



# The Exodus Road®

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### **Trafficking survivor escapes, helps save four more from brothel**

**INDIA, Aug. 14, 2017** — In a high-risk raid on a notorious brothel keeper, The Exodus Road worked together with local police to rescue five sex trafficking survivors and arrest four traffickers.

The owner of the brothel raided in Operation FREEDOM RUN owns more than 15 brothels in one city alone, and has been known to bribe police and NGOs. According to investigators, she and her husband regularly traffic women from Bangladesh and other areas of India. The couple has been operating for 10 years without law enforcement intervention — until now.

Sudir,\* The Exodus Road's country director, received a tip from another NGO on August 4 that 26-year-old Tanjia\* had been trafficked to the brothel from a poor village in Eastern India. Tanjia, a mother of three who did daily hard labor, had met the trafficker through a family member. She was promised a job at a tailoring factory, but instead was sold for about \$470.

Sudir investigated the brothel with his team and coordinated a raid for Tanjia's rescue on August 14. Then, plans changed.

The night of the 13th, Tanjia was about to be transferred to another location. But instead, she was able to escape from her traffickers. She called Sudir, who traveled with his team to the city and put Tanjia in a hotel with their female social worker overnight, at the instructions of local police.

The next day, the team took Tanjia to the police, where they registered a case. Tanjia's testimony gave them the information they needed to conduct a raid.

The Exodus Road's investigators, together with local law enforcement, found four more victims in the brothel and arrested four traffickers. The other victims had been trafficked from Bangladesh and were in a small, hidden room. One of the victims was as young as 14 years old.

"We targeted the biggest brothel keepers who have bribed many NGOs and police officers," Sudir said. He said the notoriety of the brothel keeper increases risk and need for precautionary measures.

Corrupt and dangerous operating environments require investigators to bring operational excellence to bear on each case. The Exodus Road's Tactical Advisory Board gives guidance and accountability on rescue operation strategy, risk mitigation, and maintaining focus on victim protection.

All of the survivors were taken to a government home and had to appear in court two days after their rescue. Sudir contacted Tanjia's parents, who will soon bring her home to her three children, ages 3 to 10. The Exodus Road's social workers will continue to follow up with her legal process.

"The best part of this case is that Tanjia showed bravery to tell the truth," Sudir said. "She trusted us and called us for help. Not only this, but she helped rescue four more victims and helped arrest four people."

*\*Sudir and Tanjia are representative names. Names of operatives and survivors are changed for their safety.*