

Trafficking and Child Sex Booms in South Asia

There are one-fifth population in the world lived in South Asian region. Poverty is one of the main problems in this region. Most of them earn in here less than a dollar a day. Several studies have shown that girl children and women bear a disproportionately large burden of the deprivation and exploitation resulting from such poverty related issues. The number of women living in poverty and the number of women headed households living below the poverty-line have increased over the last decade, impacting significantly on the wellbeing and human security of children, often leading to situations of trafficking.

Day by day South Asia is increasing women and girls being trafficked into the sex trade; the average age of girls trafficked from Bangladesh and Nepal into India has fallen over the past decade from 10-15 years to 16-18 years. Trafficking is by and large a gendered phenomenon. The majority of trafficking in India, happens for the purpose of commercial sex work, and over 60 percent of those trafficked into sex work are adolescent girls in the age-group of 12-16 years.

Women and girls trafficked to India are at high risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, It is estimated that half of the girls in Mumbai brothels who are under the age of 18 years have been infected with HIV. Although without being trafficking, every day many people cross border movement take place both officially and also illegally. Due to reason of that great chance to spread out HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi girls and women are trafficked to India in maximum number from these districts of Bangladesh such as Kushtia, Jessore, Rajshahi and even from other district. India shares 4,222 kilometres of border with 28 districts of Bangladesh, most of it open with rivers running across. So, Bangladeshi trafficking groups have been able to build up powerful bases in the border districts of India in West Bengal and Assam, to the north and west, and these are now favorite transit points of trafficked women.

It is not just the problem of girls, little boys and women trafficking to India even they are trafficked with in Bangladesh form the villages to the city area promising them a better life and indulging them in different activates. These little boys and girls are involved in home bounded labour, child labor, pick pocketing, illegal drug selling, criminal activities, Thieving, commercial sexual exploitation or unfair jobs etc. India is the major market of trafficking as people from most of the countries are trafficked. Bangladesh is a big market of these trafficked victims. Even it is known as the sex tourist area as lots of European, Middle-East and American come to India as sex tourist. India has thousands of children in its sex-trade centers.

Commercial sex workers (CSWs) – as a group – are an important driver of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. As has been shown in very recent research involving repatriated CSWs in Nepal, many of the CSWs who have been trafficked are at a significantly higher risk than “average” women of contracting HIV. A survey conducted by Rainbow Nari O Shishu Kallyan Foundation at Goalondo Brothel in Rajbari district in Bangladesh, this study

points out that almost 53% of sex workers enter the profession before the age of 20 years, and 30% enter between 20 to 25 years of age, and some of them have been entangled through instigation of traffickers.

As the pandemic spreads wider, the link between trafficking and HIV is emerging stronger than ever before. With South Asia recording the fastest growing rates of new HIV infections, the nexus of poverty, HIV, and the trafficking of girls within and across borders is creating ever-widening circles of insecurity that disproportionately threaten the lives of girls and further impoverish the poor through sickness, loss of livelihood and rejection by society. The epidemic is severely undermining human security and posing serious threats to the health and socioeconomic sector and overall development of the region.



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