



Surrendered Naxalites who used to boycott elections, now voted along with police personnel, through Postal Ballot

Raipur (Chhattisgarh), April 10, 2024

- **Story of Faith in the Democracy**
- **Surrendered Naxals Exercise their franchise in Chhattisgarh**
- **Journey from Bullets to Ballot**

While police personnel protect our country with bullets, they also strengthen democracy with ballots. In the same sequence, in the first phase of General Elections 2024 in Chhattisgarh, voting for PC No.10 - Bastar Lok Sabha is scheduled to be held on April 19. As per the guidelines of ECI, Election Duty Employees and Security Personnel, who cannot cast their vote in the polling stations on poll day, have the option of voting through Postal Ballot in the facilitation centers set up in the districts before the actual Poll Day. Naxalites, who once boycotted elections, not only voted through postal ballot and strengthened democracy but are also fortifying the voter's safety as **District Reserve Guard**.

To make this great festival of democracy successful, to make the general public aware of its role and responsibility in the formation of the 18th Lok Sabha and to increase the voting percentage, many events are being organized with the aim of making common citizens aware through the SVEEP campaign under the leadership of Smt. Reena Babasaheb Kangale, Chief Electoral Officer of Chhattisgarh.

Influenced by the "**Lone Varratu**" (A Gondi phrase which means "Return to Home") campaign being run by the police administration and the rehabilitation plan of the government; the Naxalites have dropped arms and have shown their faith in the Democracy. Those who were once seen opposing elections and development works under the pressure of Naxalites, today gave the message of complete public participation by casting their votes through Postal Ballots. This is the second instance after the Assembly Elections 2023 where these Naxalites have exercised their Voting Rights.

A total of 413 police personnel had applied for Form 12 to cast their vote through postal ballot. These police personnel will be deployed in outer cordon security and road security arrangements of polling stations on Poll Day 19th April. To ensure that they are not deprived of exercising their right to vote while on duty, Facilitation Centers have been set up in the district of Dantewada. On the very First day i.e. 10th April 2024, 340 Police Personnel cast their vote through Postal Ballot, in which **65 Voters were surrendered Naxalites**. Facilitation Center was set up in the Police Line, Karli, Dist. Dantewada (CG). During the whole process, Along with Political Party & Candidate's representatives, Police (Election) Nodal Officer Additional SP Mr. R.K. Burman, and Assistant Nodal Officer of Police (Election) DSP Mr. Krishna Kumar Chandrakar were also present.

As informed by the district administration, The Facilitation Center will remain functional on 11th, 12th, 17th and 18th April 2024 also so that remaining ones are able to cast their Votes. Police personnel posted in Bijapur, Sukma and other districts of Bastar will also be casting their votes through postal ballots in the Facilitation Centers.

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