Introduction

Trafficking in persons, the darkest episode of population mobility, has been widely considered as a major human security issue today. Increasingly, people from the poor families are being forced to this new form of human slavery and the trade of human dignity. Human trafficking has been used to denote a wide range of human rights abuses and crimes that combine the recruitment, movement and sale of people into an exploitative condition. While recognition of its persistence and impact on society has increased over recent years, it is not a new phenomenon rather it continues as a set of activities and effects that is hard to put a figure on. Some forms of human trafficking have existed for thousands of years, while others take advantage of opportunities presented by emerging economic niches.

In Bangladesh, human trafficking has gone to an acute condition. Governments, though endowed huge effort, failed evidently to control the trafficking in persons in the country. Activities of the NGOs and Multilateral agencies are also limited to the function of awareness building and advocacy. The complicity of the government with the trafficking nexus has added much doubt whether the government is abundantly willing to address the issue, while the US Department of state included Bangladesh in its trafficking watchlist in the 2 tier ranking that poses the threat of sanctions upon Bangladesh, if the country fails to improve the trafficking condition by next year. Therefore, re-positioning the trafficking as a human security threat would enable practitioners and policymakers to approach this issue more holistically and to ban and combat the practice.

Defining Human Trafficking

Trafficking in persons should be viewed in the context of a wide range of actions and outcomes that involve several stages ranging from the organization of the supply of people vulnerable to exploitation and harm, the process of movement to the demand for the service or labour of trafficked person. For traffickers, the process is a systematic, well-organized economic phenomenon, involving the displacement and movement of persons solely to profit directly or indirectly from the exploitation of the trafficked person’s labor. Many definitions have been offered to articulate the human trafficking problem. The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons defines trafficking as follows:

“Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring 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. On the South Asian regional level, trafficking has also been defined as “the moving, selling or buying of women and children for prostitution within and outside a country for monetary or other considerations with or without the consent of the person subjected to trafficking”. The Bangladesh Counter Trafficking Thematic Group led by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs has developed a working definition specific to Bangladesh that identifies trafficking in persons as a situation where a person no longer has control over some elements of their life for a given period of time. The elements involve:

- The type of work they do (their livelihood);
- The work environment and the working conditions;
- Freedom of movement in the context of this work situation.

Human Trafficking as a Security Issue

The world, its nations, people and environment all face newer threats and challenges from time to time. Accordingly, leaving apart the traditional notions of security, ‘trafficking in persons’ has become one of the nontraditional security issues in the recent decades, mostly due to the unprecedented scale of this phenomenon.

Human Trafficking in Bangladesh

Bangladesh, a small developing country of South Asia, contains the seventh largest population in the world. In 2011, its population stood at 158.5 million. Limited natural resources, underdeveloped industrialization along with natural disasters such as floods, droughts and cyclones cursed the population mobility and human trafficking is one of the inadvertent consequences thereof. However, trafficking is getting in an acute condition in Bangladesh. Although exact figures on...
the scope of the problem vary widely, the consensus is that the trafficking problem is growing rapidly. Though the history of women and child trafficking from Bangladesh goes back to the early 50's when camel race and 'jockey' gained momentum in the Middle East countries, in the course of time, this criminal business has taken an alarming proportion, women and children are being trafficked out of Bangladesh to various countries predominantly in India, Pakistan and the Middle Eastern countries.  

**Volume and Statistics of Human Trafficking**

The volume of persons trafficked in Bangladesh is getting increasingly further. Due to the clandestine nature of trafficking and rare prosecutions, crime statistics presents a very low estimate of the incidence of human trafficking. Consequently figures are estimated and tend to be quoted and cross-quoted in all literature. There is no reliable data concerning women and children who have been trafficked from Bangladesh to other countries. Estimates regarding the number of women and children being trafficked are not only difficult to collect, but also different sources cite wildly different figures. A reported 200,000 Bangladeshi women and children have been taken out of the country in the past 10 years. At least 20,000 Bangladeshi women and children are trafficked to India and Pakistan and to Middle Eastern countries every year. According to another estimate, 50,000 Bangladeshi girls are trafficked to or through India every year.

