
An Issue Of Human Trafficking

Silent Slaves

“Truthfully, Human Trafficking is just a polite way of saying Modern Slavery”

Slavery, sex trade, child labor, child soldiers, forced migration, trading in body parts (including genetic material)-even many forms of international adoption-represent the practice of human trafficking. This is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring and receipt of human beings for exploitation, using a variety of illicit means from threat and coercion to fraud, deception and debt bondage. These practices present difficult and varied challenges for ethics and politics in part because they are already inscribed in such fundamental concepts of Western political and social analysis as the social contract, racism, exchange and globalization.(explain please)

Oxford Dictionary defines human trafficking as - “Human trafficking is the trade of humans for the purpose of forced labour, sexual slavery, or commercial sexual exploitation for the trafficker or other.” Article 3, paragraph of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) defines Trafficking in persons as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion. Trafficking is done for the purpose of exploitation, prostitution, sexual exploitation, forced labor or slavery or similar practices and the removal of organs.

Human Trafficking Cases

- Britain recorded 2,255 modern slavery offences across England and Wales last year, a 159 per cent increase from the previous year. Reports also say that different agencies are cooperating in this stratum.
- Last year in Michigan a couple allegedly kept a 29-year-old woman with mental and physical disabilities in their back shed and set up online ads for a date with the victim. The men paid money to the couple in exchange for sexual services from the woman.
- The White House prescribed orders for Iran, Venezuela and four African Nations for adding these nations to the list of countries accused of failing to crack down human trafficking. Under 2000 US laws called the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, the United States does not provide any assistance to any country that fails to comply with minimum standards for eliminating trafficking and is not making any efforts to do so.

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- Thousands of young Bangladeshis have been trafficked to Malaysia through obscure private colleges and their agents. Many of the victims live and work not far from the glittering lights of the Klang Valley's hidden and suffering.
 - Indian Nobel Prize Winner Kailash Satyarthi said in his speech against child abuse and trafficking that "It is a war on rapes, war on child sexual abuse and trafficking because these are not ordinary crimes and they cannot be solved through the business-as-usual approach". Two children are sexually abused every hour. One child goes missing every eight minutes in India and they are disappearing in thin air.

On issues of human trafficking, specially where the victims are women and the girl child, it does not take away many words to bring out the stark horror of the situation as it exists in India at present. Minor girls rescued from the brothels are usually kept in custody of government homes. The custody of the girls in the government homes meant for the minors, ends the day the girl turns 18. On that day the girl is set free from the protection of the shelter homes. Often girls don't have a home to go and are clueless about how to proceed once they are released from the shelter home. Often traffickers are in touch with the clerical staff of the government homes and know exactly when a particular girl is going to turn 18 and will be released from the shelter home. On the appointed day, the trafficker's agents wait outside the gates of the shelter home in a car ready to pick up the homeless and clueless girl. The girl is picked up in the car, brought to a brothel readied to receive her and soon she is reintroduced into trafficking, now as an ADULT.

Trafficking is a demand driven industry. It is formed of the buyer (end user), the business (pimp, recruiter, transporter etc.), and the Bought (prostituted child, bonded slave). Because there is a demand for abusing and using little girls and women, traffickers simply go into poor and isolated villages, in low caste tribal communities, and prey upon the destitution and vulnerability of such poor people by offering a job in the big city or the false promise of marriage. In the big brothel, managers force mothers who enter their late twenties to replace themselves with their daughters as they are unable to attract customers. The rise in the use of pornography is also fueling the demand as twelve year old boys surfing the net are suddenly invited by a cartoon character to play a game and a few clicks later he watches a woman being penetrated from every part of her body, crying and saying "Give me more". He begins to believe that sex is connected with violence and domination.

Criminalization of Human Trafficking

India efforts to protect victims of trafficking vary from State to State, but remain inadequate in many places. The Central Government does not provide protection services to Indian victims trafficked abroad for forced labour or commercial sexual exploitation. The Government of India launched an Anti Human Trafficking Web Portal in February 2014.

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- Trafficking in Human Beings or Persons is prohibited under the Constitution of India under Article 23(1) The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA) is the premier legislation for prevention of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation
 - Protection of children from Sexual offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, which has come into effect from 14th November, 2012 is a special law to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation
 - State Governments have also enacted specific legislations to deal with the issue (e.g. The Punjab Prevention of Human Smuggling Act, 2012). The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC):
 - Criminalizes attempts to commit a trafficking offence.
 - Participation as an accomplice in human trafficking an offence.
 - Criminalizes organizing or directing others to commit trafficking.

In terms of actual human beings, NGOs have made a dent in preventing the trafficking of people in some of the pockets they work, but very little has been done to make a dent in the trafficking industry. Hardly any traffickers and certainly known end users, who are basically slave owners are ever arrested, prosecuted or convicted. The problems can be tackled easily if we value our girls and women more and hold those who abuse them accountable. Right now neither the police nor the government wants to do anything about it. "Crime in India" statistics show that more women are arrested under the Indian law than men!

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