leaders, demarcation and conduct of election in BKWAC should be expedited.

The present government should leave no stone unturned to implement the accord in letter and spirit because in doing so the entire population of the region will be benefited. Long awaited peace and harmony that dawned after the accord should not vanish anymore.

Sensitive issue like granting of Scheduled Tribe status to six advance and populous communities who are more than double the size of existing tribal population should be handled with utmost caution. Politicizing the issue in the name of getting votes should not be the agenda of the ruling clique.

Users of social media platforms, youtubers and intelligentsia should avoid taking partisan interests as far as possible and try to make comments and post in constructive manner. If the need arises, the wrongdoings of the ruling clique also should be pinpointed, brought under discussion and even criticized for the greater interest of the society and the sub-region.

Communal statements by leaders and supporters of certain communities should be avoided as far as possible to bring about sustainable peace and development in the region. The leaders of the concerned communities do have the responsibility of carrying forward the vision of peace and tranquility or else the hatred and misunderstanding will get upper hand in the society.

Conclusion



The result of the BTR election of 2025 brought about many twists and turns in the leadership of the council. UPPL was very confident of winning the concerned election and had taken the entire process of election as logical conclusion. BJP was also very confident of winning as many seats as possible and play the role of remote controller from Dispur. Surprisingly, the result showed otherwise and shattered the hope and aspirations of UPPL and BJP respectively. BPF leadership and supporters were themselves surprised when it managed to win absolute majority of 28 seats. Notably, dissatisfaction of the policies and activities of UPPL-BJP coalition, role of social media agents, you tubers, religious sentiments, issue of land rights and granting ST status to certain communities contributed to their convincing victory. Thus, after the declaration of the result, the political scenario in the sub-region of Assam witnessed another quick change from UPPL-BJP alliance to that of BPF-BJP coalition government under the banner of NDA. Whatever may be the trend, the result of the concerned election is going to be influential factor for the ensuing Assembly election of 2026 as well. Above all, what is pertinent is the need for sustainable peace and development for the betterment of all sections of people living within the concerned sub-region of Assam.

References

1. Assam State Election Commission. (2025, July 22). No.SEC.33/2025/24, Guwahati, Assam. <https://sec.assam.gov.in>.
2. Assam State Election Commission. (2025, August 26). Notification. No.SEC.41/2025/21, Guwahati, Assam. <https://sec.assam.gov.in>.
3. Assam State Election Commission. (2025, August 26). Press Note. No.SEC.41/2025/22, Guwahati, Assam. <https://sec.assam.gov.in>.
4. Author. (2025, April-October). Participatory and non-participatory observations.
5. Author. (2025, July-September). Discussion with the selected leaders and supporters of INC.
6. Author. (2025, July-September). Discussion with the primary and Booth level workers of APB.
7. Author. (2025, July-September). Discussion with the selected primary and Booth level workers of BPF.



8. Author. (2025, July-September). Discussion with the selected primary and Booth level workers of UPPL.
 9. Author. (2025, July-September). Discussion with the selected voters and supporters of BPF.
 10. Author. (2025, July-September). Discussion with the selected supporters and voters of UPPL.
 11. Author. (2025, August-September). Discussion with the selected primary and Booth level workers of BJP.
 12. Author. (2025, August-September). Discussion with the selected voters and supporters of BJP.
 13. 5th BTCLA Election Manifesto. (2025). United People's Party Liberal, Bodoland Territorial Region.
 14. BTR Government 2021-25: Vision to Action. (2025, August 25). Press Briefing on 5 Years of BTR Government, Kokrajhar.
 15. Implementation of Bodo Accord. (2023, December 27). Vide Order No. BTC/IBA-679/2020/244, BTC, Kokrajhar.
 16. Orders by the Governor Notification. (2025, September 5). ECF No.219451-PRD (B)/1392838, Dispur, P & RD, Govt., of Assam.
 17. Press Release: Memo No. SEC.41/2025/79. (2025, September, 27). Guwahati, Assam Election Commission.
 18. Statistical Handbook of Bodoland Territorial Council. (2023). Joint Director of Economics & Statistics, BTC, Kokrajhar.
 19. United People's Party Liberal. (2025, August 21). Candidate Nomination, 5th BTR Election 2025. No.A/2025-26/143.
-