

DROUPADI MURMU ELECTED 15TH PRESIDENT OF INDIA

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She remained an MLA till 2009, representing Rairangpur in Odisha, a town that burst into celebrations since her name was announced as a candidate for the post of President of India. She holds the record of being the only Governor of Jharkhand till date to complete a full tenure, and was known to intervene in stopping amendments to the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act that was being brought in by the BJP government of Raghubar Das, which involved changing land use in tribal areas.

Congratulatory messages poured out as her victory was assured, with Union Ministers Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah and BJP president J.P. Nadda also going in person to greet Ms. Murmu. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said Ms. Murmu “has always given voice to the hopes and aspirations of the people, understood their grievances and resolved them.”

Assam CM's tweet

Ms. Murmu's lead was substantial from the first round itself when votes of all MPs were counted, but by the third round, her unassailable lead had made it quite clear that there had been much cross-voting in her favour across party lines. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in fact tweeted that in Assam, as many as 22 non-NDA MLAs had voted in favour of Ms. Murmu.

“Smt. Droupadi Murmu polled 104 votes compared to NDA's original strength of 79 in the 126-member Assam Assembly. 2 Absent. My heartfelt gratitude to the people of Assam for reposing their faith in the NDA's presidential candidate,” he said.

Election managers for the ruling coalition tracking the counting said that as many as 17 MPs and 126 MLAs had voted across party lines for Ms. Murmu. Apart from the 22 MLAs in Assam, the NDA claimed that Bihar saw six MLAs cross-vote, Gujarat saw 10, Jharkhand also saw 10 opposition MLAs vote in favour of her. Madhya Pradesh saw 19 MLAs cross-vote, while 16 did so in Maharashtra.

The massive cross-voting showed a larger scatter in the Opposition ranks over these polls, which had also seen a steady depletion in its ranks since the candidature of Ms. Murmu was announced.

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