

Rwandan authorities have repatriated 105 citizens trafficked to various countries over the past year and prevented 57 others from being trafficked, the Rwanda Investigation Bureau said Monday.

The announcement came during a June 2 press briefing on human trafficking cases and ongoing prevention efforts.

The repatriations occurred between June 2024 and May 2025, RIB said. In one case, 10 Rwandans were brought back from Myanmar in April, while efforts are still underway to return five others.

RIB spokesperson Dr. Thierry Murangira said 52 of the 57 people intercepted before they were trafficked were women, with only five men. He noted that women are disproportionately targeted due to demand for sexual exploitation.

Murangira emphasized that the number of victims doesn't diminish the severity of the crime.

"Even if it's one in a thousand, it's still a serious issue. No one should be trafficked," he said. "The harm of human trafficking lies in the devaluation of a person, turning them into a tool or a commodity for someone else's gain."

From July 2019 to June 2024, Rwanda blocked 39 attempted trafficking cases, highlighting a growing trend that prompted greater enforcement and awareness campaigns.

Murangira said some victims are unknowingly aided by their own relatives.

"Fighting this crime is difficult when some of the people being trafficked think they're being given a great opportunity, such as finding love or a good job abroad," he said.

While many of the trafficking victims passed through Rwanda, the country is not considered a source of trafficking activity, according to RIB.

"There is no evidence of human trafficking operations inside Rwanda, but traffickers sometimes use the country as a transit route," Murangira said. "When detected, they are stopped. Rwanda is also among the countries leading efforts to repatriate its citizens."

RIB also warned about related crimes within the country, including sexual exploitation disguised as employment. In 2024, authorities discovered a Kigali strip club where people were being exploited for sex, Murangira said. He urged strong legal action and public condemnation of such cases.

The agency urged Rwandans to be wary of suspicious overseas opportunities, particularly when no clear contacts or logical reasons are provided for their selection.