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA), in a study undertaken in 1997 cited the numbers of children being trafficked as follows:

i. 300,000 Bangladesh children work in the brothels of India 4,700 children were rescued from traffickers in the past five years;

ii. 4,500 women and children are trafficked to Pakistan yearly (SAARC & UNICEF);

iii. 1,000 child trafficking cases were documented in the Bangladeshi media press during the year 1990 to 1992; and

iv. 69 children were reported being rescued at the border during a three months study in 1995.

A UNESCO-sponsored study conducted early in 2000 reveals that some 30,000 women were taken from Bangladesh and sold over the last decade. But the actual figure is probably higher than official figures, because many cases go unreported. The study of the Center for Women and Child Studies (CWCS) to determine the magnitude and trend of the problem, a mapping exercise of missing, kidnapped and trafficked children and women from Bangladesh revealed that throughout 1990, the number of trafficked children was 37, the trend increased until 1997, when the total was 927.

More than 14,000 Bangladeshi women are working as maids and domestics outside of the country. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) indicate that more than 40,000 women from Bangladesh are working in the Gulf States alone. Centre for Women and Children Studies in Dhaka, Bangladesh, specifically on Bangladeshi boys, found that during the 1990s, 1,683 boys were victims of trafficking. Domestically, it is estimated that there are between 10,000–29,0090 children in prostitution in Bangladesh.

**Table 2: Human Trafficking Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Persons Trafficked</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Mode of Exploitation</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15,000 women and children</td>
<td>Every year</td>
<td>India, Pakistan</td>
<td>Sexual abuses, forced labor</td>
<td>“Boys, rescued in India while being smuggled to become jockeys in camel races”, <a href="http://www.elsiglo.com">www.elsiglo.com</a>, 19 February 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 children and women</td>
<td>February 1998</td>
<td>Indian shelters</td>
<td>Sexual abuses</td>
<td>“Boys, rescued in India while being smuggled to become jockeys in camel races”, <a href="http://www.elsiglo.com">www.elsiglo.com</a>, 19 February 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27,000 women and children</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Indian brothels</td>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>Centre for Women and Children Studies reports, &quot;Women Forced into Indian Brothels&quot;, June 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000 women+6,000 children</td>
<td>1990 to 1997</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Sexual abuses, Camel Jockeys, Child labor, Domestic servitude</td>
<td>Centre for Women and Children's Study report, Zahirudduzaman Faruque, &quot;Women, children trafficking in Bangladesh,&quot; Kyodo, 5 May 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000 girls</td>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>Pakistan, India and the Middle East</td>
<td>sex industry</td>
<td>Tabibul Islam, “Rape of Minors Worry Parents”, Inter Press Service, 8 April, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 women and children</td>
<td>each day</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>“Human Smuggling fromBangladesh at alarming level”, Reuters, 26 may 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4500 women and children</td>
<td>Each year</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Sexual abuses, Domestic servitude</td>
<td>Bangladesh CEDAW Report, 1 April 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000 women</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Calcutta, India</td>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>“Human Smuggling fromBangladesh at alarming level”, Reuters, 26 may 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000 children</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Bombay and Goa India</td>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>Trafficking Watch Bangladesh, &quot;Human Smuggling fromBangladesh at alarming level&quot;, Reuters, 26 may 1997</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Factbook on Global Sexual Exploitation, Bangladesh.
However, contemporary data on human trafficking is hardly found, because of both the clandestine and illegal nature of trafficking as well the lack of current research on the issue. Form the crime statistics based on the number of registered cases from 2001 to 2010, we found a figure that is much smaller than the original number of trafficked persons in these years.

Table 3: Number of registered cases for human trafficking and some other related crimes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL</th>
<th>Name of Offense</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>817</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Child Abuse</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>967</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>1093</td>
<td>1542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>3654</td>
<td>3959</td>
<td>3883</td>
<td>3356</td>
<td>3270</td>
<td>2991</td>
<td>4439</td>
<td>4552</td>
<td>3456</td>
<td>3101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Smuggling</td>
<td>3076</td>
<td>4746</td>
<td>4499</td>
<td>4182</td>
<td>4334</td>
<td>4734</td>
<td>5202</td>
<td>7962</td>
<td>7817</td>
<td>6363</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Website, Bangladesh Police

Causes of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is not an automated phenomenon; instead it is a response to a wide range of driving forces. The socio-economic edifice of Bangladesh, like any other country, has colligated this cursed practice as a new form of slave trade intended primarily for sex industry or forced labor. Some of the issues that impel human trading are discussed below in brief.

