



# REVIEW



1st June - 31st August 2024  
Fourth Edition

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## IMPRESS

The EU co-funded project IMPRESS (IMProving Railway sEcurity through awareneSS and training) aims to improve the protection of stations and trains by developing security training and awareness programmes for all stakeholders in rail stations and on trains.

It focuses on the 'immediate responders' from the railway environment, or those who are most likely to be the first to prevent or react to a security incident. This includes rail staff at stations and onboard trains, security staff, staff from station shops, and cleaning staff as well as other service providers.

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ISF-2022-TF1-AG-PROTECT

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## REVIEW

As part of the IMPRESS dissemination strategy, a media monitoring was carried out by the UIC Security Division on the topic of rail security from 01 June - 31 August 2024.

Based on keyword searches performed on X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, Google news & AP News, the following pages summarize the relevant news items found during this period for the following threats:

Hoax, Aggression, Theft, Sabotage, Gender-based Violence, Knife attack, Irregular Migration & Security Measures.

It also describes news item of relevance to rail security culture and recent publications.



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## HOAXES

### Train Services Halted by Suspected Bomb (UK)

A suspected wartime explosive device was discovered near the tracks between Eastleigh and Fareham (UK) in June 2024. Train services were temporarily halted as emergency services responded. The Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team later determined the item to be a training device, allowing services to resume. [9]

## METAL THEFT

### **THREE NABBED WITH 10 TONS OF STOLEN RAILWAY GEAR (INDIA)**

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) in Khurda Road, India, successfully apprehended three suspects who were transporting over 10 tons of stolen railway equipment, indicating a large-scale criminal operation. [2]



### **RPF BUSTS NALGONDA RAIL THEFT GANG (INDIA)**

In Nalgonda, India, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) has broken up a criminal group who were engaged in stealing vital railway materials. The gang was caught red-handed while trying to pilfer 388 kg of Overhead Equipment (OHE) wire, an important component for rail electrification. [3]



## KNIFE ATTACK

### **Auckland Train Horror: Passengers Silent (New Zealand)**

In June 2024, a 32-year-old woman was attacked with a knife on an Auckland train. The assailant poked her with the knife, spat on her bag, and brandished the weapon at Penrose Station (New Zealand). The victim felt unsupported by other passengers and the train manager. The incident is under investigation by Auckland Transport and the police. [4]

### **Teen Slashed and Robbed on Chicago's CTA Orange Line (USA)**

A 18-year-old male was slashed on the forehead and robbed by a knife-wielding assailant on a CTA Orange Line train in Chicago (USA) in July 2024. The suspect was quickly arrested nearby, and the victim's stolen belongings were recovered. [5]

### **Man Jailed for Threatening MAX Driver with Knife and Slurs (USA)**

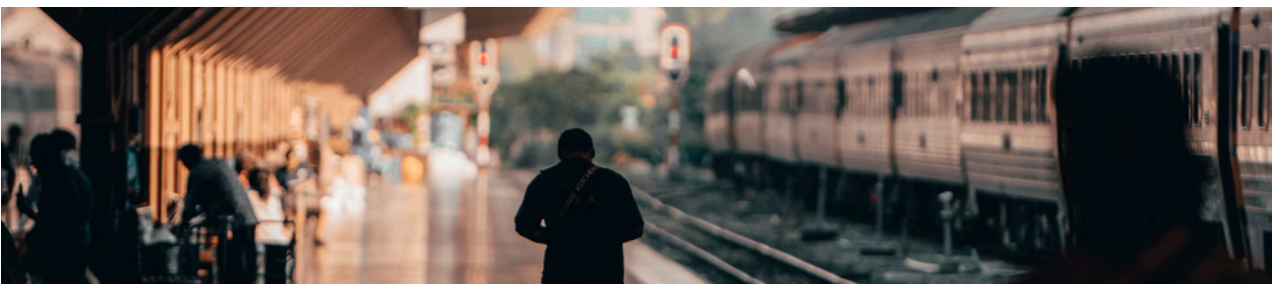
In June 2024, Steven Klopp, was sentenced to 32 months in prison for threatening a MAX train driver with a knife and shouting anti-Asian slurs. His sentence also includes three years of post-prison supervision, anger management classes, and a three-year ban from TriMet services. [6]

### **Knife Attack Disrupts Liège-Guillemins Services (Belgium)**

A train driver was attacked with a knife at Liège-Guillemins station (Belgium) on August 2024. The assault occurred on a train bound for Herstal, resulting in the cancellation of multiple trains at the station, including routes to and from Brussels. [7]

### **French Soldier Stabbed at Station (France)**

In July 2024, a French soldier was stabbed at Gare de l'Est station in Paris (France). The attacker, a 40-year-old man from the Democratic Republic of Congo, was arrested. The incident is being investigated as attempted murder, with anti-terrorism authorities involved. [19]





## SECURITY MEASURES

### GTR FIGHTS BACK: BODY CAMS FOR STAFF AMID ASSAULT SURGE (UK)

Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) is equipping 1,500 frontline staff with body-worn cameras due to a 40% increase in physical assaults on workers in the UK during 2023. These cameras will be used by train drivers, conductors, and station staff to record incidents of threats or antisocial behavior, with the footage serving as evidence in criminal cases. [10]

