Human Trafficking as Socio Economic Problem: A Comparative Study of Developing Countries

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Abstract—Human Trafficking has become an evil of modern society. It is commercial trade of human beings, who are subjected to involuntary acts such as begging, prostitution or forced labour. It involves an act of recruiting, transporting or receiving a person through the use of force or coercion, for purpose of exploiting him or her. Every year, thousands of men, women and children fall into the hands of traffickers, in different countries of world. In 2005, a study was conducted by National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC) after receiving alarming reports about the rise of human trafficking and found that India was fast becoming a source, transit point and destination for traffickers of women and children for sexual and non-sexual purposes. Human trafficking is illegal trade of human lives for the purposes of commercial, sexual exploitation or forced labour. The poverty, hunger, backwardness and illiteracy make the persons particularly children and women belonging to the poor sections of the society highly vulnerable to human trafficking. Social, cultural and religious practices too have been a big cause. Human trafficking is a crime that strips people of their rights, ruins their dreams, and robs them of their dignity. It is a crime that shames us all. Human trafficking is a global problem and no country is immune. Millions of victims are entrapped and exploited every year in this modern form of slavery. This paper mainly focuses on international mechanism to control human trafficking. My paper analyses the root causes of the problem of human trafficking in Asian and African countries and conclude some suggestions to tackle this socio-economic problem. It is necessary to take some urgent steps so that human rights of every human being can be protected. State governments should make efforts to enhance the family income of poor sections. Minimum one person of the family should be employed permanently in a public or private concern. There is also urgent need of creating awareness among the masses about human trafficking and media also can play very effective role in this regard.

Keywords—Human Trafficking as Socio Economic Problem: A Comparative Study of Developing Countries.

I. INTRODUCTION

Human Trafficking has become an evil of modern society. It is commercial trade of human beings, who are subjected to involuntary acts such as begging, prostitution or forced labour. It involves an act of recruiting, transporting or receiving a person through the use of force or coercion, for purpose of exploiting him or her. Human trafficking is a global problem and no country is immune, but developing countries are seriously affected as source or destination countries or a combination of both. Human trafficking is illegal trade of human lives for the purposes of commercial, sexual exploitation, forced labour. The poverty, hunger, backwardness and illiteracy make the persons particularly children and women belonging to the poor sections of the society highly vulnerable to human trafficking. Social, cultural and religious practices too have been a big cause. Millions of victims are entrapped and exploited every year in this modern form of slavery. Men, women and children are all being trafficked. However, the most vulnerable groups, those with limited rights or protections, have been the hardest hit. Disproportionately, trafficking affects poor women, children and members of disadvantaged minority groups. We can say that human trafficking is a crime that shames us all as it strips people of their rights, ruins their dreams, and robs them of their dignity.

II. THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING:

The Human Trafficking is one of the most horrific issues for international community. It is disrespect and disregard of human dignity. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), as guardian of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the Protocols thereto, assists States in their efforts to implement the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children. The Trafficking Protocol is the first and legally binding instrument at international level. To date, it has been signed by 117 countries and ratified by 154 countries. The 2000 UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children defines human trafficking as “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 includes, 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.”[2] In addition to this, the Trafficking in Persons...
Protocol requires criminalization also of: Attempts to commit a trafficking offence, Participation as an accomplice in such an offence and Organizing or directing others to commit trafficking.

III. REASONS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING:
The poverty, hunger and lack of employment opportunities are the root cause of human trafficking. Political instability, militancy, civil unrest, internal conflict and natural disaster are other reasons that increase human trafficking. Due to bigger family size and lack of care and protection, abject poverty sometimes forces parents to sell their children to traffickers.[3] Desertion by one or the other parent, uncare for or abandoned children are often trafficked due their vulnerable conditions.[4]The lack of legitimate and fulfilling employment opportunities particularly in rural communities and male unemployment and loss of family income puts pressure on women to earn and support the family.[5] In its January 2009 global employment report, the ILO said the economic crisis is causing dramatic increases in the numbers of unemployed, working poor, and those in vulnerable employment. If the crisis continues, more than 200 million workers, mostly in developing economies, could be pushed into extreme poverty.[6]The traffickers often take advantage of these economic hardships faced by the women and children and victimize them. Social stigma associated with single, divorced, widowed, sexually abused women and young girls is a major contributing factor to push them in this hell. The unwillingness of the society to accept them as an integral part leads to frustration, isolation and with no support system to provide them security, they fall a prey to the traffickers. Frustrated with their lives, many victims of sexual abuse are more vulnerable to becoming victims or to involving themselves with the trafficking activities.[7]