Actor-Factor Nexus: the Trafficking Chain

The trafficking process operates through chains of events, actors and factors. The nexus between demand side actors-factors and supply side actors-factors forms the chain. While globalization, rise of sex industry, forced and illegal, migration child labor and the demand for women in domestic services stimulate employers to recruit trafficked labours, traffickers and criminal network exploit the demand by supplying the vulnerable people mostly young women and children since the victims are compelled to take dangerous decision due to their economic and family hardship or being deceived by the recruiting agents.

Push Pull Factor

Human trafficking in an actual term is a response to a combination some push and some pull factors. While push factors force the victims to walk on the street of vulnerabilities to trafficking and create trafficking like environment, pull factors usually offer false promises and illusions leading to the exploitative condition at the end. On the micro level, urge to escape economic hardship and abusive home environment, gender discrimination and social exclusion, dysfunctional family or stepparents, social acceptance of child labour and early marriages, and so on push people to be trafficked either willingly or forcibly. On the other hand, fake promises of jobs or marriage by the traffickers, illusion of a better life in the cities and

Table 4: Actor-Factor Nexus in Human Trafficking Chain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nexus</th>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demand side</td>
<td>Employers (sex industry, forced labour, domestic work, child labour), consumers of prostitution and child labor</td>
<td>Globalization, rise of sex industry, migration (forced, illegal), child labor and the demand for women in domestic services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply side</td>
<td>Traffickers, criminal network, third party (middle man), victims themselves, victim’s family and neighbours</td>
<td>Dysfunctional family, abuse, poverty, illegal cross-country migration, or marriage natural calamity, conflicts and war</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 2: Push-pull factor in Human Trafficking
human trafficking. macro-factors such as the impacts of globalization, employment, trade and migration policies and conflicts and environmental disasters, rise of sex industry and sex tourism, demands for exploitable labor in harsh and criminal working sectors and development induced risks can put into motion to the circumstances that increase vulnerabilities.

**Poverty, Inequality and Discrimination**

Poverty, social inequality and deep rooted discrimination particularly against women are the most commonly identified factors to the trafficking process. Who are living under extreme poverty, the promise of a better life, no matter how unrealistic, is worth the risk. Poverty provides traffickers with people who have no alternatives for survival; impoverished and desperate who trust the offers of work or marriage abroad, which ultimately lead them to be exploited through trafficking. A UNICEF report revealed that most of the guardians of trafficked women and children are landless, and of them 45 percents are farmers and 16 percent day-labourers while the remaining are small traders. Similarly, income disparities between regions, countries or job opportunities encourage people out to exploitation.

In addition, gender discrimination and the feminization of poverty are primarily responsible for the massive women trafficking. Deeply rooted discrimination and low status of women within Bangladesh society excluded them from development opportunities disproportionately. They experience poverty more intensely than men as they have fewer assets such as skills, education or resources to remove themselves from these situations, and the incidence of poverty is higher for women which makes them at high risk of being trafficked.

**Economic Motive**

Human trafficking has become a profitable industry. Its high-profit, low-penalty-nature makes human trafficking attractive to criminal gangs. Economic benefit underlies why traffickers tend to smuggle women and children. Trafficking is a big business, primarily with respect to the utilisation of trafficked persons, rather than their actual transport. The profits from transporting and handing over trafficked individuals (to brothels, sweatshops, etc.) are shared by many—traffickers, transporters, trafficking facilitators such as shelter provider, members of criminal gang, corrupt government or security officials, and the employers of the trafficked persons. Traffickers get the price for girls is between Tk. 10,000 to Tk. 30,000 for beautiful and healthy girls; and children are bought for Tk. 7,000 to Tk. 8,000. Usually prices vary according to age, 'beauty', skin colour and virginity. According to another study, the female touts earn about 10,000 to 50,000 takas (167 to 834 dollars) for each victim while the traffickers earn anything from 50,000 to 500,000 takas (167 to 8,334 dollars) after sales. Besides, organs trade of the trafficked children and women increases the volume of profit these days.

