

Hillary Clinton loses edge over Republicans in presidential race: Poll

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Washington: With Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton's lead for party nomination in the 2016 presidential race falling to just 10 points, her advantage against the top Republican contenders has vanished, according to a new poll.

A new CNN/ORC poll found Clinton with 37 percent support among Democratic and Democratic-leaning voters, down 10 points since August, followed by self-proclaimed socialist Senator Bernie Sanders at 27 percent.

Vice President Joe Biden, who is still mulling a presidential bid, stood at 20 percent, up 6 points in the last month. In the general election match-ups, Clinton runs about evenly with Republican front runner Donald Trump with 48 percent backing each.

But former neurosurgeon Ben Carson leads Clinton by a significant margin of 51 percent to 46 percent, while former Florida Governor Jeb Bush narrowly leads her 49 to 47 percent.

The shift away from Clinton stems from shrinking support among women, CNN said. Clinton's advantage among women has disappeared in match-ups against Bush and Carson.

Facing Trump, Clinton still carries women by a large, though tighter, margin.

In August, 60 percent of women favoured Clinton to 37 percent for Trump, but that's narrowed slightly to 55 percent Clinton, 41 percent Trump now.

Clinton's advantage among women against Trump is fuelled by independent women, despite that group shifting away from Clinton in the head-to-head against Bush.

The poll suggests Republican women have consolidated their support around their party's front-runners in the last month, and are now more apt to back both Bush and Trump than they were a month ago.

At the same time, the near-universal support for Clinton among Democratic women has softened slightly, bringing it more in-line with her support among Democratic men.

Biden also leads Clinton in hypothetical match-ups, topping Bush and Trump while falling just slightly behind Carson. Biden tops Trump by 10 points (54 percent to 44 percent among registered voters), leads Bush by 8 points (52 percent to 44 percent) and is 3 points behind Carson (50 percent Carson to 47 percent Biden).

Within the Democratic party, Clinton's support among moderates holds at 47 percent, while among liberals, it has plummeted to just 23 percent.

Sanders has increased his share of the liberal vote (from 42 percent to 49 percent), while falling 9 points among moderates (from 24 percent to 15 percent). Meanwhile, Biden has gained ground in both groups.

But there was some good news also for Clinton in the poll. Most Democrats still say they expect her to be the party's eventual nominee and the more enthusiastic Democratic voters are more apt to be Clinton backers.

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