

Obama takes narrow lead in Guam caucuses

Senator Barack Obama had a narrow lead over rival Hillary Clinton as Democratic caucus results came in from the tiny, US territory of Guam Saturday.

With 79 percent of precincts reporting, Obama had received 53 pe cent of the vote to Clinton's 47 percent, with fewer than 200 votes between the candidates, who are locked in a tight contest to secure their party's presidential nomination that has brought the unlikely political spotlight to the Pacific island.

The Democrats will formally choose a presidential candidate at their nominating convention in late August in Denver ahead of November general elections.

Guam will elect just four delegates with full voting rights to the convention, but each vote counts in the closest-ever nomination race. According to the website RealClearPolitics.com, Obama already has 1,738 delegates, to Clinton's 1,599. Both are still a long way off the 2,024 needed to secure the nomination.

More important than the number of delegates is the chance to flaunt a triumph over the losing rival - even if that triumph takes place more than 20 hours from Washington on an island with only 170,000 people.

Guam has little in common with the mainland, and its importance is almost exclusively strategic. The 550-square-km island is home to US Navy and Air Force bases.

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