

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *172
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.12.2024

SAFETY OF JUVENILES AND WOMEN AT RAILWAY STATIONS

*172. SHRI SAKET GOKHALE:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that is in place for enhancing the safety and security of juveniles and women across railway stations in the country; and
- (b) whether Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) have been set up and are functional across 262 railways stations in the country, if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) and (b): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) AND (b) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.172 FOR ANSWER ON 11.12.2024 RAISED BY SHRI SAKET GOKHALE REGARDING SAFETY OF JUVENILES AND WOMEN AT RAILWAY STATIONS

(a) and (b) : The Ministry of Women and Child Development is the nodal Ministry for the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act, 2015) as amended in 2021 which is the primary legislation for ensuring the safety, security, dignity and well-being of children. The Act provides for protection of children in need of care and protection as well as those in conflict with law by catering to their basic needs through care, protection, development, treatment and social re-integration. The primary responsibility of implementation of the JJ Act lies with the respective State/UT Governments.

Section 2(25) of JJ Act, 2015 also provides for twenty-four hours emergency outreach services 'Childline' for children in crisis which links them to emergency or long term care and rehabilitation services. Under the Mission Vatsalya Scheme which is Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by the States/Union Territories (UTs), Child Helpline services are provided across all the States including Districts. It also includes 135 identified railway stations across different States.

The Ministry of Railways has issued a Revised Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on 25.10.2024 to ensure care and protection of children in contact with Railways. The SOP, *inter-alia*, mentions regarding establishment of Child Help Desk/ Kiosk/ Booth at Stations, formation of Child Help Groups at all Stations having Child Help Desk and production of rescued children before Child Welfare Committee. Further, the following steps are taken by the Railways in coordination with Government Railway Police (GRP)/ District Police for safety and security of passengers including women passengers and Juveniles :

- i. □ 'Meri Saheli' initiative of Ministry of Railways has also been supported under Nirbhaya Fund. It is focused on providing safety and security to lady passengers travelling alone by long distance trains for their entire journey i.e. from originating station to destination station.
- ii. □ On vulnerable and identified routes/sections, trains are escorted by Railway Protection Force in addition to trains escorted by Government Railway Police of different States daily.
- iii. □ Zonal railways have been instructed for deployment of proper combined strength of male & female Railway Protection Force (RPF)/ Railway Protection Special Force (RPSF) personnel in train escort parties.
- iv. □ Drives are conducted against entry of male passengers into the compartments reserved for ladies.
- v. □ Surveillance is kept through CCTV cameras provided in a number of coaches & Railway Stations for enhanced security of passengers.
- vi. □ For immediate assistance passengers can make complaint on Rail Madad Portal directly or through Helpline Number 139 which is integrated with 24x7x365 Emergency Response Support System-112 (ERSS-112).

- vii. □ Railways are in regular touch with passengers through various social media platforms viz. twitter, facebook etc. to enhance security of passengers and to address their security concerns.
- viii. □ Frequent announcements are made through Public Address System to educate passengers to take precautions against theft, snatching, drugging etc.
- ix. □ State Level Security Committee of Railways (SLSCR) have been constituted for all States/ Union Territories for regular monitoring and review of security arrangements of the Railways.

Ministry of Railways have also equipped 499 Railway Stations with CCTV systems under Nirbhaya Fund to provide 24x7 security to women passengers at railway stations. Further, 67 Railway Stations of Konkan Railway have been completed with installation of 740 cameras. Artificial Intelligence (AI) based Facial Recognition System (FRS) integrated with video surveillance systems across 7 stations as a pilot project in Mumbai CST, Delhi, Howrah, Sealdah, Patna, Secunderabad and Chennai Central.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is also implementing 24x7x365 Women Helpline 181 under Mission Shakti Scheme, which aims to provide emergency and non-emergency response, both in all public and private spaces by linking the needy women with appropriate authorities such as Police, One Stop Centres, Hospitals, Legal Services Authorities etc. 181 Helpline also supports women in distress with counselling services in addition to providing information about schemes of women welfare across the country.

In order to strengthen action against Human Trafficking, more than 750 Anti Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) have been set up by RPF over the Indian Railways network. These AHTUs coordinate with AHTUs of local Police & CAPFs (Central Armed Police Forces) namely Boarder Security Force (BSF) & Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) functioning at District level/ State levels/ International Borders and with Intelligence Units, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other stakeholders and take effective action against human traffickers.