### BRUSSELS BOOSTS SECURITY, EUROSTAR FACES SUMMER HICCUPS (BELGIUM)

From June to September 2024, Brussels stations had heightened security checks. Eurostar faced disruptions due to Paris traffic restrictions, limited German network service, and SNCB engineering works. [1]

## DRUGS

### RPF Seizes ₹5L Drugs in “Operation Narcos” (India)

In a joint operation with the Excise department carried out at the beginning of August 2024 in Palghat station, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) recovered narcotics worth ₹5 lakhs. This operation was part of an initiative called “Operation Narcos”, which appears to be an ongoing effort to combat drug trafficking on railway premises in Indian Railway trains. [11]





## THEFT

### **RPF Dhanbad Cracks Down on Coach Attendants (India)**

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) in Dhanbad (India) successfully arrested two onboard coach attendants suspected of theft in June 2024. The operation was executed swiftly in collaboration with detectives, leading to the recovery of two stolen mobile phones valued at ₹70,000. [12]

### **Second Defibrillator Stolen from New Beckenham Station (UK)**

A defibrillator was stolen from New Beckenham station in June 2024, marking the second theft from this location and the third in the area within six months. The British Transport Police (BTP) are investigating, having released a Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) image of a suspect. The thefts have resulted in a total loss of around £3,000. Authorities stressed the importance of recovering these life-saving devices. [13]

### **Salem RPF and GRP Solve Major Theft (India)**

In July 2024 the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) in Salem, India, solved a high-value theft case. They took into custody six individuals involved and recovered stolen items valued at ₹48.46 lakhs. [14]

### **RPF Waltair Arrest (India)**

In Waltair, India, three individuals involved in criminal activities at the Visakhapatnam railway station were detained in July 2024. The suspects were caught in possession of stolen property, although specific details about the items recovered were not disclosed by the Railway Protection Force (RPF). [15]

### **RPF and GRP Seize ₹2.04 Crore in Cash and Gold from Passenger (India)**

During a July 2024 routine check in Tiruchchirappalli, the RPF and GRP discovered ₹15 lakh in cash and 2,796 grams of gold jewelry in the shoulder bag of a passenger. The seized items, valued at ₹2.04 crore, have been handed over to the Deputy Director of Income Tax for further investigation. [16]

### **Gaya Theft Gang Dismantled (India)**

In Gaya (India), a collaborative effort by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) led to the capture of a five-member gang involved in theft in August 2024. The team employed modern surveillance techniques to recover passenger property worth over ₹1.5 lakhs. [17]





## PHYSICAL AGGRESSION

### POLICE SEEK WITNESSES AFTER TRAIN ASSAULT (UK)

West Yorkshire Police are investigating an assault on a train between Leeds and Manchester (UK) that occurred on 22 June 2024. A man was attacked by a group while on board, sustaining injuries but not requiring hospitalization. Police have released images of the suspects and are appealing for witnesses to come forward with any information to assist in their investigation. [18]

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

### JAILED FOR ASSAULTS (UK)

Gareth Rees, was sentenced to 16 months in prison for sexually assaulting two women at Pontypool and New Inn railway stations (UK) on 17 June 2023. He pleaded guilty to two counts of sexual assault and received a 10-year Sexual Harm Prevention Order, along with being required to register as a sex offender for 10 years. The British Transport Police praised the victims for reporting the assaults. [20]

### TRAIN CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN SOAR BY 50% (UK)

Violent crimes against women and girls on UK trains have surged by over 50% from 2021 to 2023. Sexual offenses rose by 10%, and reports of sexual harassment doubled. Over a third of women feel at risk of assault, especially during peak travel times. In response, the rail industry and British Transport Police are launching an anti-sexual harassment campaign, and the government is committed to improving policing and the justice system to combat this issue. [21]





## SABOTAGE AND TERRORISM

### ARSON DISRUPTS FRENCH RAIL AHEAD OF OLYMPICS (FRANCE)

On 26 July 2024, just hours before the opening ceremony of the Paris Olympics, France's high-speed rail network was targeted by coordinated arson attacks that caused significant disruptions. Fires were set at critical junctions, damaging infrastructure and leading to widespread cancellations and delays affecting hundreds of thousands of travelers.

French authorities launched a criminal investigation, suspecting possible involvement from far-left extremist groups, and sought assistance from the FBI to identify those behind a claiming email. Despite the chaos, officials remained committed to ensuring the safety and success of the Olympic events. [22][23][25][26][27][28][29][30]



### Far-Left Sabotage Suspected in German Rail Chaos (Germany)

A series of suspected sabotage attacks on Germany's rail network, believed to be carried out by far-left activists, has caused widespread disruptions across major cities during the summer 2024. The incidents, which involved cable fires and vandalism, have affected services in Bremen, Hamburg, and Berlin. A letter claiming responsibility was published on a far-left platform, prompting a police investigation. [31]

### Pakistan-Based Terrorist Urges Sabotage of Indian Railways

Farhatullah Ghori, a Pakistan-based terrorist, has urged sleeper cells in India to sabotage Indian Railways and target critical infrastructure. In a Telegram video published in August 2024, he called for train derailments and threats against Hindu leaders, prompting increased vigilance from Indian intelligence agencies. [8]

### Aligarh Cops Apprehend Railway Robbery Duo (India)

In Aligarh (India), the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) arrested two suspects after a fierce encounter at the end of June 2024. The criminals tampered with railway signals by placing coins on the tracks, causing trains to stop unexpectedly and allowing them to rob passengers. [33]





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