

## **Role of media in addressing child trafficking: A case study of the state of Chhattisgarh**

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Child trafficking is a crime which involves movement of children so as to exploit them. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000 defined : *child trafficking as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, of abuse of power, 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, prostitution, other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.*(1)

Competing representations of child trafficking in the media and within the movement have contributed to a general confusion of public perceptions of child trafficking as a social phenomenon. Various activist and political groups have, over the years have classified child trafficking into a series of categories or needs i.e into child marriage , Sexual abuse, cheap labour needs and Religious prostitution .

The lack of holistic understanding and awareness of the problems are the greatest challenge to an intervention on child trafficking. It is due to this lack of awareness the relevant estimates are unavailable. We feel strongly for a complete legal framework to be formed. There are number of international , national and regional level programs which different governments are being worked for the needful.

As the eyes, ears and voices of the public, drawing attention to abuses of child trafficking media has always helped in setting the agenda in the society for a particular issue. Media can help encourage governments and civil society organizations to combat child trafficking. Journalists, photographers and programmers frequently expose the plight of children caught up in circumstances beyond their control, or abused or exploited by adults. By providing children and young people with opportunities to speak for themselves - about their hopes and fears, their achievements, and the impact of adult behavior on their lives - media can remind the public that children deserve to be respected as individual human beings.

The media have a large role to play in mobilizing public support and involvement to help prevent and combat trafficking. Owing to their reach and their ability to mould public opinion, they are a powerful tool of social change. Investigative journalism on trafficking needs to be promoted. By writing an article or broadcasting an item focusing on trafficking in persons, the media not only educate the public but also shine light on an issue typically shrouded in darkness. Responsible scrutiny by international media can be the difference between a trafficker being released or imprisoned. However, in some parts of the world, journalists and media outlets are not adequately aware of the trafficking phenomenon or do not have sufficient understanding of the dimensions of the problem. As a result, some media coverage confuses the issue with others, such as migrant smuggling. Media publicity should take into consideration the rights-based approach and ensure that there is no violation of the rights of victims and survivors.

In the 21st century, human trafficking has become a truly global problem on an unexpected scale. Due to its tendency to double treatment, human trafficking has gradually been further referred to as "current conquest", which has prompted a rapid increase in laws against human trafficking enemies at the global, provincial, and public levels. Encourage countries to give huge amounts of currency and administrative assets to eliminate them. In the past ten years, the number of human trafficking has increased, but the exact number is unknown; it is probably the most valuable criminal exchange, close to guns, and a well-coordinated thug attempting to smuggle drugs. A report by Rajnath Singh of Human Trafficking in Chhattisgarh on Thursday night showed that Chhattisgarh contributed 0.84%

of the participation rate in 68 cases announced in 2016, while the state ranked twelfth in terms of number of cases , It depends on the rhythm of identifiable violations. Therefore, there were 51 detailed PM cases in 2016, accounting for 0.63% of the total. In any case, the report shows that the number of people accused is very small, but 193 people were arrested under Article 370 of the IPC, of which only 46 were charged with zero convictions. Of the 68 detailed cases, there were only 17 defendants. The number of MPs being prosecuted is much smaller, only 6 of 170 traffickers were arrested, and no one was charged in 2016. In exposing the motives behind human trafficking in Chhattisgarh, the report revealed 191 detailed cases of “restriction on work” and 41 cases of sexual abuse or prostitution. 1 case of restricted marriage and 31 cases of land governance were investigated and dealt with. The state also recorded 96 cases of trafficking for the purpose of child pornography. The maintenance of these records depends on the information gathered from hostile human trafficking units in each state and the interpretation of the records of victims and expropriations. Among those who dealt with the deputies were 120 people and 97 minors. The NCRB explained that if there are protected persons, the number may be greater than the number processed because it may include the number of persons processed in previous years. In fact, while 135 men and 130 women were exempt from trafficking in persons in 2016, the number of women under 18 years of age prosecuted was 76, higher than the 54 of women over 18 years of age. The data shows that there are more boys over 18 years old than boys. Chhattisgarh has 60 boys under 60 and 75 boys over 18 years old.

