

MPRA

Munich Personal RePEc Archive

Human trafficking in Asia: a heinous crime against humanities

Mohajan, Haradhan

International Journal of Cross-Cultural Studies

7 January 2012

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/50852/>

MPRA Paper No. 50852, posted 23 Oct 2013 02:41 UTC

Human trafficking in Asia: a heinous crime against humanities

Haradhan Kumar Mohajan

Premier University, Chittagong, Bangladesh.

E-mail: haradhan_km@yahoo.com

Abstract: *This paper discusses the human trafficking especially women and children trafficking in Asia. Human trafficking is not only a local problem but also a global concern. It is performed for various purposes such as labor, prostitution, organ transplant, drug couriers, and arm smuggling and affects virtually every country in the world. Recently trafficking of human being increased alarmingly due to globalization and liberalization. In Bangladesh and Nepal trafficking becomes an important issue regionally, nationally and internationally. The victims mainly come from urban and rural areas of poor families. The governments and various NGOs of the world have taken various steps to stop human trafficking. This paper has taken an attempt to discuss aspects of human trafficking and highlights on various steps to prevent it.*

Keywords: Human trafficking, Migration, Boarder killing, Anti-trafficking.

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations (UN) protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transportational Organized Crime, trafficking is defined as any activity leading to recruitment, transportation, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or a position of vulnerability. When the methods of trafficking may be such as coercion, luring, duping, abducting, kidnapping etc. then these happens due to social and economical constraints of the victims which make them vulnerable. Human trafficking is considered as the third largest source of profit for organized crime, following arms and drug trafficking. Trafficking is performed for various purposes such as labor, prostitution, organ transplant, drug couriers, arm smuggling etc. (Miko and Park 2002, Sarkar 2011). It is very difficult to collect data on trafficking, as the trade is secretive, the women and girls are silenced, the traffickers are dangerous and not many agencies are counting (Hughes 2000). Recently trafficking of human being increased alarmingly due to globalization and liberalization. People tend to migrate in search of better opportunities to make them selves rich and wealthy which is a positive trend the people for developing countries. But it sometimes creates problems such as smuggling of people across borders and unsafe migration by unscrupulous touts and agents. Increase trafficking also creates an adverse impact on the problem of HIV. The women and girls migrated for better ambition but at last they are sold in brothel by the traffickers and they have to confine for longtime in the brothel which sometimes cause HIV infection due to poor negotiation for safe sex methods. If a woman or girl is HIV infected then she may be return to his own country and her country has to spend huge costs for health and rehabilitation sectors. The UN estimates that about 4 million people trafficking in a year are treated against their will to work in some form of slavery, many of them are children. It is roughly estimated that in the last 30 years trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation in Asia alone has victimized more than 30 million people. Asia is mainly an origin region as well as a destination for trafficking in persons.

Due to absence of social protection, economic security and legal support, an alarming number of women from the poor families become easy victims of trafficking. As trafficking and sexual exploitation is a crosscutting issue in this subcontinent, it has become a growing concern especially across borders. The problem is more acute for a country like Bangladesh that shares a porous border with India. As there is a heavy demand for women and girls traffickers takes trafficking as a highly profitable business. The organized gangs of traffickers often lure young women and girls with false promises of better jobs or false proposals of love and marriage. Bangladeshi and Nepalese women and girls are more innocent and attractive, so that they become the first target of traffickers. Victims of trafficking are generally trafficked for forced prostitution, for purposes of organ transplants and slave labor. Accurate statistical data about the number of women trafficked from Bangladesh to serve the sex trade in neighboring countries is absent. The trafficked victims end up in brothels where they are sold for sexual exploitation or serve as street sex workers in India, Pakistan and the Middle East. Although the government has enacted stringent laws and implemented various policies to combat this menace, trafficking continues to be a significant problem in Bangladesh (Farouk 2005). Special target of traffickers are Bangladeshi girls, because the customers think that girls are virgins and are less likely to be infected with HIV. There is a blind belief that intercourse with a virgin girl cures a person's sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), though there is no evidence for this belief. Traffickers use Kolkata of India as the trafficking point for other destinations such as India, Pakistan and Middle East for Bangladeshi women and girls (Sarkar 2011).

The present form and nature of trafficking can be explained by poverty and social disintegration. The spread of wage employment or bonded labor such as domestic labor, women working in the sex trade, in entertainment (camel jockeys), child abuse, and organ trading can be identified as demand factors of trafficking.

In South Asia, Bangladesh and Nepal are the countries that face the brunt of global child and women trafficking. From Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan, a high number of women being trafficked mainly to India, Eastern Europe and Middle East for commercial sex and maid service works. Indian traffickers lure young women and female children for lucrative jobs and better standard of living from Assam, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Chattisgarh and Rajasthan, and finally push them into Indian brothels.

Migration without valid documents is more rampant throughout the world because of a variety of factors, including existence of unclear rules governing immigration in the developing world and their weaker implementation, inability of the countries to law enforcement their extensive borders due to lack of sufficient resources and trained manpower, unholy links between and among the migrants, borders security forces and international gangs of human smugglers and traffickers and powerlessness of the civil societies. In sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, irregular and illegal migration is probably the dominant form of migration. Here the children are trafficked for farm labor and women for sexual exploitation. It is estimated that up to 200,000 children are trafficked each year in Western and Central Africa alone. According to an estimate, by the end of

1990s, around 400,000 people had entered the European Union as a result of human smuggling and trafficking (Ugur 2007).

