

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA
Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No.464/L&O/2007/PLN-I Dated: 08.01.07

To

1. The Secretary to the
Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs
New Delhi-110001

1. **2. The Chief Secretaries of all States and Union Territories**
2. **3. The Chief Electoral Officers of all States and Union Territories**

Sub: Security Plan and Force Deployment to ensure free, fair and peaceful conduct of elections to Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

The Commission has, in the past; issued various instructions on the deployment of forces from time to time to ensure conduct of peaceful, free and fair elections. These instructions that are applicable for both general and bye-elections to Lok Sabha and various State Legislative Assemblies have now been consolidated for the convenience of all concerned which are as follows: -

2. During elections the State Governments deploy a large number of their existing police forces and these are further augmented by induction and deployment of Central Para Military Forces (CPMFs) for ensuring free, fair and peaceful conduct of elections. The Commission has observed that there is a tendency amongst the States to keep the Central Police Forces as 'reserves' and thereby not actually deploying them on election related duties. This defeats the very purpose of augmenting the local forces with the CPMF resulting in suboptimal benefits. To ensure full and optimal utilization of the police forces including CPMFs and SAPFs, the Commission directs that the following guidelines will be followed strictly in the matter of deployment of security forces for conduct of elections: -

(a) State Deployment Plan will be prepared taking into account the available forces of the State Government/SAPF and CPMFs which will be made available by the Ministry of Home Affairs. State Deployment Plan will be prepared in consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer of the State and his recommendations on the quantum of forces to be deployed to different constituencies shall merit serious consideration in the drawing of the plan. State Level Force Coordinator appointed by MHA will assist the CEO in this task.

(b) Based on its experience during the Lok Sabha and general elections to various State Legislative Assemblies, the Commission has persuaded the

Ministry of Home Affairs to allow splitting of Sections and deployment of half Section of CPMF in the areas, which are not insurgency/militancy/naxalite affected. But these forces must not be deployed in less than one Section strength in insurgency/militancy/naxalite affected areas. The S.P of the concerned district shall certify in writing whether the area is insurgency/militancy/naxalite affected or otherwise.

(c) The CEO of the State shall be actively associated in drawing up the State deployment plan. His recommendations on what quantum of forces should be deployed to which Constituency shall merit serious consideration in drawing up the plan. The State

Deployment Plan will factor in the requirements of the different districts based on District Deployment Plans which will be prepared by every district taking into account the forces being made available by the State Government to the district, the CPMFs and other forces being made available from the state pool to the district and the available forces with the district. The District Deployment Plan shall be formulated and finalized under the Chairmanship of the District Magistrate/District Election Officer. The Observer on his arrival to the district shall be consulted by the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police and the views of the Observer will have to be incorporated in giving final shape to the District Deployment Plan.

(d) Both the State Deployment Plan and District Deployment Plan would be finalized at least one week before the day of poll.

(e) In the District Deployment Plan, it shall be ensured that all polling stations are covered with adequate static duty reinforced by necessary mobile patrolling at the level of "zones" and "sectors". Particular attention should be paid to deploy CPMFs in constituencies and polling stations identified as sensitive / hyper sensitive.

(f) Among others the following may be considered as guiding factors in identifying

sensitive and trouble prone areas/polling booths: i) Past history of the constituency or the polling area ii) Incidents of Booth Capturing, violence, riots, large-scale impersonation etc. iii) Information regarding abnormal law & order situation in particular area iv) Specific complaints made by political parties and candidates v) Nature of contest viz. political status of candidates vi) Political rivalries vii) Number of history sheeters and absconders viii) Number of SC/ST electors

(g) Deployment of any force other than State's own uniformed police force or the CPMFs, (for example, Village Defense Force, Homeguards, Adhoc Auxilliary force etc.) will require prior approval of the Commission.

(h) The deployment plan must spell out when and where the CPMFs are reaching the State.

(i) Whenever area domination by CPMF is needed, CPMF will undertake area domination etc. till 2 days before the polling day (P-2). After that they shall be drafted for static duty at polling stations. In naxal and other insurgency affected area, CPMF may be deployed for active election related duty other than static

duty at polling booths such as mobile patrols with magistrates, area pickets, check gates and quick reaction teams located in specific areas etc. Such exceptions shall have to be approved by Election Observer for the district or CEO for inter-district duties. The central forces shall not be deployed or kept as "reserve" at any level. In rarest of the rare cases, when they are to be deployed as "reserve" (a) prior ECI approval shall be obtained and (b) they should be made available with suitable communication and mobility facilities for contingent deployment and movement on short notice. However, the proposal to retain some of the CPMF contingents as "reserve" should be discussed with the Observer and should be sent to the Commission through CEO of the State for specific permission of the Commission. The justification for such request shall be clearly brought out in the proposal. It is made clear that as a matter of policy, the Commission favours, the deployment of CPMF on poll day on static duty at polling stations invariably.