**Poor Law and Order, Porous Border and Corruption**

The law and order situation is not at the satisfactory level in Bangladesh. There is little enforcement of the existing laws on trafficking control. Despite the existence of legislation intended to extend such protection, many of the most vulnerable are not aware of or able to access adequate protection. Only few cases of trafficking are registered with the police compared to the number of women and girls identified as missing. The expansive and porous borders between Bangladesh and India and between Bangladesh and Myanmar are conducive to the external trafficking. Official procedures for exiting and entering Bangladesh are rarely enforced and there is no specific legislation addressing cross-border trafficking. Lack of border controls and lax documentation requirements also allows traffickers to freely shuffle people across borders. Moreover, corruption and illegal bondage of the security service providers-police, customs and border guards add more layers as rather facilitator of the trafficking process. Women and children are trafficked each year from Bangladesh into bondage in India and Pakistan, often with the acquiescence or cooperation of state officials.

**Targets and Forms of Human Trafficking**

The main targets of the smugglers are teenage girls, widows, maidservants and the women abandoned by their husbands, floating women and children, slum dwellers and female garment workers and children from poor family. Street children living in the capital are among the prime targets of organized child-trafficking rings. Men are also trafficked but their portion in the total trafficking volume is relatively low and they are mostly from labour migration.
Forms of trafficking include fake marriages, sale by parents to "uncles" offering jobs, auctions to brothel owners or farmers, and abduction. Trafficking in Bangladesh exists for the purposes of sexual abuses and of forced labor. An estimated 90 percent of trafficked women were forced to engage in prostitution. Besides, some are thrust into pornography, or forced beggary through use of violence, threat of violence, or drugs. Boys in Bangladesh are abducted or taken on false pretences to work as camel jockeys in the Middle East. A significant share of Bangladesh's trafficking victims are men recruited for work overseas with fraudulent employment offers who are subsequently exploited under conditions of forced labor or debt bondage. There have been reports of trafficking in organs in Bangladesh. A group of anthropologists from the United States claim to have encountered "kidney theft" in Bangladesh.

Recruiting Agents and Origins of Victims

Recruiting agents are known as the traffickers who can be anyone involved in the recruitment and transportation of trafficked persons. Traffickers can be people known in the community including: family members, friends, neighbors, community representatives, employers, gang members or strangers. In Bangladesh trafficking is carried out by well-organized regional gangs that have links with the various law enforcement agencies. There is a close nexus between agents, smugglers, and traffickers, all agents having good rapport with the BGB, BSF and police. Traffickers take advantage of Bangladesh’s sizable borders to transport the women, often using large criminal networks and deceptive tactics to avoid detection and prosecution.

Though the local communities are not prime perpetrators of irregular migration and trafficking, they participate directly or indirectly in the processes by providing transit shelter and other services, and at the very least, remain silent observers. Those families who provide transit shelter charge anywhere between Rs 50 to Rs 500 per migrant, according to the area, condition of stay, services provided and the security situation at the border.

### Table 5: Targets of Trafficking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>Orphan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Broken Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Deprived of social recognition</td>
<td>Deprived of social recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Not beautiful</td>
<td>Absconding from home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Suppressed by husband</td>
<td>Tortured by step parents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Country Paper on "Combating Trafficking in Women and Children in Bangladesh", 2004, p.6

![Figure 3: Recruiting Agents Cycle](http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/Bangladesh_trafficking_routes.pdf)

![Map 1: Origins of Trafficking Victims](http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/Bangladesh_trafficking_routes.pdf)
Human Trafficking is the most densely populated area in the country, having three million slum dwellers with more and more people arriving everyday from the villages seeking better livelihoods. Comilla, Kurigram, Chittagong, Narayanganj and Jessore, Mymensingh and Rajshahi are also identified as common places of origin of trafficked children.

