



# Protocol to Prevent Human Trafficking: SCO

## Why in News

Recently, the [Shanghai Cooperation Organisation \(SCO\)](#), in its 19<sup>th</sup> meet (of Prosecutors General) held in New Delhi, adopted a **protocol to strengthen cooperation in preventing and combating growing menace of human trafficking**, especially women and children.

- The **current chair of SCO is Tajikistan**.

## SCO

- It was **founded at a summit in Shanghai in 2001** by the presidents of **Russia, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan**.
- Presently, it comprises **eight member states** namely India, Kazakhstan, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
  - India was made an observer at the SCO in 2005.
  - **India** and Pakistan became its **permanent members in 2017**.
  - Recently, Iran's bid to become a full member of the SCO has been approved.
- It is headquartered in **Beijing, China**.
- **RATS (Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure)** is a permanent organ of the SCO, headquartered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
- The **summit is held annually** and chairmanship goes to the member states for a year on rotation basis.

## Key Points

- **Human Trafficking:**
  - Human trafficking involves recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, for the purpose of exploitation.
  - Exploitation include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the removal of organs.
- **About the Protocol:**
  - Calls for **continuation of exchange of national legislation** to combat the menace of trafficking in persons.
  - Seeks to provide **protection and assistance to victims** of trafficking within their competence.
  - Calls for **developing cooperation between the educational organisations of the SCO member states** in the field of advanced training of prosecutors, whose competence include combating trafficking in persons especially, women and children.
- **Relevant Laws in India:**
  - **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act 1956** is the premier legislation to deal with this issue.

- **Article 23 and 24** (Right Against Exploitation) of the Constitution of India.
- **25 sections in IPC** such as 366A, 366B, 370 and 374.
- The **Juvenile Justice Act** and the **Information Technology (IT) Act** and also the **Prevention of Child Labour Act**, the **Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act**, among others.
- **India's Efforts in Combating Human Trafficking:**
  - In July 2021, the Ministry of Women and Child Development released **Draft anti-trafficking Bill**, the Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021.
  - India has ratified the **United Nations Convention on Transnational Organised Crime (the Palermo Convention)** which among others has a Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.
  - India has ratified the **SAARC Convention** on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.
  - **Anti-Trafficking Nodal Cell was set up in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in 2006** to act as a focal point for communicating various decisions and follow up on action taken by the State Governments to combat the crime of Human Trafficking.
  - **Judicial Colloquium:** In order to train and sensitize the trial court judicial officers, Judicial Colloquium on human trafficking are held at the High court level.
  - Ministry of Home Affairs under a Comprehensive Scheme '**Strengthening Law Enforcement Response in India against Trafficking in Persons**' through Training and Capacity Building, has released fund for establishment of Anti Human Trafficking Units for 270 districts of the country.
  - The **Ujjawala scheme was launched in 2007** to put an end to the trafficking of children and women. The objective of the scheme is to prevent, rescue, rehabilitate, reintegrate, and repatriate victims trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation.
  - Various initiatives such as "**SwadharGreh Scheme**", "**Sakhi**", "**Universalization of Women Helpline**", provide for a supportive institutional framework and mechanism for addressing concerns of women affected by violence.

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING in INDIA

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Involves recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion/deception, for the purpose of exploitation.

### NCRB 2018:

5264

Cases reported

64%

Females

48%

Below 18



## MOST SUSCEPTIBLE

To fall victim to such malpractices are the economically disadvantaged, and people belonging to the SC, ST, AND OBC CATEGORIES



## CAUSES

Poverty, social or cultural practice, and migration, porous nature of borders, corrupt Government officials, the involvement of international organised criminal groups or networks etc.



## AFTER EFFECTS

Mental and Physical ailments such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, HIV, AIDS, STDS, TB



## RELEVANT LAWS

- Article 23 and 24 of the Constitution of India.
- Sections in IPC such as 366A, 366B, 370 and 374.
- The Juvenile Justice Act
- Information Technology (IT) Act
- Immoral Traffic Act
- Prevention of Child Labour Act
- Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act

## CHALLENGES



- Inadequate understanding & bad implementation of laws
- No regulation of social media
- Inadequate data

**Source: PIB**

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/protocol-to-prevent-human-trafficking-sco>