.(j) In pursuance to the directions given by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order no.9228 of 2003 (Janak Singh Vs. Ram Das Rai and others) dated 11.01.2005, the Commission has desired that one CPMF Jawan from the CPMF party posted at the polling station will be stationed at the entrance of the polling station so that he can keep a watch on the proceedings that are going on inside the polling station, particularly, to ensure that no unauthorized person enters inside the polling station and / or no irregularity is committed either by the polling staff or outsiders in the poll process. In the buildings which have more than one polling station and

.where only half a section of the CPMF personnel is deployed, the CPMF Jawan selected for duty at the entrance of the polling station may be asked to oscillate from one polling station to other and look at what is going inside these polling stations and report to the officer in charge of the CPMF party or observer, if something unusual is observed by him. It is also clarified that CPMF Jawan posted at the entrance of the Polling Station shall not verify the identity of electors coming into the polling stations to cast their votes as such verification is the duty of the polling personnel.

.(k) The specific things on which a CPMF Jawan posted at the entrance of the polling stations are expected to keep an watch are as under -

.(i) No unauthorized person is present inside the polling station at any time during the poll.

.(ii) The polling party or the polling agents do not attempt to cast or cast any vote or votes when no voter is present inside the polling booth.

.(iii) No polling officer accompanies any voter to the voting compartment.

.(iv) No polling agent or polling officer threatens any voter or makes any gesture to threaten them.

.(v) No arms are carried inside the polling station.

.(vi) No silent rigging takes place.

.(l) If the CPMF Jawan posted at the entrance of the polling station discovers violation of the election process as above or observes something unusual going on inside the polling station, he shall not interfere in the poll process but report the same to the officer incharge of the CPMF party at polling station or observer.

The officer incharge of CPMF party will in turn send this information to the Returning Officer and also Observer on the same day in writing for further necessary action. The Returning Officers/Observer will report cases from where adverse reports are received from the CPMF parties for further instructions of the Commission.

.(m) The other instructions relating to deployment of CPMF, which are needed to be considered by the election authorities, are: -

.(i) CPMF shall be used during the pre-poll period for the purpose of area domination, conducting flag marches, confidence building among the electors and checking of border areas etc.

.(ii) The District Magistrates, Superintendents of Police shall finalize the sensitivity of polling stations giving the reasons in accordance with the instructions of the Commission. This list shall be kept ready and finalized on arrival of the observers after consulting them.

.(iii) The forces shall be deployed at the polling stations in the following order of sensitivity (from higher to lower) - CPMF followed by State Armed Police (SAP) followed by District Armed Police (DAP).

.(iv) At places requiring two sections of force, one section of CPMF and one section of SAP / DAP can be used to maximize the coverage by CPMF.

.(l) It will be the responsibility of the District Magistrate concerned and Superintendent of Police concerned to ensure that the polling parties and static armed force parties reach polling booths in time as scheduled.

.(m) The arrangements for security of contesting candidates, according to the perception of threat to their lives should also be made and the contesting candidates provided with the security after an assessment of the threat. It is vital to note and follow that security should not be provided in a routine manner. All relevant factors must be considered and taken into account.

.(n) The Observers appointed by the Commission should also be provided with adequate security.

.(o) The Commission has directed that for guarding the strong rooms after the completion of poll armed Police personnel shall be used. To the extent possible, CPMF should be used for the purpose. Wherever, CPMF is not available, SAP shall be used.

.(p) The State Government must also ensure that adequate and fool-proof security arrangements are made, both inside and around the counting centers as well to prevent incident that are likely to vitiate the counting process. For this purpose, it should be ensured that adequate security forces preferably CPMF should be present at all the counting centers.

.(q) The deployment of forces within the district and at the polling booths as per the district deployment plan shall be the responsibility of the concerned District Superintendent of Police and officers below him.

.(r) The state government shall provide adequate facilities and make necessary arrangements as needed, for transport and accommodation of the CPMF deployed.

.(s) Ministry of Home Affairs shall get all international Borders sealed at least one week in advance to prevent any movement of anti-social elements crossing

the borders to disrupt electioneering process. Similarly, in view of the phasing of elections, all State Governments shall seal inter-state borders/inter-district borders well in advance to prevent infiltration of antisocial and disruptive elements from neighbouring states /districts where polls are being held.

3. Kindly acknowledge the receipt.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-
(A.K. MAJUMDAR)
SECRETARY