According to an estimate of the US government, for example, between 800,000 and 900,000 victims are trafficked globally every year and between 17,000 and 18,500 are trafficked into the USA each year.

DEFINITION OF TRAFFICKING

The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons defines trafficking as follows: “Trafficking in persons’ shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”

The US Government definition of trafficking in persons is as follows: “All acts involved in the transport, harboring, or sale of persons within national or across international borders through coercion, force, kidnapping, deception or fraud, for purposes of placing persons in situations of forced labor or services, such as forced prostitution, domestic servitude, debt bondage or other slavery-like practices”.

Some religious groups, as well as feminist organizations, have campaigned to broaden the definition of trafficking to include all forms of prostitution, whether forced or voluntary, on grounds that prostitution is never truly voluntary and that traffickers will simply force their victims to claim to be acting voluntarily.

In 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on Transnational Crime, including a Protocol on Trafficking. A Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography was signed by the United States July 2000 (Miko and Park 2002).

TRAFFICKING WITHIN ASIA

Asian victims sometimes trafficked from Asia to Asian countries, in particular to Thailand, Japan, India, Taiwan and Pakistan (UN 2004). The US Department of State estimates that 600,000 to 800,000 women and children are trafficked for sexual purposes across international borders each year, of which about 80% are women and 50% are minors. Also International Labor Organization (ILO) estimated that about 12.3 million people trafficked worldwide for labor annually and the annual profit made from the exploitation of all trafficked and forced labor is about \$31.7 billion (US Department of State 2006).

In South Asia, Bangladesh and Nepal are the countries that face the brunt of global child and women trafficking. From Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan, a high number of women being trafficked mainly to India, Eastern Europe and Middle East for commercial sex and maid service works. In south Asian countries the demand of women and girls is more than male.

Chinese, Asian, Mexican, Central American, Russian and other former Soviet Union gangs are among the major traffickers of people. Chinese and Vietnamese Triads, the Japanese Yakuza, South American drug cartels, the Italian mafia, and Russian gangs increasingly interact with local networks to provide transportation, safe houses, local contacts, and documentation (Miko and Park 2002).

It is estimated in 1995 that approximately 45,000 Nepalese girls arrive in the brothels of Mumbai and approximately 40,000 in brothels of Kolkata every year (Women's Groups in Nepal 1995). In Mumbai, children as young as 9 years old are bought for \$1,200 at auctions (Freidman 1996). There were about 1,000,000 Bangladeshi and more than 200,000 Burmese were trafficked women in Karachi, Pakistan (Chakraborty 2006). More than 19,000 Pakistani children have been trafficked to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) (Sinha 2006). Approximately 10,000 to 12,000 girls from rural areas of Bangladesh are trafficked and prostituted to pedophiles abroad by organized crime groups (Bedi 1997).

UNITED NATIONS AND SOUTH ASIAN POLICY OF TRAFFICKING

Trafficking in people, especially women and children, for prostitution and forced labor is one of the fastest growing areas of international criminal activity and one that is of increasing concern to the US Administration, Congress, and the international community (Miko and Park 2002).

The United Nation's former definition of a 'victim of trafficking' perceived women mostly as a group which surfaces as a variable only under specific circumstances. This has been visibly appropriate in the adaptation of the 1949 Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Persons and its further development is found in 2000. After much debate, an internationally agreed definition of human trafficking now exists in Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol. This definition focuses on exploitation of human beings, be it for sexual exploitation, or other forms of forced labor, slavery, servitude, or for the removal of human organs. As per the definition, "trafficking takes place by criminal means through the threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of positions of power or vulnerability" (DeStefano 2007).

After the advancement of international anti-trafficking efforts like the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (UN 2004), south Asian countries have started strengthening their constitutional laws regarding trafficking and prostitution (US Department of State 2008). Sri Lanka and Myanmar have established anti-trafficking units. Pakistan added section to combat trafficking not stated in the Sharia law. Nepal passed the Traffick in Humans (Control) Act in 1986, but it was considered ineffective due to the lack of political and judicial enforcement (Hennink and Simkhada 2004). Bangladesh has recently passed laws such as the Suppression of Violence against Women and Children Act and India has amended its Immoral Traffic Suppression Act (SITA) with the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act (PITA). Unfortunately, these laws are often enforced by penalizing the victims of violence under the charges of 'public indecency' and 'public nuisance' (Gangoli 2007).