CID Supplementary Police Chief RK Vj said: “Since Chhattisgarh introduced the Chhattisgarh Private Placement Agency (Supervision Act), the number of human trafficking cases has plummeted, and when the person cannot be traced for a long time, the trafficking situation has been explained in detail, and the case has moved quickly. Go to the anti-trafficking unit to speed up interaction. In addition, the number of protection personnel increased last year, and the Women and Children Welfare Office was better designated jointly. The Women and Children SAARC countries collectively welcomed children in Kathmandu on January 5, 2002. The purpose of the convention is to promote cooperation among member states so that they can manage the prevention, suppression and concealment of different parts of trafficking in women and children in a feasible way; return home and restore survivors of trafficking and prevent prostitution organizations around the world Women and children are used in China, especially when the countries in the SAARC region are the countries of the starting point, journey, and destination. In terms of the number of trafficking in women and youth, Chhattisgarh ranks among the top five in the country. In addition, a new review by the (UNODC) found that the state government’s strong resistance to human trafficking would only undermine the situation. Ravi Kant,

SC’s legal adviser and the main creator of the report, visited Chhattisgarh during the research period and revealed to TOI that “Middle supports the dynamics of helping the country deal with problems, but its implementation at the state level is extremely slow. ...”. “Women and youth advocacy service agencies allocated 390 million rupees to the government child assistance program, including anti-trafficking units, government child assistance committees, specialized youth police units, which cover families, treat victims,” recovery programs and many more, But these are usually still underutilized,” he pointed out. In fact, even the Project Approval Board (PAB) objected to reimbursement of the cost of the Comprehensive Child Protection Program (ICPS) to the state in February 2013 because it incorrectly stated that The purpose specified by the government of Tisgarh for the settlement of currency records.

So far, the public authorities have not launched a victim compensation program. According to a report from the Office of Drugs and Crime, in this program, victims receiving treatment must immediately receive assistance of 50,000 rupees and subsequent 300,000 rupees before receiving compensation . The report warned that without a legal child welfare committee and institutional insurance measures for women and children, the situation will remain severe. In 2011, 20 women were protected and transferred to Gujaspur. Nearly 50 cases have been registered, but the most important evidence is still the victim's unwillingness to open the case.

The ‘State of 36 forts’ (hence the name in Hindi) is densely populated and has the highest poverty rate in the country. According to government data released in 2014, 47.9% of the people in Chhattisgarh are below the poverty line. There are 765 villages in the Jashpur district of Chattisgarh. Jashpur’s 7,43,160 population accounts for almost 72% of SCST, which is of no avail. These marginal communities make a living by cultivating small plots of land, doing temporary work or selling forest products. According to a survey conducted by UNICEF and local self-help groups in the state, in 2012/14, a large number of underage girls were trafficked from the Raigarh-Sarguja-Jaspur



corridor. In addition to Chhattisgarh, children are also trafficked from Andhra Pradesh. The state travels to West Bengal, Chennai, Mumbai and Delhi via national highways. Although the exact number of trafficked children is difficult to determine, the growth of informal placement agencies that attract girls due to limited opportunities in the state is one indicator. The call to make a fortune in immigrant cities is, in relative terms, the desire of many children. They are the most susceptible to the temptation of the employment agencies and their defenders, who seduce them with false promises of employment in the big city. Most of these street vendors are also close relatives of trafficked children. These street vendors have a certain degree of credibility because they come from the local community, not from complete strangers. There is a clear demand and a supply chain that thrives mainly due to strong collusion between local agents / vendors and resettlement agencies. Resettlement agencies have offices in large cities. Most of the trafficked children (most of them are girls) eventually settled down, according to the UNICEF research report. The report added that although many trafficked children began their displaced lives as domestic servants, a considerable number of them eventually became sex slaves. Once girl is removed from the district, it becomes very difficult to locate her, because the intermediary agency often changes the agency's name and mobile phone number. is in contradiction with the UNICEF figure. According to PN Tiwari, he is a special service officer of the CID of the Chhattisgarh Police Department. Between 2011 and 2016, only 265 cases of human trafficking were reported, of which 192 cases related to child trafficking, the police have been able to arrest 536 traffickers (agents and owners of intermediary agencies) throughout the state in the last five years. According to the National Criminal Records Bureau (NCRB) report, nationwide in 2014, human trafficking in India increased by 38.7% compared to 2013. The total number of registered cases nationwide increased from 3,940 in 2013 to 5,466 in 2014. Obviously, national agencies across the country have failed or are failing in the fight against human trafficking

