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Three Seats, Three Answers: Prashant Kishor Wins Bankipur, Congress Takes Datia

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Three Seats, Three Answers: Prashant Kishor Wins Bankipur, Congress Takes Datia

3 August 2026 · 5 min read

✓ Every fact web-verified against primary sources

Results for three assembly by-elections, held on July 30, were declared on August 3, 2026. Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor won Bankipur in Patna on his electoral debut, the Congress won Datia in Madhya Pradesh, and the Bharatiya Janata Party retained Manjalpur in Gujarat.

THE RESULTS

CONSTITUENCY	STATE	WINNER	PARTY	RUNNER-UP	MARGIN
Bankipur	Bihar	Prashant Kishor (64,151)	Jan Suraj Party	Neeraj Kumar Sinha, BJP (44,827)	19,324
Datia	Madhya Pradesh	Ghanshyam Singh (66,757)	Indian National Congress	Ashutosh Tiwari, BJP (60,741)	6,016
Manjalpur	Gujarat	Satish Govindbhai Patel (55,481)	Bharatiya Janata Party	Bhikha Rabari, INC (24,851)	30,630

Some outlets published a Bankipur margin of 18,953. That figure came from an incomplete count showing 63,203 to 44,250. The Election Commission's final totals of 64,151 and 44,827 give a margin of 19,324, which is the figure used here.

WHY BANKIPUR IS THE SIGNIFICANT RESULT

Three features make it more than an ordinary by-election win.

FEATURE	SIGNIFICANCE
First-ever Jan Suraj MLAs	The party contested the 2025 Bihar assembly election and won no seats; this is its first entry into the legislature
Ends a three-decade hold	The BJP had held Bankipur continuously since 1995
Founder's electoral debut	Prashant Kishor, previously known as an election strategist, contested and won his first election as a candidate
A low-turnout urban seat	Bankipur recorded roughly 34.3 per cent turnout, among the lowest in Bihar, so the result rests on a small mobilised base

The last point cuts both ways and is worth holding onto. A win on roughly a third of the electorate demonstrates organisational capacity to mobilise committed supporters, but it is weak evidence of broad-based appeal, and by-election results have historically been poor predictors of subsequent general-election performance.

THE DATIA RESULT AND WHY VACANCIES MATTER

The two vacancies arose by different routes, and the contrast is the examinable part.

Bankipur fell vacant by **resignation**. Nitin Nabin of the BJP, then the party's national president, had held the seat since a 2006 by-election through five terms, most recently in November 2025, and resigned as MLA on being elected to the **Rajya Sabha in April 2026**.

Datia fell vacant by **disqualification**. The sitting Congress MLA, Rajendra Bharti, was disqualified after being convicted and sentenced to three years, with a fine of Rs 1 lakh, on 2 April 2026 by the Rouse Avenue Court. The case had been registered in 2015 on a private complaint by a cooperative bank over forged records relating to a fixed deposit of 1998, on which interest was drawn between 1999 and 2011. The Delhi High Court subsequently declined to stay the conviction, which cleared the way for the by-election. That disqualification operates under **Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951**, which disqualifies a convicted person sentenced to imprisonment of two years or more, for the period of imprisonment and a further six years.

The provision acquired its present force through **Lily Thomas v. Union of India (2013)**, in which the Supreme Court struck down Section 8(4) of the Act. That sub-section had allowed a sitting legislator to continue in office if an appeal was filed within three months of conviction. After Lily Thomas, disqualification is immediate on conviction, which is why a seat falls vacant rather than waiting on appeal.

Datia also recorded by far the highest turnout of the three seats, at 71.44 per cent, against roughly 34.3 per cent at Bankipur and 37.5 per cent at Manjalpur.

THE BY-ELECTION FRAMEWORK

ELEMENT	PROVISION
Timeline	Section 151A, Representation of the People Act, 1951: a casual vacancy must be filled within six months of its occurrence
Exception	The six-month rule does not apply where the remainder of the member's term is less than one year
Conducting authority	The Election Commission of India , under Article 324
Common causes of vacancy	Death, resignation, disqualification (including under the Tenth Schedule), or elevation to the other House

WHAT BY-ELECTION RESULTS DO AND DO NOT TELL YOU

READING	CAUTION
A ruling party losing a by-election signals anti-incumbency	By-elections typically draw far lower turnout, so the result reflects the preferences of a more motivated, less representative slice of the electorate
A new party winning signals a shifting party system	A single seat won on a concentrated urban base does not establish statewide viability under first-past-the-post
A safe seat changing hands is a major upset	Local factors, candidate identity and the absence of a government-formation stake all operate differently in a by-election

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 2: Salient features of the Representation of the People Act; appointment to and functioning of constitutional bodies; the Election Commission; parliamentary and state legislatures.

Prelims pointers:

- **Section 151A, RPA 1951:** casual vacancy filled within **six months**, unless the remaining term is under one year.
- **Section 8(3), RPA 1951:** disqualification on conviction with a sentence of two years or more, for the sentence period plus six years.
- **Lily Thomas v. Union of India (2013)** struck down **Section 8(4)**, ending the protection for sitting legislators pending appeal.
- Turnout: Datia **71.44 per cent**; Manjalpur **37.5 per cent**; Bankipur about **34.3 per cent**.

- **Jan Suraj Party** won its first assembly seat; the BJP had held Bankipur since **1995**.

★ **FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA**

THE RESULTS (DECLARED 3 AUGUST 2026; POLLING 30 JULY):

Bankipur (Bihar): Prashant Kishor, Jan Suraj, 64,151 votes; margin 19,324 over the BJP's Neeraj Kumar Sinha. First Jan Suraj MLA; ends a BJP hold since 1995.

Datia (Madhya Pradesh): Ghanshyam Singh, Congress, 66,757; margin 6,016 over the BJP's Ashutosh Tiwari.

Manjalpur (Gujarat): Satish Govindbhai Patel, BJP, 55,481; margin 30,630 over the Congress's Bhikha Rabari.

TURNOUT: DATIA 71.44 PER CENT; MANJALPUR 37.5 PER CENT; BANKIPUR ABOUT 34.3 PER CENT.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK:

Section 151A, RPA 1951: casual vacancy filled within six months, unless under a year remains.

Section 8(3), RPA 1951: disqualification on conviction with a two-year-or-more sentence.

Lily Thomas v. Union of India (2013): struck down Section 8(4), making disqualification immediate on conviction.

DATIA'S VACANCY AROSE FROM THE DISQUALIFICATION OF CONGRESS MLA RAJENDRA BHARTI AFTER A CONVICTION IN A 2015 BANK FRAUD CASE.

Sources: Election Commission of India, PRS Legislative Research, The Hindu

Source: Three Seats, Three Answers: Prashant Kishor Wins Bankipur, Congress Takes Datia — Ujiyari.com | Free
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