CAUSES OF SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES VICTIM OF VIOLENCE

In South Asia it is a common deadly fate of life for millions of women and girls. Here one in every two women faces violence in her home. Violence is an inescapable reality of women's lives, as the social customs and attitudes that support violence against them are entrenched and institutionalized at all levels such as at home, family, community, society, and the state. Breaking the silence on this violence is not an easy, or even a real option for most women and to do so would threaten their lives (Mehta 2004). South Asian women suffer multiple forms of violence including domestic violence, rapes, gang rapes, dowry deaths, sexual harassment, and suicides due to domestic physical and mental tortures or stigma after rape, forced marriage, trafficking, and other psychological and financial oppressions (Mohajan 2012). Women and girls are sometimes underestimated by keeping in purda (special dress to cover the body), deprive from education and do not allow for jobs. So that violence against women is consider as a normal situation by the society (Farouk 2005). South Asian countries show a patriarchal culture at different levels in society including caste, class, and extreme gender discriminations. Gender discrimination begins at the primary level of education where parents invest in the education of boys over girls. This is because men's wages in the labor market are historically higher than women's. Gender discrimination is observed more in families living below the poverty line as they have to make choices when resources are scarce (Dollar and Gatti 1999). In most cultures, a son is preferred, and daughters are often a liability to the natal family as a result of societal customs like dowry and arranged marriages. Poor parents prefer to marry their daughters off to strangers who make less or no monetary demands, thus making them more vulnerable to trafficking (D'Cunha 2002). Also, in economically backward regions of Nepal, due to the economic limitations parents often sell their daughters to traffickers for small income (CATW 2003). Young girls are commonly married off to elderly men. Similarly, the girls from ethnic minorities and lower caste groups are more at risk of trafficking (Ejalu 2006). Some cases pre-natal female fetus' are killed by abortion when parents confirm by ultrasonography that their coming baby will be female. This is because the parents feel the female as a burden of the family (Mohajan 2012).

UNDP (2003) exposes how women in this region remain deeply vulnerable and disadvantaged; indicators for literacy, health, economic activities, work burden, empowerment, and political participation are among the lowest in the world. A recent World Bank regional brief for South Asia reinforces the message that women are in crisis; stating that 56% of South Asian women are illiterate, and one third of all maternal deaths in the world occur here (Mohajan 2012).

Married women in South Asia are not full aware of their own sexual and reproductive rights, and have only limited control over their own bodies. A woman's freedom of choice regarding sexual intercourse, birth control, pregnancy, pre-natal care, and abortion are decided by her husband and his family members. A man sometimes intercourse with his wife against her opinion and she is a passive participant to satisfy her husband only. Sometimes he threats his wife of taking second wife if she does not take part of intercourse according to his wish. Often there is a pressure from the husband's family for the wife to male offspring. Hence sometimes a young woman might begin conceiving at a very early age and endure several consecutive pregnancies in the hope of a male offspring

and if she fails to give a male child then physical and psychological oppressions begin upon her (Mohajan 2012).

India, Pakistan and Malaysia are well-known for hosting a number of illegal Bangladeshi migrants including those smuggled and trafficked from Bangladesh. These countries are also well-known for their use as transit countries by the illegal Bangladeshi migrants and their smugglers and traffickers (Mehdi 2010).

LEGAL AND ILLEGAL MIGRATION IN ASIA

Human beings have always been on the move and their migration due to a variety of factors including wars, conflicts, violence, environmental hazards, hunger, disease, indignity and quest for a better future have been both voluntary and forced and regulated and unregulated. Traffickers advertise the phony jobs, as well as marriage opportunities abroad in local newspapers, and the men and women from poorer families are the victim of these false promises.

There are many causes for human trafficking and some of them are as follows (Sarker and Panday 2006):

- chronic poverty,
- increase number of parentless street and working children,
- false hope of employment and marriage without dowry,
- the insecurity of basic needs and civic facilities,
- marital closing in terms of abandonment, separation and divorce of the women,
- unemployment and rapid growing need of cheap labor in the international market,
- natural disaster and displacement of people,
- increased activity of traffickers and the entry and consolidation of organized crime syndicate in the arena of trafficking,
- corruption among the agencies responsible for enforcing law and order,
- increased tourism around the world,
- rapid growth of transport facilities, networking, paper advertising, and
- increased criminalization and brutalization of society against women and children, such as rape and acid throwing.

At present there are about 191 million international migrants worldwide. More than 700,000 people are believed to be trafficked each year worldwide; some 50,000 to the USA. The largest number of victims comes from Asia, with more than 225,000 victims each year from Southeast Asia and more than 150,000 from South Asia. More than 15,000 women and children are believed to be trafficked out of Bangladesh every year. Over 4,000 women and children from Bangladesh are trafficked to Pakistan each year. In total, more than 200,000 women are believed to have been trafficked to Pakistan.

About 7,000 Nepalese women and children are trafficked for prostitution to the Asia Pacific area, especially in Hong Kong. A non-government source reports that about 200,000 Bangladeshi women and children have been trafficked to the Middle East in the last 20 years. Some 20,000 Pakistani children are said to have been trafficked to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). India is a source, transit, and destination country, receiving women and children from Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan and sending them to Europe and the Middle East. The growth of sex tourism in this region is

one of the main contributing factors. Large-scale child prostitution occurs in many countries. Thailand, Cambodia, and the Philippines are popular travel destinations for sex tourists, including pedophiles, from Europe, North America, Japan, and Australia (Miko and Park 2002).

The former Soviet Union is now believed to be the largest new source of trafficking for prostitution and the sex industry, with over 100,000 trafficked each year from that region. An additional more than 75,000 are trafficked from Central and Eastern Europe. More than 100,000 come from Latin America and the Caribbean, and more than 50,000 victims are from Africa. Most of the victims are sent to Asia, the Middle East, Western Europe and North America (Miko and Park 2002).

