International Relations · GS - III

How can India strengthen its response to transnational human trafficking networks that exploit migrant workers through cyber-enabled forced labour?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 27/11/2026	GS - III	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Human trafficking, forced labour, migrant vulnerability, cybercrime, organised crime, victim protection, international cooperation, law enforcement

Model Answer

The rescue of 164 foreign nationals from an alleged cyber-slavery network in Noida highlights the convergence of human trafficking, forced labour and digital financial crime. Such networks exploit employment aspirations and weak cross-border coordination.

Understanding the exploitation chain

1. **Deceptive recruitment:** Criminal networks advertise attractive overseas employment opportunities and use fraudulent intermediaries to recruit vulnerable individuals.
2. **Coercive control:** Confiscation of passports, confinement, intimidation and restrictions on communication make victims dependent on traffickers.
3. **Digital exploitation:** Victims are compelled to operate online investment scams, fake customer-support operations and other fraudulent platforms.
4. **Transnational networks:** Recruitment, confinement, financial transactions and victims may be spread across different jurisdictions, complicating investigation and prosecution.

India's institutional response

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, criminalises trafficking under Section 143 and exploitation of a trafficked person under Section 144. The Information Technology Act, 2000, and financial investigation mechanisms can support action against associated cyber fraud.

Priorities for effective intervention

1. **Victim-centred policing:** Rescued foreigners must receive interpretation, legal assistance, medical care, safe accommodation and support for repatriation.
2. **Cross-border coordination:** Police agencies should strengthen cooperation with foreign governments, Interpol and diplomatic missions to trace recruiters and financial networks.
3. **Recruitment regulation:** Verification of overseas employment agencies and awareness campaigns can reduce vulnerability to fraudulent offers.
4. **Digital investigation:** Financial intelligence, electronic evidence preservation and coordinated cybercrime investigations are essential to dismantling criminal networks.

The central challenge is to treat trafficked individuals primarily as victims of coercion, not merely as participants in online fraud. A coordinated approach combining prosecution, prevention and rehabilitation is therefore essential.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP