

PRESS NOTE: 24 March 2016

On the basis of a report published in the India Express on 20 March 2016 and subsequent complaint received from the Bharatiya Janata Party, District Election Officers of seven districts, namely Purulia, Bankura, Paschim Medinipur, Nadia, Malda, Murshidabad and Birbhum were asked to report preventive actions taken by the districts to ensure strict vigil over ferrying of illegal arms and ammunitions in the districts and report status of seizure of illegal weapons. Reports have been received from all seven districts and sent to the Election Commission of India. Following is the district-wise gist of reports:

Purulia

The district has long borders with Jharkhand state wherefrom infiltration is checked through inter-state 'naka' points. 14 such 'naka' points have been set up by the Purulia district police. Since 1 December 2015, the district police has seized 14 unlicensed arms, 19 rounds of ammunitions and has arrested 24 persons.

Bankura

The district conducted 31 specific operations in LWE affected areas since 1 December 2015. They have as yet seized 26 unlicensed arms, 22 rounds of ammunitions and 65 explosives.

West Medinipur

The district police has, since 1 December 2015, seized 36 unlicensed arms, 3 explosives and 69 rounds of ammunitions.

Nadia

In Nadia district, the district police could seize, since 1 December 2016, 89 unlicensed arms, 82 rounds of ammunitions, 71 crude bombs and 250 grams of explosives. In the district, 88 cases have so far been registered in related provisions of law.

Murshidabad

Maximum seizure was reported by Murshidabad district where, since 1 December 2015, 96 unlicensed firearms, 138 rounds of ammunitions, 958 crude bombs and 321.5 KG of explosives were sized. In total 143 persons have so far been arrested in related provisions of law.

Malda

In Malda district too considerable seizure of illegal arms and ammunitions were reported. 66 illegal arms, 50 rounds of ammunitions and 55 bombs were reportedly seized since 1 December 2015 in the district. 14 persons were arrested. The district authority has also seized FICN worth Rs. 58.88 lakh for which 5 persons were arrested. There was massive operation against cultivation of poppy in the area and poppy cultivation worth 11500 bigha were destroyed in a massive operation.

Birbhum

In Birbhum district, the district police reported seizure of 86 unlicensed arms, 69 rounds of ammunitions and 2099 crude bombs.

In all the districts massive confidence building measures have been taken to address the issues in the vulnerable hamlets identified. Along with the Central Forces, the District Magistrate and the Sub-divisional Magistrates, along with their police counterparts have been visiting the vulnerable areas on a daily basis. The efforts taken by the districts are seen as proactive steps to gain confidence of the voters for a free, fair and participative election.