The demand for the labor force will continue to grow in the coming years and decades due to globalization. On the other hand the number of countries interested in sending their labor force abroad for works. As a result, the international job market is much more competitive today than it ever was. So that the labor force reputed to be professional, hard working and dedicated and belonging to countries known for being relatively peaceful, secular, democratic and forward-looking will be preferred by the labor importing countries and demand for work force from countries known for being violent, corrupt, retrogressive and poorly governed will gradually decline. Especially the work force from the countries widely censured for not doing enough to combat and prevent illegal migration, smuggling and trafficking of their own citizens and the citizens of other countries will not be welcomed by the international job market (Mehdi 2010).

For the migration states like Bangladesh, Pakistan and India are facing challenging times but enormous opportunities for them and there is lot of space in the international job market for their labor force. Being hugely labor surplus and poor countries, they aspire to export more work forces to earn more remittances and reduce the level of unemployment at home. They need to provide quality training and education to their citizens and invest in the people and build up their reputation as supplier of professional, hard working, honest and cooperative labor force. They also need to establish their credentials as countries not only opposed to illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, but also as countries doing whatever they can to combat these evils (Mehdi 2010).

Pakistan is an attractive transit state concerning illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking from Bangladesh to Pakistan and the traffickers tempted to pass through Pakistan to the Gulf and the Middle East, Great Britain, USA, Canada, Malaysia and Japan. Illegal migration, smuggling and trafficking of Bangladeshi men, women and children into Pakistan are continually increasing as the Gulf and the Middle Eastern countries are allegedly having considerable demand for children (for camel races, domestic work and sexual abuse), for young girls and women (for sexual exploitation and domestic work), and for men (for slave labor) (Mehdi 2010).

The issue of illegal migration of Bangladeshis to Pakistan and their smuggling and trafficking into Pakistan or their flight through Pakistan into the adjoining countries and beyond is part of a larger issue concerning almost all the countries of the world and the entire humanity. Of course this is a part of a larger issue of human slavery, prostitution and dehumanization of the humans. But it challenges the evolving global, regional and

national human rights regimes and structures and retards the pace of humanizing and democratizing process at local and international level. It is important for both Bangladesh and Pakistan that they deal with the issue with mutual understanding, cooperation and determination, and with care, empathy and creativity (Mehdi 2010).

Japan is the largest market for Asian women trafficked for sex, where some 150,000 non-Japanese women are involved, half are from the Philippines and 40% are from Thailand. Victims are also trafficked in increasing numbers to newly industrializing countries and regions, including Taiwan, Malaysia, Hong-Kong, and Thailand. Cross-border trafficking is prevalent in the Mekong region of Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and the Southern Yunan province of China. Vietnamese women are trafficked to China and Cambodia. According to various NGO sources, hundreds of thousands of foreign women and children have been sold into the Thai sex industry since 1990, with most coming from Myanmar, Southern China, Laos, and Vietnam. East Asia, especially Japan, is also a destination for trafficked women from Russia and Eastern Europe (Miko and Park 2002).

Victims from Southeast Asia, especially China, Burma, the Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam, are also sent to Western Europe, the United States, Australia, and the Middle East.

ILLEGAL BOARDER KILLING AND ARREST

In the recent years the illegal boarder killing increases alarmingly. About 390 persons were killed in the year 2008 and 417 in 2009 to cross the US-Mexican border and about 705,022 persons were arrested while trying to cross the border illegally (The Daily Jang 2010). At least 920 migrants died when trying to reach Europe between 1992 and 1997 and more than 4,000 had killed between 1992 and 2003. Most of them died while crossing the Strait of Gibraltar. Estimates of the death toll range from 3,861 to 5,607 in the last fifteen years (Jimenez 2009). It is estimated that, during the last 12 years, over 4,000 migrants died crossing the wall that separates Mexico from the United States, which is 15 times more the number of people who died crossing the Berlin Wall during the 28 years it existed (International Federation for Human Rights, FIDH 2008).

Human rights violations by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) at border areas continued between January and September 2011. BSF abduct farmers at work in the fields by intruding into Bangladesh territory. On 7 January 2011, a 15-year old girl, Felani Khatun, was shot and killed by the BSF while she was entering Bangladesh from India, near the international pillar 947 of the Anantapur border in Phulbari Upazila under Kurigram district. Her body was left hanging from the wire fence for 5 hours. The BSF took down Felani's body after the 5 hours and handed her over to BGB after 30 hours. According to information gathered by Odhikar, since January to September 2011, along the India-Bangladesh border, the BSF allegedly killed 21 and injured 51 Bangladeshis (Odhikar 2011).

Over the past 10 years Indian security forces have killed about 1,000 people, mostly Bangladeshis, turning the border area into a South Asian killing fields (The Guardian 2011).

TRAFFICKING OF BANGLADESHI WOMEN AND CHILDREN

In Bangladesh trafficking becomes an importance issue regionally, nationally and internationally. There is well organized channel of trafficking in women and children constituted by the traffickers of Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Middle East. Bangladesh is a poor developing country in the world, the density of population is very high, most of the populations are illiterate, natural disaster is recurrent, gender inequality prevails in every society, erosion of river bank due to over flood make shelter less women and girls. The traditional social structure, economic system, cultural condition and geographical setting of Bangladesh are vulnerable. As a result Bangladeshi women and children become easy victim of human traffickers. Easily crossable boarder with India which extends over 4,222 km is one of the contributing factors for trafficking in women and children to India. The women are generally instructed to wear a particular band or amulet on their arms for easy identification at the transit points and destinations. At the boarder, the women and girls are kept in particular houses for prearranged fees and then simply walk across fields adjunct to the border at a convenient time (Paul and Hasnath 2000). Due to monetary gain and individual sexual favors, a number of dishonest border police in Bangladesh assist in carrying trafficked women across the national border (Momen 1998). Western border districts of Bangladesh, particularly Jessore and Khulna are widely used by traffickers for trafficking purposes. A small number of women are taken directly by air from Bangladesh to Middle East and European markets. Corrupt officers at the airport and travel agents are involved in issuing the documents necessary for international air travel for a specified amount of money (Sarker and Panday 2006).

About 40,000 to 50,000 young women and children are being victim of trafficking every month from Bangladesh. About 600,000 women and children per year are being victims of trafficking to India, Pakistan, Middle East, Africa (especially in Libya), Europe and the USA in search of work and they become vulnerable to exploitation and unprotected law due to their illegal status. Many of them are forced to work for extremely low wages, while other auctioned for sex work to develop tourism or forced marriage, which is often a form of slavery. The traffickers lure the poor families of the rural area of Bangladesh with the false promise of employment, marriage without dowry and better quality of life. The traffickers use the technique of illegal border crossing. The trafficking women and children are compelled to involve in sex-trade with the probability of HIV/AIDS infection, domestic work, harmful industrial work, debt bondage labor, forced marriage, forced begging, camel jockeying, adoption trade and sometimes trafficked victims are killed for organ harvesting.

The illegal trafficking of Bangladeshi women have started for the first time when the large scale migration of both male and female laborers to the Middle East commenced in 1976. In 1981, a presidential order was announced, allowing only professional women to migrate. An organization of migrant workers in Kuwait together with an Islamic organization in Bangladesh forced the government to stop the migration of women. They argued that women's honor could only be protected if women were not allowed to leave their families, their communities and their home (Sarker and Panday 2006). Many women who legally entered in the Middle East prior to 1982 face the ill-treatment and offensive

behavior included overburden, whipping, dishonor, insufficient food, sexual persecution and rape (Hossain 1993, Paul and Hasnath 2000).

The trafficking strangely and instinctively exaggerated in early 1982, when the government of Bangladesh in response to the problems generally faced by maids employed there, passed protective legislation to dissuade the migration of women workers to the Middle East.

Anti-Trafficking Policies of the Government

Bangladesh government accepted to the UN Optional Protocol to the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. The government has promulgated a numbers of laws and formulated policies to prevent trafficking in women and children. The Suppression of Immoral Trafficking Act of 1993 provides stringent penalties for forcing a girl into prostitution. The Children Act of 1974 and 1993, seek to protect children from exploitative and hazardous conditions. The Anti-Terrorism Ordinance of 1992 makes all types of terrorism including the abduction of women and children a punishable offence. The Penal Code of 1860 contains strict provisions and penalties for kidnapping. The Women and Children Repression Prevention Act of 1995, which was replaced by the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act of 2000, act specifies that trafficking a woman for prostitution or unlawful or immoral purposes or import or export or buying or selling or renting or engaging in any other form of transportation of women is a subject to life imprisonment and fine. Kidnapping a woman for illegal or immoral purposes such as prostitution, non-consensual marriage or forced or falsely enticed coitus is an offence punishable by life punishment, 10 years rigorous punishment and fine. Illegally importing, exporting, buying or selling a child, keeping a child or transferring a child to another is subject to the death penalty or life imprisonment. However, enforcement of these laws is weak, especially in rural areas. The government also has enacted laws specifically prohibiting certain forms of discrimination against women, including the Anti-Dowry Prohibition Act of 1980, the Cruelty to Women Law of 1983 (Sarker and Panday 2006).

Bangladesh government has introduced National Action Plan in consultation with NGOs which gives priority in 14 ministries and divisions under initiative of The Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. Besides, UN Task Force in Bangladesh, UNAIDS in Bangladesh, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), ILO-IPEC supports NGO program, International Organization of Migration (IOM), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and World Health Organization (WHO) are involved for combating the trafficking of women and children. Many international NGOs such as, Save the Children Alliance, The Asia Foundation, Plan International, Action Aid, etc are working against human trafficking. In addition, some major INGOs and donor organizations such as Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), OXFAM, CEDPA, Population Council, United States Agency for International Development

(USAID), Red Barnet, Trafficking Watch Bangladesh, etc. are involved in anti-trafficking programs (UNIFEM 2003, Sarker and Panday 2006).

The government of Bangladesh established a Police Monitoring Cell at the Police Headquarters in 2004. Its functions include collection of information and intelligence regarding human trafficking specially trafficking in women and children, and the monitoring of the movement of criminals involved in human trafficking, arrest of criminals, rescue/recovery of trafficked persons, assisting in prosecuting relevant cases, rehabilitation of trafficked persons and subsequent follow up, and regularly following up the progress of disposal of such cases. The Monitoring Cell at the Police Headquarters maintains the database of cases related to trafficking. A monitoring unit has been formed in each of the 64 district headquarters and it sends updated statistics to the police headquarters (Bangladesh Country Report 2007).

The Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), the Bangladesh Police, the Bangladesh Coast Guard and also the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) have been given strict instructions to prevent any trafficking in women and children, and apprehend the traffickers. 407 traffickers have been arrested since 15 June 2004 to 15 February 2007 and in this connection, 373 cases were instituted in different police station (Bangladesh Country Report 2007).

A monthly meeting is held regularly in the Ministry of Home Affairs with the representatives of the US Mission in Bangladesh wherein updated information is given on different aspects of the problem and ideas are exchanged. The US Mission officials have also attended inter-ministerial meetings and the meeting with the NGOs to see the working of such committees. As a result of the endeavors so made, Bangladesh was cited as a positive example in combating trafficking in persons in two hearings before the US Congress. Again in an interim assessment report prepared recently by the US State Department, it has been mentioned that Bangladesh has made clear and significant progress in combating trafficking in persons (Bangladesh Country Report 2007).

Rehabilitation/Reintegration of Recovered Persons

The members of law enforcing agencies, the Deputy Commissioners, the Superintends of Police and NGOs have been tasked to rehabilitate the recovered trafficked persons through social reintegration process. The recovered trafficked persons are rehabilitated in the following two ways, (i) the trafficked persons are sent to their parents or guardian after due verification and proper documentation and (ii) if parents or guardians are not found immediately, the trafficked persons are sent to the nearest government or NGO-run safe homes (shelter). Some initiatives have been taken by respective GO / NGO in their safe homes for the welfare of the trafficked persons, while waiting for the reintegration with their family/society. These are physical and mental treatment, psychosocial counseling, shelter, food, clothing, and legal aid, training on skills development for economic and social reintegration. Of the recovered victims during 15 June 2004 to 15 February 2007, 484 persons were rehabilitated by being sent to their parents and guardians after proper verification and documentation, 11 persons were sent to the safe homes of the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, and 39 persons were sent to the safe homes of NGOs (Bangladesh Country Report 2007).

Repatriation and Social Integration of Bangladeshi Children Involved in Camel Racing in UAE

Through lobby and advocacy by human rights organization, NGOs, civil society and the government of source countries, the UAE government finally banned the use of children younger than 14 years of age or below 45 kg as camel jockey since March 2005. As a result, huge number of children under 14 years of age or below 45 kg who had so long been used as camel jockeys were released from forced and harmful job. The government of Bangladesh, with the technical support of UNICEF and financial support of the government of the UAE, has taken necessary steps to repatriate and integrate the Bangladeshi children used as camel jockey within agreed time frame ([Bangladesh Country Report 2007](#)).

TRAFFICKING OF NEPALESE WOMEN AND GIRLS

In South Asia, Nepal is in the top position in victim of global child and women trafficking. Every year about 10,000 Nepalese women are trafficked to India's four main cities, Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi and Bangalore for bondage based commercial sex. About 6,000 Nepalese girls are trafficked to Hong Kong, Thailand and the South East Asian countries as far as away as Taiwan and about 7,000 Nepalese girls being trafficked to the Middle East. The 2009, Trafficking in Persons Report provided an estimate of 10,000 to 15,000 Nepali women and girls are trafficked to India each year ([US Department of State 2009](#)). The traffickers collect women and girls (whose age are between 9 and 16 years) from the isolated districts Sindhupalchowk, Makwanpur, Dhading and Kavre of Nepal where the populations are largely illiterate, poor and a highly infected of HIV ([Prasai 2008](#)). More than 200,000 Nepalese girls are involved in the Indian sex trade. A girl is bought for \$20 and later on sold or re-sold to Indian sex market agents for up to \$600, the price of the girl is increased based on her beauty, physique and the demand for her type of services ([Nepal/India News 1997](#)). In the brothels the girls often have to serve offering commercial sex to 15 to 25 customers daily against their will and they often have to work 14 to 18 hours a day for which they find nothing. Even these girls find no proper food and treatment. The victims are only abandoned when they become infected with HIV. In February 1996, total 218 Nepalese girls rescued by a Mumbai police raid, and 60-70% of them were found HIV positive. Many poor Nepali men sell their young wives and daughters for \$150 each to the trafficking agents and some highly poor families even booked their daughters in advanced to the trafficking agents. Nepal has a unique cultural system known as 'Deukis' where by rich zamindars (feudalistic agricultural families) having no children through a legally married wife, procure young girls from poor rural Nepalese families and after initiating them into the household through the temple rites are taken as mistresses cum slave bonded laborers to produce offspring. Later on, as the girl gets to be over 30 years and grows older, she is forced into prostitution. These Nepalese women have no right to take any action against this oppression. Even the government of Nepal does not take steps to protect this illegal law, although this is a violation of human right. Global action is needed to halt these Nepalese women oppressions. In 2007

according to a UN report, there were nearly 30,000 deukis in Nepal compared to 1992, when there were 17,000 deuki girls according to [Radhika Coomaraswamy \(2002\)](#).

It has been stated by various Indian NGOs that the girls often were locked up, starved, beaten, and burnt with cigarettes for not complying with the brothel owner or the customers' needs. Sometimes girls are forced to take special training by showing pornographic films, tutorials in how to please customers, and adjust with repeated rapes. About 1,740 mile-long open border between India and Nepal affords easy commercial flexibility for sex transactions which also includes primarily trafficking of Nepalese women and girls. Sometimes victims are brought into destination countries, their passports are often confiscated ([Miko and Park 2002](#)).

TRAFFICKING WITHIN INDIA

In India in the third century girls born in poorer families had been offered by the parents to the service of the God and their religion and they have to dance and act as prostitute. In south India, they are known as *Devadas*' and in north India as *Mukhies*. During the Mughal Empire, the Muslim rulers brought these dancers to courtyards and recognized prostitution as a profession which flourished under royal patronage. After the downfall of the Mughal Empire, these dancing and singing girls turned into prostitution. The situation of dancing women worsened during the British regime. These dancing girls were termed *Nautch* girls and they were used to prostitution for both Indian customers and the refreshment of British troops ([Joardar 1984](#)).

The number of girls trafficked alarmingly in India from rural areas to urban cities of India like Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi ([United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF 2003](#)). Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh are the high-supply zones for women in prostitution in India. Belgaum, Bijapur, and Kolhapur are some common districts from which women migrate to cities due to socio-economic forces or through an organized trafficking network. Goa is a famous tourist destination in west India; about 2,000 girls have been engaged in prostitution along the Baina beach for high income in Goa. The bordering districts of Maharashtra and Karnataka, known as the Devadasi Belt, have trafficking structures operating at various levels. Many of the *Devadasis* are found in brothels and dance bars of India who are dedicated into prostitution by their families in the name of the goddess *Yellamma* ([Menon 1998](#)).

Women born into a Bedia family remain unmarried and they engage in prostitution in order to provide for the economic needs of their natal family. This practice has been going on for many generations ([Agrawal 2008](#)). But the Indian government has not taken any strong step to ban this crime against women.

Eunuch Lane in Mumbai has more than 2,000 eunuchs (male prostitutes) in prostitution. As young boys, they are abandoned or sold by their families to sex rings and taken into the jungle, where a so-called 'priest' cuts off their genitals in a ceremony called *nirvana*. Due to societal discrimination, they generally survive by begging and prostituting. There is a common belief among Indian men that they cannot contract HIV from eunuchs ([Freidman 1996](#)).

Kolkata is the center of prostitution employing over 10,000 prostitutes in the red light district of Sonaghachi. The girls from poorer Indian villages work as prostitutes here. The

Bangladeshi girls are also trafficked here through gangs for the prostitution here (Gayen et al. 2004). According to International Organization for Migration's (IOM's) report for 2008 is that almost half of all migrants are women (49.6%), with only slightly more working in the developed than in the developing countries (IOM 2008).

The important host countries in Asia are Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand. There is a high proportion of migrants in the labor force of these countries, in Singapore (28%) and in Malaysia (16%). Many of the foreign workers in these countries are from Bangladesh and Pakistan. South Asia is another Asian region where there is a large concentration of migrant workers, refugees, illegal migrants and smuggled and trafficked people. Among the countries of the region, India and Pakistan together host a large number of such people (Battistella 2007).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this paper we have discussed that trafficking activities are increasing both nationally and globally. A large number of women and children in Asia are victim of violation of basic human rights. The governments of Asian countries, NGOs, INGOs and Civil Society Organizations are working together to eliminate human trafficking from the society. The governments of all countries of the world will have to pass strict laws to punish the criminals such a way that this crime will abolish in future. Actually migration due to globalization increases human trafficking worldwide. We have shown that poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, social statuses are the main cause of trafficking of women and children. Campaigns on awareness about human trafficking should be building to those areas where migration rates are risky and high. Social workers will have to teach about bad effects of trafficking to the common people so that they may remain away from trafficking and migrate in legal way.

REFERENCES

- Agrawal, A. (2008), *Chaste Wives and Prostitute Sisters: Patriarchy and Prostitution among the Bedias of India*, New Delhi: Routledge.
- Bangladesh Country Report (2007), *On Combating Trafficking in Women and Children Ministry of Home Affairs*, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Battistella, G. (2007), Migration without Borders: A Long Way to go in the Asian Region. Antoine Pecoud and Paul De Guchteneire (eds), *Migration Without Borders: Essays on the Free Movements of People*, Paris: 199-219.
- Bedi, R. (1997), Bid to Protect Children as Sex Tourism Spreads. *London's Daily Telegraph*, August 23.
- Chakraborty, I. (2006), *Trafficking Our Children: A Brief Situational Analysis on the Trend of Migration, Child Marriage, and Trafficking in Eight Districts of West Bengal*. Kolkata: Sanlaap.
- Coalition against Trafficking in Women (CATW), (2003), *CATW Report 2003*.
- Coomaraswamy, R. (2002), *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence, on the Violence of Women, its Causes and Consequences*, Presented to the 58th United Nations General Assembly, New York: United Nations.

- Mohajan, H.K. (2012), Human Trafficking in Asia: A Heinous Crime Against Humanity, *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Studies*, 2(1): 29–41.
- D’Cunha, J. (2002), *Trafficking in Persons: A Gender and Rights Perspective*. Expert Group Meeting on “Trafficking in Women and Girls,” Glen Cove, New York.
- DeStefano, A.M. (2007), *The War on Human Trafficking: U.S. Policy Assessed*, Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Dollar, D. and Gatti, R. (1999), *Gender Inequality. Income, and Growth: Are Good Times Good for Women?* World Bank.
- Ejalu, W.A.E. (2006), From Home to Hell: The Telling Story of an African Woman’s Journey and Stay in Europe. In K. Beeks & D. Amir (Eds.), *Trafficking and the Global Sex Industry* (pp. 165-186). Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Farouk, S. A. (2005), Violence against Women: A Statistical Overview, Challenges and Gaps in Data Collection and Methodology and Approaches for Overcoming them: UN Division for the Advanced of Women.
- FIDH (2008), United States-Mexico Walls, Abuses, and Deaths at the Borders Flagrant Violations of the Rights of Undocumented Migrants on their Way to the United States.
- Friedman, R. I. (1996), India’s Shame. *Nation*, 262(14), 11.
- Gangoli, G. (2007), *Indian Feminisms: Law, Patriarchies and Violence in India*. Hampshire, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Gayen, S.; Chowdhury, D.; Saha, N. and Debnath, R. (2004), Durbar’s (DMSC) Position on Trafficking and the Formation of Self Regulatory Board. *15th International Conference on AIDS*, Bangkok, Thailand.
- Hennink, M. and Simkhada, P. (2004), Sex Trafficking in Nepal: Context and Process. *Opportunities and Choices Paper* No. 11.
- Hossain, H. (1993), Foreign Domestic Workers: NGOs Perspectives, *Development*, 1: 41- 45.
- Hughes, D.M. (2000), The ‘Natasha’ Trade: The Transnational Sex Trafficking, *National Institute of Justice Journal*, 246: 8-15.
- IOM (2008), *World Migration 2008: Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy*, Geneva.
- Jimenez, M. (2009), Humanitarian Crisis: Migrant Deaths at the US-Mexico Border, *Mexico’s National Commission of Human Rights*, ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties.
- Joardar, B. (1984), *Prostitution in Historical and Modern Perspectives*. New Delhi: Inter-India Publications.
- Mehdi, S.S. (2010), Illegal Migration, Human Smuggling and Trafficking: From Bangladesh to Pakistan and Beyond.
- Mehta, M. (2004), Towards Ending Violence against Women in South Asia, Oxfam Briefing Paper No. 66.
- Menon, M. (1998), *Women in India’s Trafficking Belt*. <http://www.twinside.org/sg/title/belt-on.htm>

- Mohajan, H.K. (2012), Human Trafficking in Asia: A Heinous Crime Against Humanity, *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Studies*, 2(1): 29–41.
- Miko, F. T. and Park, G. (2002), Trafficking in Women and Children: The U.S. and International Response, CRS Report for Congress, Order Code RL30545.
- Mohajan (2012), Are Bangladeshi Women Enjoying Human Rights Properly? , Brown Walker Press, USA, (Submitted).
- Nepal/India News, 27 January 1997.
- Odhikar (2011), Nine Month's Human Rights Monitoring Report, Bangladesh.
- Paul, B.K. and Hasnath, S.A. (2000), Trafficking in Bangladeshi Women and Girls, *Geographical Review*, 90(2): 268-276.
- Prasai, S.B. (2008), Call for Global Action to Halt Nepalese Women and Girls Trafficking (*Unpublished Manuscript*).
- Sarkar, S. (2011), Engendering Trafficking and Human Security: A Comparative Study of India and Hungary, *International Journal of Development Research and Quantitatives Techniques*, 1(2): 25-42.
- Sarker, P.C. and Panday, P.K. (2006), Trafficking in Women and Children in Bangladesh: A National Issue in Global Perspective, *Asian Journal of Social Policy*, 2(2): 1-13.
- Sinha, I. (2006), *Paper on Globalization & Human Rights*. Sanlaap, India.
- The Daily Jang, Karachi, 7 May 2010.
- The Guardian Co. UK (2011), India's Shoot-to-kill Policy on the Bangladesh Border, Sunday 23 January 2011.
- Ugur, M. (2007), The Ethics, Economics and Governance of Free Movement: *Migration Without Borders*: 65-95.
- UNICEF (2003), End Child Exploitation: Stop the Traffic!
- United Nations (2004), *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*. New York.
- United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) South Asia (2003), *Say No To Gender Based Violence, Responses from South Asia*, New Delhi: UNIFEM.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report (2003), *Millennium Development Goals: A Compact among Nations to End Human Poverty*, New York, Oxford University Press.
- US Department of State (2006), *Trafficking in Persons Report*, Washington, DC.
- US Department of State (2008), *Trafficking in persons report 2008*. Washington DC.
- US Department of State (2009), *Trafficking in persons*. Washington, DC.

Mohajan, H.K. (2012), Human Trafficking in Asia: A Heinous Crime Against Humanity, *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Studies*, 2(1): 29–41.

Women's Groups in Nepal (1995), *Trafficking in Women and Children: The Cases of Bangladesh*. Unnayan Bikalper Nitinirdharoni Gobeshona (UBINIG) (Policy Research for Development Alternatives) Dhaka, Bangladesh.