

## **Korean opposition party warms up for presidential primary**

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South Korea's main opposition Democratic United Party (DUP) braced itself for its presidential primary after five finalists were selected on Monday through a week-long preliminary race.

The five finalists are Sohn Hak-kyu, Moon Jae-in, Park Joon-yung, Kim Doo-kwan and Chung Sye-kyun with underdogs Cho Kyoung-tae, Kim Young-hwan and Kim Jung-kil dropping out.

The party did not specify their respective scores, claiming that the figures may affect the upcoming races, but it was broadly assumed that former presidential aide Moon took the lead.

The list is also regarded as well-balanced in terms of regions, as Moon and Kim have their power base in the southeastern Youngnam, while Chung and Park have their stronghold in the southwestern Honam region.

Former Gyeonggi Governor Sohn, on the other hand, enjoys steady support in the metropolitan area.

The selected candidates are now to compete for the party's final nomination through a series of regional races after the London Olympic Games, from August 25 to September 16, according to officials.

Should the top frontrunner fail to win at least 50 per cent of the votes, the party will hold a runoff election, which is expected to involve Moon.

The final result, in this case, will be confirmed on September 23.

The key point in the upcoming race is whether the four contestants besides Moon will be able to catch up with his popularity.

Sohn earlier attempted to bring down the former presidential aide by denouncing the achievements of the Roh Moo-hyun regime.

Kim also claimed that Moon was no match for professor Ahn Cheol-soo, the leading left-wing potential who is largely expected to join the race shortly.

The rookie has recently boosted his polls by publishing his book and appearing in a television talk show, but has not yet confirmed whether he will join the DUP's primary.

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