



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Operation Narcos and Operation AAHT

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Why is in news? Railway Protection Force (RPF) conducted a month long nationwide Drive under Operation "Narcos" and Operation AAHT during January 2023

Railway Protection Force (RPF) is entrusted with the responsibility of security of railway property, passenger area, passengers and matters connected therewith.

In addition to the mandate, RPF has been entrusted with other responsibilities in the interest of national security.

Railway has been the **preferred mode of trafficking of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) for longer distance.**

Therefore, Government of India, empowered RPF officers, of and above the rank of Astt. Sub-Inspector, to exercise the powers and perform the duties to **conduct search, seize NDPS and arrest traffickers under the provisions of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1984** and further hand them over to the empowered law enforcing agencies.

Human Trafficking, especially of Women and Children, for sexual exploitation, prostitution, forced labour, forced marriage, domestic servitude, adoption, begging, organ transplant, drug peddling etc is an organised crime and the most abominable violation of human rights. Perhaps not many crimes are as ghastly as trading in human misery.

In May 2011, Govt. of India **ratified** the **United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC)** and one of its three protocols includes the protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in person, especially women and children.

RPF has been working closely with other law enforcement agencies and other stake holders to identify and rescue victims of human trafficking under Operation "AAHT".

To focus upon this, RPF conducted a month long nationwide Pan India Drive with an objective to make a dent upon the syndicate involved in smuggling of Narcotic Products through the railway network under **Operation "Narcos"** and Human Trafficking under **Operation AAHT**.

RPF is working in a mission mode to ensure that the credentials and criminal antecedents of all the persons engaged on contractual work in railways are verified from the concerned Police and only the persons having no criminal antecedents are allowed in the railway system.

A focused initiative in this regard was taken and the contractors were directed to comply with the condition of Police Verification of their staff.

Operation Narcos:

In order to bring attention to the menace of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, a **month-long pan India drive against smuggling of narcotics through rail** was launched under code name Operation "NARCOS" in the month of June-2022.

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RPF intensified its checks in trains and in identified black spots across the country in coordination with Narcotics Control Bureau and other Law Enforcement Agencies to target drug peddlers involved in this illegal trade.

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**.

Under 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, the identity of carriers/agents, kingpins etc and shared with other law-enforcing agencies.

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

The most affected state for human trafficking presently is **West Bengal** followed by **Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Assam**.

Other Initiatives of RPF:

Meri Saheli Initiative:

The initiative will focus on the **safety of women passengers**. It was launched as a pilot project in South Eastern Railway in September 2020. It was then extended to all zones.

Operation Yatri Surakhsha:

Under “Operation Yatri Surakhsha”, RPF also supports state police in the fighting **against passenger crime**.

Operation Nanhe Farishte:

It saved 1,045 children who were **found alone or were abandoned at the railway stations**.