

Chinese Police Bust Trafficking Rings, Rescue 89 Children

Chinese police have rescued 89 children and arrested 355 suspects during a crackdown on nine **child trafficking** rings nationwide, state media reported on Monday.

Police began the operation on December 18 in provinces including Guangdong and Sichuan, two of China's most populous, the official Xinhua news agency said, citing the Ministry of Public Security.

Child trafficking is rampant in China, where population control policies have bolstered a traditional bias for male offspring, seen as the main support for elderly parents and heirs to the family name, and have resulted in abortions, killings or abandonment of girls.

The imbalance has created criminal demand for abducted or bought baby boys, but also for baby girls destined to be future brides attracting rich dowries.

The children are being cared for by the government and police are searching for their parents.

"We will collect the children's DNA and use it to find their parents within a national DNA database established for anti-trafficking purposes," Xinhua cited Chen Shiqu, director of the ministry's anti-trafficking office, as saying.

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