

15 South Asians in fray for elections in US

As many as 15 South Asian candidates are in the fray for the crucial House of Representatives and Senate elections in November.

The spotlight, however, is on five prominent Indian Americans -- Republicans Bobby Jindal and Raj Bhakta; Democrats Ajinderpal Singh Sekhon and Jay Goyal; and independent Neeraj Nigam.

House Rep. Jindal, running from District 1 in Louisiana, has fought for the rights of Hurricane Katrina victims and is also trying to get oil exploration revenues for Louisiana.

Bhakta, a Republican hopeful, may pull off a shocker against incumbent Allyson Schwartz in Pennsylvania, according to News India Times, an ethnic Indian newspaper.

Democratic candidate Sekhon, running from California, and Neeraj Nigam, an independent from District 10 Virginia, may face tough competition. But both can be credited for doing more than most people do when they differ from current administration policies.

Experts are of the view that the elections may bring back incumbents like Kumar Barve (Democrat) in Maryland, Swati Dandekar (Democrat) in Iowa and Minnesota State Senator Satveer Chaudhary.

In Arizona, Democrat Rano Singh won her primary unopposed to contest for the state treasurer's race. She is drawing attention as incumbent treasurer David Petersen, a Republican, is resigning in the face of a financial scandal.

South Carolina State Representative Nikki Randhawa Haley (Republican) sails back into the chambers automatically as she has no Democratic opponent against her.

The fortunes of Maryland State House candidate Republican Neil Sood and Maryland State Senate candidate Jay Bala (Republican) are not known.

In State level races, Maryland's Republican candidate Dilip Paliath did well but Republican Governor Bob Erlich's approval ratings have been going down and his fortunes may affect Paliath.

(© IANS / India eNews)