IV. HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES:
Every year, thousands of men, women and children fall into the hands of traffickers, in different countries of world. The UNICEF estimates that more than 300,000 children under 18 are currently being exploited in more than 30 armed conflicts worldwide. While the majority of child soldiers are between the ages of 15 and 18, some are as young as 7 or 8 years of age. [8] The sexual exploitation of women and children in the Middle East involves the import of women from other regions. The exploitation of Middle Eastern women and children tends to have less of a commercial dimension. Women and children, mostly from Asia (Thailand, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Philippines) are trafficked as prostitutes, brides, camel jockeys, and domestic help to the Middle East. Victims from South East Asia, especially China, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam are also sent to Western Europe, United States, Australia and the Middle East. In south Asia, the US Department of State estimates that some 1,50,000 victims are trafficked annually.[9]Sri Lanka and India are the favoured destinations of sex tourists from other parts of the world. Bangladesh and Nepal serve as the supply zone whereas India and Pakistan serve as destination countries. Women from the former Soviet Union are sent to Israel. According to Israel Women's Network, every year well-organized criminal groups bring several hundred to 2,000 women from Russian and the former Soviet Union to Israel. [10] Human Trafficking is a serious problem in Nepal. Mainly young girls and women are trafficked for sexual exploitation in places such as cabin/dance restaurants. Nepali women and children are trafficked to India, the Middle East, and other areas such as Malaysia and forced to become prostitutes, domestic servants, beggars, factory workers, mine workers, circus performers, child soldiers, and others. [11]Sex trafficking is particularly rampant within Nepal and to India, with as many as 5,000-10,000 women and girls trafficked to India alone each year. [12] Girls and women are subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour in other Asian destinations includes Malaysia, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates and other Gulf states. Even experts believe that China also becoming an emerging hub for Nepali victims.[13]In addition, there is no immigration control for Nepalese migrating to India or Indians coming in Nepal under the 1950 Peace and Friendship Treaty between India and Nepal. [14] India is also a transit country for Nepalese and Bangladeshi women trafficked to Pakistan, Western Asia, and the Middle East.

In 2005, a study was conducted by National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC) after receiving alarming reports about the rise of human trafficking and found that India was fast becoming a source, transit point and destination for traffickers of women and children for sexual and non-sexual purposes. The benefits of development and advance policies of government have not trickled down to the marginalised sections of the society and millions of people still live below the poverty line. The Constitution of India strictly prohibits the trafficking of human beings in the territory of India.[15]The Government of India penalises trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation through the Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act (ITPA) Prescribes penalties- ranging from seven years’ to life imprisonment — are sufficiently stringent and commensurate with those for other grave crimes. India also prohibits bonded and forced labour through the Bonded Labour Abolition Act, the Child Labour Act, and the Juvenile Justice Act. Sections 366(A) and 372 of the Indian Penal Code, prohibit kidnapping and selling minors into prostitution respectively, to arrest traffickers. Penalties under these provisions are a maximum of ten years’ imprisonment and a fine. But unfortunately, there is lack of effective enforcement agencies to implement the law, when it comes to dealing with human trafficking.

V. CONCLUSION
No doubt, Human Trafficking is a socio economic problematic issue as inequalities, health, poverty, lack of employment opportunities, gender based discrimination and violence, caste, ethnicity and social marginalization, lack of
education, unsafe migration, weak governance and legal framework, internally displaced women and children, etc., States should adopt effective victim protection mechanism. States must adopt a multi-disciplinary and coordinated approach that focuses on preventing trafficking, punishing the perpetrators and protecting, rehabilitating and reintegrating the victims. Civil society can also provide with information to governments and assist in prevention and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking and their families. States should encourage gender sensitization and education on equal footing between in sexes so that violence against women can be prevented. It should be enhance job and business opportunities for women at global level. A strong and effective network States is required for better implementation of the prevention, protection and rehabilitation schemes and policies of governments.

REFERENCES
[4] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Supra note, 6
[14] Ibid.
[15] Article 3 of the Constitution of India