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SSB Thwarts Human Trafficking Attempt Near India-Nepal Border in North Bengal

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A joint operation by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and local police successfully disrupted an attempted human trafficking incident near the India-Nepal border in North Bengal, leading to the arrest of two individuals and the rescue of seven Nepali women, including a minor.

The operation took place on Saturday at Panitanki Bazaar in the Kharibari block near Siliguri. Officials from the Quick Response Team (QRT) of the 41st Battalion, SSB, intercepted a four-wheeler roughly 150 meters inside Indian territory. The two male suspects, identified as Japan Gurung, a Nepali national, and Dipesh Gurung from Toribari in Darjeeling, were taken into custody and handed over to local police along with the rescued victims.

Darjeeling Superintendent of Police Praveen Prakash stated that the suspects were presented before the Siliguri Subdivisional Court later that day. Investigations are ongoing to determine whether more individuals are connected to the trafficking network.

Initial findings suggest the suspects were part of an organized international trafficking operation that lured young women and minors from Nepal with false promises of jobs abroad. Authorities believe the accused arranged fraudulent identity documents, including Aadhaar cards, PAN cards, and passports, to facilitate the illegal movement of victims across borders.

One of the suspects, Japan Gurung, also known by the alias “Dada”, allegedly charged families around 100,000 Nepali rupees in exchange for promised jobs in Hong Kong. Police recovered multiple videos, photographs, and fake documents from his mobile phone, indicating the possible involvement of additional victims.

This case follows a series of similar incidents in the region. In July, the Government Railway Police intercepted 56 women from the Terai-Dooars area on board the Capital Express at New Jalpaiguri station. A separate operation by Pradhannagar Police rescued 34 women from the Sevak Road bus terminal. In both cases, victims were reportedly misled about employment opportunities in South Indian states.

Officials have highlighted the India-Nepal open border as a vulnerability exploited by human trafficking networks. The successful intervention at Panitanki underscores the importance of coordinated cross-agency efforts to combat trafficking in the region.