

Initiatives by Government of Jharkhand to Control Trafficking of Girls - A New Consciousness

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Trafficking of girls from Jharkhand has become a major concern for the state government. To put an end to this, the state department of welfare rescued 94 girls from metropolis in 2011. Migration and trafficking are related to lack of education, ignorance and basic amenities, which result in exploitation of women, especially tribal women.

Administration is also responsible for increased trafficking as this issue is not prioritized enough. The geographic condition of Jharkhand is such that it forms an easy transit point for trafficking. Jharkhand forms a triangle with Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa on three sides with large markets. Women of Jharkhand are trafficked for various reasons and not specifically for prostitution, unlike in Andhra Pradesh that has the highest rate of trafficking for prostitution. Here they are trafficked for labour purposes but are also vulnerable to sexual as well as physical exploitation.

What is needed to be done is to monitor migration of tribal women and minors, which is presently not done. In most cases, women go traceless after moving outside their state. Parents also play an important role in the exploitation because they, too, have vested interest. They do not verify anything beforehand and depend blindly on the middlemen who take them out for work. Mostly women and girls go out with the men or women who are from their own village.

Chief minister Arjun Munda said that the government would soon come out with a state women's policy — the draft for which was prepared in 2006. We have already created bodies such as a state women's commission and state human rights commission to assist the masses," he said, adding, "A women's policy and child rights protection commission will also be in place soon."

The main objectives of the paper is to advocate for minimizing cases of tribal female migration and trafficking.

- To change perception of people regarding the same and
- To develop international understanding of the problem and to suggest collaborative action/ intervention plan to prevent or minimize migration and trafficking in developing countries.

Situation of Female child Migration in Jharkhand

A growing number of tribal female child and young girls from Jharkhand are being trafficked, lured by promises of employment and marriage to Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, West Bengal and Mharashtra. The girls are promised to good jobs by touts but they are end up as domestic helper, bonded agricultural laborers and brick kiln labour.

Migration is a compulsion and curse. It is occasioned out of complete lack of sources of livelihood. It doesn't lead to a better fortune for most of the girls going out of their homes but dark lanes where they are forever lost, where their lives end as victim of sexual exploitation in various ways and they fall prey to sexual exploitation in the brothels or outside the brothels(Sharma2009).

As reported by Abhijeet Mukherjee of The Telegraph ,Ranchi, April 27, following case study and discussions by NGO representatives in a workshop highlights the situation of trafficking in Jharkhand.: Sheila (named changed) from a small village in West Singhbhum, was an ordinary girl with an ordinary life till she was lured out of her home with false promises of employment and sold off to a brothel in Mumbai.

Fortunately, Sheila was rescued and her trafficker arrested. Sheila was later transferred to a Calcutta-based NGO called Sanlaap. Today, she is back in her home state, travelling with Sanlaap and attending a workshop, "Trafficking-transported lives and aborted souls".

The workshop, held in State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), was organised by Hyderabad-based NGO Centre for World Solidarity. It focuses mainly on the capacity building of different NGOs and would highlight on the various aspects of preventive, proactive and active campaigns that include awareness, formation of committees to stop

trafficking and implement registration of migrating workers from other states.

Participating NGOs in the workshop plan to submit their findings to the government.

Sheila, and women like her, will be provided vocational training so that they can fetch a job for themselves and also provide counselling. Sheila was here to get information about the laws about trafficking. Indrani Sinha, director of Sanlaap, speaking on the occasion highlighted on the risk of exploitation that minors and other women face while seeking work outside their own states. Many are sold off to brothels, especially in large metros like Delhi and Mumbai, for commercial sexual exploitation.

"This is because metros have an organised network of gangs which provides an opportunity for lucrative flesh-trade. Four recent cases of trafficking from Jharkhand have come to our notice lately. Rescued girls are minor, ignorant and illiterate. People they know and trust are usually responsible for their plight," she added.

"Migration and trafficking are related to lack of education, ignorance and basic amenities, which result in exploitation of women, especially tribal women. Administration is also responsible for increased trafficking as this issue is not prioritised enough," said Harleen Walia, moderator of CWS.

"The geographic condition of Jharkhand is such that it forms an easy transit point for trafficking. Jharkhand forms a triangle with Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa on three sides with large markets. Women of Jharkhand are trafficked for various reasons and not specifically for prostitution, unlike in Andhra Pradesh that has the highest rate of trafficking for prostitution. Here they are trafficked for labour purposes but are also vulnerable to sexual as well as physical exploitation. Often their organs are sold in the market," added Walia.

"What we are trying to do is to monitor migration of tribal women and minors, which is presently not done. In most cases, women go traceless after moving outside their state. Parents also play an important role in the exploitation because they, too, have vested interest. They do not verify anything beforehand and depend blindly on the middlemen

who take them out for work. Mostly women and girls go out with the men or women who are from their own village," said Poonam Sharma convenor of Jharkhand Anti Trafficking Network (JATN).

Indian laws that protect rights of migrants

- Emigration ammendment bill, 2002(to ammend the Emigration act,1983
- Emigration act 1983
- Emigration Rules 1983
- Foreign marriage act,1969
- Inter state Migrant workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of service)Act,1979

Unsafe migration –

Human smuggling, Trafficking and CSE, Organ trade, Bonded labour etc.

