

Palamu polling booths likely to be relocated

Daltonganj: Officials of the Palamu zila parishad as well as mukhiyas are worried about the security arrangements at polling booths for the Lok Sabha election.

This is going to be the first such LS polls in the state with elected officials of the zila parishad and the mukhiyas. The last Lok Sabha election was held in 2009 and election for zila parishad/mukhiya was held in 2010.

Vice chairman of the Palamu zila parishad Binod K Singh said the polling booth at Mahoor under Mohammadganj block is too difficult and prone to Maoist violence. It had seen a fierce attack on the security forces by the rebels in which a chopper was used to airlift the injured and the dead cops in the 2004 Lok Sabha election. In 2009, security was beefed up at Mahoor.

Binod Singh said polling booths at Salaiyya and at Gardaag under Pipra block are under the Maoist influence. All these booths fall under the jurisdiction of the Palamu Lok Sabha constituency.

Palamu SP Y S Ramesh and the district election officer (DEO) Manoj Kumar, who is the Palamu DC, both hinted at relocation of booths in Palamu saying polling booths track record and its vulnerability to Maoist attacks will count much for their re location.

In the 2009 Lok Sabha election more than four dozen polling booths were relocated.

The mukhiya of the Manatu panchayat Sachindrajeet Singh listed about half a dozen polling booths in Manatu which fall under Palamu district but are counted as booths for Chatra Lok Sabha constituency.

According to Singh polling booths located at Dumri, Karmahee, Sarguja, Metar, Chunka are in heavily naxal dominated where run the writ of the naxals especially the CPI Maoists. Singh added the voters simply dance to the tune of the Maoists as it is the Maoists who decide the voting in favour or against of the candidate here.

In 2009 Lok Sabha election ten booths falling under Manatu were relocated. According to DC Manoj Kumar this time too there would be relocation of booths here.

Permod Singh a member of Palamu zila parishad who represents Chainpur Mdhya said polling booths falling at Boorhee, Karso, Khura, Salutwa are in Maoists territory but here security arrangements help prevent any unseemly incident in election time.

The Maoists cast their shadows on elections here by its two committees East Palamu Sub Zone committee and Koyal Sone Sub Zone committee which covers even the two national Highways NH 75 and 98 here too.