Dilemma for Bodo voters

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Hantigiri Narzary 22 April 2014 Updated 23 Apr 9357 views

Many voters in Bodo belts are likely to face hardship in reading the name of the candidates when they come to exercise their franchise on April 24 in the third phase election in the state. The EVM machines have candidates name written only Assamese language apart from the symbol of the respective candidates.

“It is very unfortunate that the EVM machines did not have Bodo language to identify the candidates where it is in the 8th scheduled and one of the associate official languages in Assam. How would a voters coming from Bodo medium or non-Assamese medium background who cannot read and write Assamese identify the candidates name”, said a local intellectual in Kokrajhar.

‘Voters should have prior knowledge about their candidates’ names and symbols while exercising their franchise, he said. The Bodo language is included as the 8th scheduled language in the constitution of India and one of the associate official languages of Assam, so the Bodo language should have been given equal importance for the benefits for the voters in Bodoland region.

Bodo Sahitya Sabha General Secretary, Kamala Kanta Muchahary criticize the government for step motherly attitude towards the Bodo language saying the Bodo language is still discriminated by the government though it is associate official language of Assam and one of the 8th scheduled languages.

He said that BTC administration and Bodo representatives in the state Assembly and parliament have not taken initiative to include the Bodo language in the voters list and EVM machines like Assamese.

“It’s a shame that the Bodo language is not being used in the Bodo dominated areas by the government”, he rued.

He said that Bodo voters coming from Bodo or non Assamese medium background will have hardtime identifying the names of the candidates while exercising their franchise.

Muchahary also said that the government is trying to sabotage the Bodo voters by not using the Bodo language in voters list and EVM machines. He has also urged the BTC administration, Bodo MLAs and MPs to take initiative to include the Bodo language in voters list and EVM machines.

Menwhile, Kokrajhar Deputy Commissioner and Returning Officer Nitin Khade said that there are 10 to 15 languages in Assam. He also said that it was the direction of the Election Commission of India as per rule of the law.

Hantigiri Narzary
Reporting from Kokrajhar

BY HANTIGIRI NARZARY

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