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## Polls for 4 council seats on Oct 28

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**Bengaluru:** Polls to the four vacant seats in the legislative council will be held on October 28, the Election Commission (EC) announced on Tuesday.

The seats, which have been open since June 30, are: South-East Graduates, West Graduates, North-East Teachers and Bengaluru Teachers. R Chowda Reddy Thoopalli, SV Sankanur, Sharanappa Mattur and Puttanna represented these constituencies in the Upper House. The EC had put the elections on hold earlier because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The notification for the elections will be issued on October 1. The last dates for filing nominations and withdrawal of candidature are October 8 and October 12, respectively. The papers will be scrutinised on October 9. Polling will be held from 8am to 5pm on October 28, and the votes will be counted on November 2.

The results could help the ruling BJP improve its strength in the council, but it will still fall short of the Congress-JD(S) combine. Currently, BJP has 27 members in the 75-member council. Congress 28, excluding the chairman, and JD(S) 14.

The shortfall hurt BJP during the recent monsoon

session of the legislature as Congress and JD(S) defeated the bill for labour reforms. The government now plans to reissue an ordinance for the same.

Though there's time to pick candidates, the three parties have already shortlisted names. BJP, according to some functionaries, is likely to give another chance to SV Sankanur on the West Graduates seat. Former MLC Mohan Limbikai is also in contention.

**Results could help BJP improve its strength in the council, but it will still be adrift of Cong-JD(S) tally**

Former MLCs Shashil G Namoshi and Amarnath Patil of BJP are contenders for the North-East Teachers constituency. Congress is likely to field Sharanappa Mattur again.

BJP's AH Anand and KP Chidananda are reportedly eyeing the South-East Graduates seat. JD(S) may go with P Chowdareddy Thoopalli, while Congress is likely to field Ramesh Babu or Prabhakar Reddy. For the Bengaluru Teachers seat, Congress has finalised the candidature of Praveen Peter and JD(S) has chosen advocate AP Ranganath. BJP will field Puttanna, a three-time MLC who joined quit JD(S) recently.