

## OPERATION TO CURB TRAFFICKING LAUNCHED

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On alert: The Railway Protection Force launches 'Operation AAHT' to intensify crackdown on human trafficking.

The Railway Protection Force has launched a nationwide operation to curb human trafficking. As part of "Operation AAHT", special teams will be deployed on all long-distance trains/routes with focus on rescuing victims, particularly women and children, from the clutches of traffickers.

The Railways, which operate about 21,000 trains across the country daily, is the most reliable mode of transportation for the traffickers who often move their victims on long-distance trains.

Thousands of Indians and persons from neighbouring countries were trafficked every day to some destinations where they were forced to live like slaves.

"They are also being trafficked for illegal adoptions, organ transplants, working in circus, begging and entertainment industry..." Sanjay Chander, Director-General of RPF, said in a note to all Chief Security Commissioners of Zonal Railways.

As part of "Operation AAHT", the infrastructure and intelligence network of the force could be utilised to collect, collate and analyse clues on victims, source, route, destination, popular trains used by suspects, identity of carriers/agents, kingpins etc and shared with other law-enforcing agencies.

The RPF could act as a bridge cutting across States to assist the local police in the mission to curb the menace.

Explaining the need to strengthen the intelligence machinery and the action plan to identify, investigate, rescue and rehabilitate victims of the offence, Mr. Chander said cyber cells would start patrolling the web/social media to look for digital footprints of human trafficking and added that the focus should be more on trains originating from districts bordering Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

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