As the world continues to transform digitally, internet technologies are increasingly being used for the facilitation of trafficking in persons. With the rise of new technologies, some traffickers have adapted their modus operandi for cyberspace by integrating technology and taking advantage of digital platforms to advertise, recruit and exploit victims. Everyday digital platforms are used by traffickers to advertise deceptive job offers and to market exploitative services to potential paying customers. Victims are recruited through social media, with traffickers taking advantage of publicly available personal information and the anonymity of online spaces to contact victims. Patterns of exploitation have been transformed by digital platforms, as webcams and livestreams have created new forms of exploitation and reduced the need for transportation and transfer of victims. With the help of the internet, traffickers have learnt to adapt their strategies to effectively target specific victims, by actively 'hunting' those who they deem as vulnerable to falling victim to trafficking, or passively 'fishing' for potential victims by posting advertisements and waiting for potential victims to respond. To analyze these new emerging patterns, UNODC has gathered the narratives of 79 court cases of trafficking containing an element of internet technology. Some of these cases were directly collected by UNODC to produce the Global Report. Others were collected from the UNODC Case Law Database, Sherlock, to expand the information at the base of this analysis.<sup>340 339</sup> The initial findings of the research were reviewed at an Expert Group Meeting hosted by UNODC in Vienna on 25-27 November 2019. The meeting gathered practitioners, experts and academics to review the overall approach, verify findings and discuss additional perspectives. <sup>340</sup> The research is based on court material gathered by UNODC since 2012, which has been compiled into a Court Case Database. Out of the 489 cases included in the database, 45 were selected based on the criterion of containing an element of internet usage in the narrative. In order to expand the evidence base, an additional 34 cases from the UNODC 'SHERLOC' Case Law database were included in the analysis of this Chapter. In total, the final dataset comprises information from 79 cases of trafficking in persons reporting the use of internet during the criminal offence. The cases involved a total of 491 victims and covers more than 30 national jurisdictions. The dataset provides sex and age-specific information on a subset of cases. In total, the dataset provides information on 26 boys, 65 girls, 287 women and 41 men. In selected cases, full transcripts have been identified and analyzed, which is referenced in the foot notes where relevant. The following chapter presents an analysis of the collected court cases, illustrating how internet technologies are applied by traffickers to perpetrate their crimes in the digital age. Digital platforms and markets: The use of technology to advertise, recruit and exploit Among the cases collected by UNODC for this thematic chapter, the first which reports the use of internet dates to 2004.



Internet technologies also play a role in the exploitation of victims. The internet can be used to broadcast or livestream acts of exploitation, reaching a large base of consumers in different locations throughout different regions of the world. In one case, a group of traffickers organized and managed a “cybersex den” to exploit victims through coerced performances in front of webcams. The four male traffickers coerced 21 female victims into ‘cybersex’, harbouring them in an apartment where some rooms were used for dance performances. The performances were livestreamed, reaching paying costumers all over the world.<sup>356</sup> Other court cases describe forms of trafficking that involve child sexual abuse ‘on demand’. One court case reported by Norwegian authorities, for example, reported one male trafficker who was found guilty of forcing children, both girls and boys, into sexual performances, which were livestreamed over Skype.<sup>357</sup> Similar cases have been detected in other countries, but not necessarily prosecuted as trafficking, rather as sexual assault or rape.<sup>358</sup> The internet can also be used to traffic victims to exploit them into the commission of crime. One court case describes how a group of traffickers successfully recruited people with the purpose of coercing them to commit identity theft and data fraud.<sup>359</sup> The victims were kept in an abandoned building and forced to live under inhumane conditions.

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