

Co-District Election Offices' Absence Sparks Concern Ahead of Assam Assembly Polls



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As Assam prepares for the upcoming Assembly elections, concerns are mounting over the absence of dedicated election officers' offices at the Co-District level. The issue has drawn criticism from journalists and local stakeholders, who argue that the current arrangement has rendered Co-Districts "powerless and ineffective."

Sources indicate that earlier, each subdivision—now functioning as a Co-District—had its own election officer's office. These offices played a crucial role in managing election-related responsibilities locally, including the issuance of accreditation passes for journalists covering the polls. The decentralized system ensured smoother access and efficiency, particularly for those working in remote areas.

However, in the run-up to the elections, the administrative structure has reportedly been reconfigured. Several Co-District-level election offices have been merged with district headquarters, effectively removing these services from the local level.

The impact of this shift has been felt most strongly by journalists in rural and far-flung regions, who now face logistical challenges in accessing essential election-related services. Travel to district headquarters has added both time and financial burdens, complicating coverage efforts during a critical democratic exercise.

The restructuring has also created confusion within Co-District offices of the Information and Public Relations Department. Officials are reportedly grappling with unclear roles and responsibilities, leading to delays and disruptions in routine work.

Local observers have expressed dissatisfaction with the government's handling of the matter, alleging that the issue has been overlooked despite its visible impact on grassroots functioning. Many have termed the situation unfortunate, particularly at a time when seamless coordination is vital for the conduct of free and fair elections.

Amid growing concerns, there is an increasing demand from various quarters to reinstate election officers' offices at the subdivision level. Stakeholders argue that restoring a decentralized framework would enhance accessibility, improve administrative efficiency, and ensure better preparedness ahead of the Assembly elections.

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