



ABHINANDAN

FELICITATION FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS CHILD PROTECTION ACROSS RAILWAY STATIONS

28TH JULY, 2021 | PATNA, BIHAR

INTRODUCTION

Railway Children India, in collaboration with East Central Railway, organized a felicitation ceremony named "ABHINANDAN" to honor the exceptional contributions of Railway Officials in protecting and safeguarding children at railway stations. The event was held at Hotel Chanakya in Patna on July 28, 2023. The main objective of this event was to recognize and appreciate the significant role played by railway officials in ensuring the safety and well-being of children associated with railway stations.

Since 2013, Railway Children India has made remarkable progress by training nearly 40,000 railway officials through 500 training sessions. These efforts underscore the organization's dedication to creating a safe and nurturing environment for children in the railway ecosystem.

The event commenced with a half-day program, starting with a concise orientation on Railway Children India's work pan India and its association with the railways since 2013. This provided insights into the importance of child protection and sensitized the attendees about the challenges and best practices in ensuring the safety of children at railway stations.

A pivotal highlight of the event was the felicitation ceremony, where 35 outstanding railway officials from each division of East Central Railway were honored for their remarkable contributions to the protection of children in contact with the railway system. The recognition was a token of appreciation for their dedication and efforts in making railway stations safer for children.



SNAPSHOTS

MR.S.C.PARHI

**INSPECTOR GENERAL CUM PRINCIPAL CHIEF SECURITY COMMISSIONER,
EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**

Mr. S.C Parhi, Inspector General cum Principal Chief Security Commissioner, East Central Railway, Chief Guest extended his congratulations to RCI for acknowledging the diligent efforts of railway officials in ensuring the safety of children.

He highlighted that within the ECR zone, it is a daily occurrence to witness the protection of approximately eight to ten children on the railways. Having been associated with RCI for the past 15 to 17 years, he possesses an understanding of RCI's work and its strong ties with the railway sector.

Furthermore, he expressed his admiration for RCI's proactive stance in recognizing the necessity of training railway personnel. He emphasized that such training not only enhances their knowledge but also empowers them to effectively safeguard children, preventing them from falling victim to abuse and exploitation. Mr. Parhi commended RCI's collaborative approach and its unwavering commitment to advancing this crucial mission. He eloquently stated, "In the event that even a single railway staff member can save a child's life, it stands as a commendable lifelong achievement."



MR. UDAY JHA

ADDITIONAL DIRECTOR OF CHILD PROTECTION, PATNA

Mr. Uday Jha, Additional Director of Child Protection and a special invitee to the event, commended RCI for acknowledging the dedicated endeavours of railway officials. He expressed, "Acknowledgment amplifies the drive for improved service."

He highlighted that notifications from the railway sector reach their offices when a child's protection is ensured, and similarly, when successful family reunification is accomplished through joint efforts. He underscored that safeguarding children and successfully reintegrating them with their families is a collaborative undertaking, necessitating the involvement of various stakeholders. The comprehensive and robust network of support is crucial to ensure that children remain securely enveloped within the protective embrace of their families.



MR.S.LOUIS AMUTHAN

CHIEF SECURITY COMMISSIONER OF EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

Mr. S. Louis Amuthan, Chief Security Commissioner of East Central Railway, extended his congratulations for the commendable actions undertaken by railway officials in safeguarding at-risk children and thwarting potential threats posed by perpetrators. He articulated that these actions exemplify noble deeds and likened serving children to serving a divine purpose.

He went on to acknowledge and appreciate RCI for its laudable initiative of honouring and acknowledging the contributions of railway officials.



MR. NAVIN SELLARAJU

CEO & DIRECTOR, RAILWAY CHILDREN INDIA

In his welcome address, Mr Navin Sellaraju Sukumar, CEO & Director, Railway Children India, highlighted that the 35 railway officials being honoured by RCI had been instrumental in ensuring the protection of 650 children within railway stations. Notably, these officials had also actively participated in 46 training sessions organized by RCI. He extended his gratitude for the remarkable dedication and vigilant efforts of this exceptional railway personnel, which had led to safeguarding numerous children from potential harm.

Furthermore, he remarked, *"Today, we are privileged to acknowledge their extraordinary contributions and convey our deep appreciation for the profound impact they have had on innumerable lives. It is also heartening to witness the presence of many women officers among us today." Their steadfast commitment and innovative strategies have effectively transformed railway stations into secure sanctuaries for children, fostering an environment of safety and protection."*



Several of the honorees also took the opportunity to share their accounts of safeguarding children within railway stations, preventing the children's involvement in illegal recruitment networks, and shielding them from the perils of unsafe migration.

Ms S.R. Dutta, Sub Inspector at Barkakana Junction railway station, shared her experience, stating, *"Hailing from a rural region in Odisha, an underserved area, protecting nine children at the railway station brought immense joy to my heart. This felicitation serves as a motivating force."*

Mr Narsingh Yadav, currently serving as the Sub Inspector at Hajipur railway station, expressed, *"While we have received recognition from the railways before, this marks the very first instance of acknowledgement from a civil society organization. Receiving this award brings me great satisfaction."*

These testimonials from the awardees highlight their profound dedication to their roles and the invaluable impact they have on the lives of vulnerable children. Their stories underscore the significance of collaborative efforts in ensuring child protection within railway environments.



Distinguished stakeholders from the zonal, divisional, and station levels were present at the event, along with representatives from Railway Children India and its partner organizations. Representatives from various civil society organizations, including PLAN, Prayas, Sarthi, Miracle Foundation, Bal Sakha, and UNICEF, enhanced the importance of the ceremony. They echoed the imperative of early intervention within railway stations to shield children from the clutches of abuse and exploitation, underscoring the significance of proactive measures. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts, uniting under a shared objective of safeguarding children. The collective sentiment expressed by these representatives highlighted the urgency and collective responsibility in ensuring the well-being and protection of children in railway environments.

In conclusion, ABHINANDAN - the felicitation ceremony organized by Railway Children India and East Central Railway - celebrated the exceptional contributions of railway officials towards child protection at railway stations. This event not only recognized their valuable efforts but also emphasized the importance of continued collaboration and initiatives to ensure the safety and well-being of children in railway environments.



★ **THANK YOU** ★