- Every year thousands of young people in Jharkhand become victims of human trafficking.
- Youth who are victims of trafficking are recruited, transported, and exploited by criminals, known as traffickers.
- There are several traffickers involved in the trafficking of a young person. Traffickers establish businesses such as employment agencies, entertainment companies, or marriage agencies which they use to recruit their victims.
- The traffickers recruit unsuspecting young women and men with deceptive promises of well-paying jobs, education etc.
- This has been established facts by various newspaper reports(annexture- slides).
- Massive mass-awareness through public meetings and policy advocacy needed.

Welfare of migrant population-

To ensure safer migration with special focus on reducing vulnerability of migrant workers to HIV/AIDS

The issue of migrant workers' vulnerability to HIV can no longer be pigeon holed there is a need for an integrated response.

Activities

- Need based surveys to identify issues leading to vulnerability of migrant workers to HIV.
- Awareness campaigns for community to reduce their vulnerability to HIV.
- To provide information to the community on different aspects of migration and safe behaviour, so that migrants can make informed choices.
- To initiate information campaigns on HIV, through effective media (Radio, TV, Street drama, News letter and through community workshops.)
- To develop modules/manuals for training programmes. The manuals should cover all aspects of migration Pre-departure, departure and post-arrival, plus information on STDs/HIV/AIDS

Advocacy with- There is an emergent need for advocacy with the followings to address the trafficking issue in Jharkhand.

- Govt ministries- Labour, Foreign, Health
- Trade Unions
- Civil Society
- Recruiting agencies
- Much work through various NGOs under JHARKHAND AIDS CONTROL SOCIETY are working with NACO toolkits for awareness generation for prevention of aids but migration has just recently drawn attention of the chief secretary of state. Further policy making and intervention will take time to start.

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- The Chief Minister of Jharkhand Mr. Arjun Munda said that ,the police as well as NGOs should be sensitised about the unsafe nexus between migration and trafficking as a first step towards curbing the problem.
- He pointed out that 58 per cent of panchayat election winners were women, who outperformed men right from the post of ward member to zilla parishad chairman. “This is a positive sign. Social organisations should now empower these leaders to be agents of change to tackle problems of exploitation and abuse of women,” he said.
- The administration, including the police, also had an important role to play. “The police”, Munda added, “needs to put in extra efforts to fast track cases and complaints registered by the masses so that they gain confidence in the law and order mechanism.”
- What is needed to be done is to monitor migration of tribal women and minors, which is presently not done. In most cases, women go traceless after moving outside their state. Parents also play an important role in the exploitation because they, too, have vested interest. They do not verify anything beforehand and depend blindly on the middlemen who take them out for work. Mostly women and girls go out with the men or women who are from their own village.
- Chief minister Arjun Munda said that the government would soon come out with a state women’s policy — the draft for which was prepared in 2006. We have already created bodies such as a state women’s commission and state human rights commission to assist the masses,” he said, adding, “A women’s policy and child rights protection commission will also be in place soon.”
- Commissioner of the Labour department Aradhana Patnaik said, "They are not in a normal mental state when they are rescued from prolonged sexual exploitation in cities like Kolkata and Delhi." Therefore, a two-pronged strategy has been adopted to help the young women come to terms with their demons. "After rescuing trafficked girls we send them to schools run by the National Child Labour Project or Sarva Siksha Abhiyan where focus is given to rehabilitation," Patnaik said. "We send them

to other schools too. Recently we sent 50 of them to the NCLP," she said. She said awareness should be built up by panchayat pradhans, while it was no less important for parents to understand the dangers of placing their daughters in the hands of people whose antecedents they were not fully aware of. "Some of the girls and children are sent to the Nari Niketan and given vocational training to make them self-reliant," she said. Many of the girls and women have shown talent in drawing, painting and poetry.

- "The paintings will be sent to the International Labour Organisation," Patnaik said.
- Trafficked girls also faced the problem of stigma with some parents not willing to take them back. "Despite sincere efforts to convince families to accept their daughters back some have refused to do so. But we have not given up. We hope ultimately to convince them to take them back," he said. Fifty young trafficked women are now working as security guards at a government-run school here and some corporate houses after the CRPF offered to train them, giving them a chance to start life afresh.
- "Over 50 young women were given security training by the CRPF at Burmu in Ranchi district," Sanjay Kumar Mishra, state Coordinator of Action against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Women, said. Most of the women have now found employment as security guards at the government-run Kasturba Girls School while some corporate houses have also engaged them in their projects, he said.
- Besides these 50 women, many other trafficked girls in the state have now have a better life after undergoing training. 19-year-old Sahita, who was lured to Delhi on the promise of a job and made to work for hours as a domestic help, has now a better life after being rehabilitated as a housekeeper in a hotel here in Jharkhand's capital.
- "Despite sincere efforts to convince families to accept their daughters back some have refused to do so. But we have not given up. We hope ultimately to convince them to take them back," he said. (Mukesh 2010)

What is needed?

In order to effectively respond to the situation there is a need to look at the issue of migration in an integrated fashion by-

- Using anthropological knowledge in understanding linkages between migration, trafficking and vulnerability to HIV

- Focusing on illegal and undocumented migrants
- Facilitating respect for human rights, human dignity and security of migrants.
- Securing just and humane condition of work
- Ensuring access to quality health care
- Freedom of movement
- Preventing exploitation of migrant workers.
- Strengthen understanding and arrive at action.

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