



Maoist-Hit Areas in Singhbhum to Witness Voting for First-Time

Why in News?

Areas in the **Maoist den of Singhbhum** will witness voting for the first time, or after decades-long gap, as polling teams and materials will be air dropped from helicopters to enable people living in **Saranda, Asia's densest Sal forest**, to exercise their franchise.

Key Points

- Despite improvement in the situation, West Singhbhum remains one of the worst **left-wing extremism**-affected districts of the country. It had also witnessed 46 **Maoist**-related incidents resulting in **22 deaths in 2023**.
 - **Maoism** is a **form of communism** developed by **Mao Tse Tung**. It is a doctrine to **capture State power** through a combination of **armed insurgency, mass mobilization and strategic alliances**.
- Thalkobad and about two dozen other villages were earlier dubbed as '**liberated zones**' but the administration succeeded in establishing its presence through massive operations by security forces, including **Operation Anaconda**.
 - Operation Anaconda was **launched in 2011** in the Saranda forest area of **Chaibasa district against the Maoist extremists**.
 - This area is claimed as a **liberated area by the Maoists** and is functioning as the headquarters of their **Eastern Regional Bureau**.
- The administration is resorting to innovative ways, including putting up a giant sky balloon at a height of 100 feet, and running 1,284 '**Chunav Pathshala**' under the **Systematic Voter's Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP)** to make people aware of the need to exercise their franchise.
- **118 remote booths** will be set up by personnel and materials dropped from choppers such as **Robokera, Binj, Thalkobad, Jaraikela, Roam, Rengrahatu, Hansabeda and Chhotanagra**.

Left Wing Extremism (LWE)

- Also known as left-wing terrorism or radical left-wing movements, refers to political ideologies and groups that advocate for significant **societal and political change through revolutionary means**.
- LWE groups may target **government institutions, law enforcement agencies**, or private property to further their agenda.
- The LWE movement in India originated in a **1967 uprising in Naxalbari, West Bengal**.

Systematic Voter's Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP)

- Started in **2009**, as the **flagship program of the Election Commission of India (ECI) for voter education**.
- **Primary goal** is to build an inclusive & participative democracy by encouraging all eligible citizens to vote and make an informed decision & ethical choice.

Saranda: Asia's Densest Sal Forest

- It is located along the Jharkhand-Odisha border, and is home to a large number of animal, bird and reptile species.
- The word saranda means elephants and the forest gets its name due to the large number of elephants that call it home.

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