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## Ex-armymen for PMCH security

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**PATNA:** Security at the state's premier hospital is set for an overhaul with the Patna Medical College Hospital (PMCH) authorities deciding to engage ex-servicemen instead of private security guards.

What worked as a catalyst to change the present security agency - Indraprastha security services - was the mysterious disappearance of a newborn male child from the intensive care unit of the obstetrics and gynaecology department of the hospital here on May 18. The child has

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since been recovered from Gaya.

As per the government proposal, 350 ex-armymen are likely to be engaged for hospital security. However, in the first phase only 250 would be hired. The hospital authorities want ex-armymen recently superannuated from defence services to join them.

The proposal to change the security agency had been pending for over a year after the government first floated a tender in this regard. The agency, which was then selected, never turned up for medical examination of its security personnel. As a result, the hospital authori-

**THE MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF A NEWBORN MALE CHILD FROM THE ICU OF THE OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY DEPTT OF PMCH ON MAY 18 NECESSITATED THE MOVE**

ties had to cancel the tender and re-tender some six months back.

PMCH superintendent Dr Amarkant Jha 'Amar' convened a meeting of all heads of departments of the PMCH and finalised the tender on Tuesday. However, when HT contacted him on Wednesday, he could not give any detail, including the name of the selected firm, financial implication of engaging ex-armymen or the number of security personnel to be deputed on the hospital campus.

"The hospital security agency has been unchanged in the last 6-7 years. Normally, such contracts are for a year, with maximum

two extensions possible.

After that, it has to be re-tendered. Since no new agencies were forthcoming, the same set of securitymen continued. Against our tender, three security agencies applied, of which we selected the firm of ex-armymen," said Dr Jha.

Prior to Indraprastha, ex-armymen were entrusted the responsibility of hospital security, but it failed to impress the hospital authorities then.

An 'as-is survey' on the gap analysis and recommendations of the PMCH, commissioned by the health department in 2010 and undertaken by the National Health System Resource Centre (NHSRC), New Delhi, had painted the hospital security in poor light.

Pointing out the gaps, NHSRC advisor quality improvement Dr JN Sahay said, police verification of security personnel had not been undertaken; security guards were not aware of their duties and responsibilities; and there was no security alarm system at the hospital.