Destination, Trafficking Routes, and Transit Points

In the region of South Asia, India and Pakistan are the major two countries of destination or transit to other regions, commonly Gulf States or South East Asia for the trafficked persons from Bangladesh and Nepal, Kolkata in India being a major transit point for other destinations. Besides, Bangladeshi women and girls are trafficked to Middle East particularly Bahrain, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Bangladeshi boys are also trafficked to the UAE, Qatar, and Kuwait for forced work as camel jockeys and beggars. In addition, considerable numbers of women from Bangladesh are trafficked to Eastern Europe. People from Bangladesh go to Malaysia as illegal immigrants through Thailand as well.

Bangladesh shares 4,222 kilometers border of 28 districts with India and 288 kilometers of two districts with Myanmar. Thus, Bangladeshi touts build up powerful bases in the border districts and these are now favourite transit points of human trafficking. There are as many as 20 transit points from districts of Bangladesh bordering India through which women are smuggled out of the country. Benapole border crossing, known as the southwest transit point, is the most-commonly used and the easiest land route to India. In the northern region, the districts of Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Dinajpur, Naogaon, Chapai Nawabganj and Rajshahi and in the south Jessore and Satkhira are areas through which trafficked persons are moved to India.

There are also transit points on the other side of the Indian border where women and girl children are kept for supplying to various destinations including Pakistan, and Gulf States. Trafficking to Myanmar and then on to other destinations in South East Asia are being smuggled out and gathered in Cox’s Bazaar. Internally, women and children from

Table 6: Recruitment place, transit point and destination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Recruitment</th>
<th>Transit Point</th>
<th>Destination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bagerhat</td>
<td>Jessore, Benapal Border, Shaildia</td>
<td>India +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessore</td>
<td>Shilgacha, Kolkata, Howrah Station, Mumbai</td>
<td>India +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nator</td>
<td>Shaildia, Foutulla, Shilakia,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noakhali</td>
<td>Dhaka, Comilla, Lalmonirhat</td>
<td>India +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapai</td>
<td>Rabgopur Khatlabar, benapal Border,</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nowabganj+</td>
<td>Bongah, Shaildia, Mumbai, Delhi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shibganj+</td>
<td>Bhaki, Shaildia, Bangkok</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khulna</td>
<td>Dhaka, Kolkata, Delhi</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cox’s Bazar</td>
<td>Dhaka, Alkhad, Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhaka</td>
<td>Alkhad, Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comilla</td>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chittagong</td>
<td>Dhaka, Kuria, Bangkok</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faridpur</td>
<td>Jessore, Benapal Border, Old Delhi,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh baria</td>
<td>Dhaka, Mumbai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh baria</td>
<td>Dhaka Kamalapur, Benapal Border, Kolkata,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mumbai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Rapid Assessment on Trafficking in Children for Exploitative Employment in Bangladesh, 2002, February, p.34.


Map 2: Trafficking routs and destination in South Asia
rural areas in Bangladesh are trafficked to urban centres for commercial sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. The most advantageous route used by the traffickers is the land route followed by air and waterways. Those using the air routes usually have work permit or a false family visa to travel to the countries of the Middle East. Some of the most used trafficking routes, as identified by Bangladesh Government are:

Route 1: From Dhaka to Barisal by launch and from there to Jessore, Satkhira
Route 2: From Barisal to Benapole and other border areas via Jessore
Route 3: From Gabtoli, Dhaka to Jessore and Satkhira via Aricha
Route 4: From Gabtoli, Dhaka to Chapai Nawabgang and other border areas via Nagarbari
Route 5: From Gabtoli, Dhaka to Darshana by bus and from there to different border areas.
Route 6: From Gabtoli, Dhaka to Dinajpur and Lalmonirhat by bus and from there to different border areas.

Human Security Implications of Human Trafficking

Harm Environment: Persecution, Paranoia and Point of No Return

Trafficked victims, both in the process of trafficking and in slave-like exploitative condition, have to face immense maltreatment and threat to their lives. This is called ‘harm environment’ that exists within the victims’ perceived helplessness and lack of control over their freedom and choices. “Harm environments” that exist in brothels, exploitative workplaces, and homes that use trafficked labour usually come out from a combination of physical torture, sexual abuses, and threats of many kinds stimulating fear and sometime long term mental paranoia. Being lured, deceived, deprived of freedom and income, and compelled to engage in work against their will, victims who are trafficked painfully generally have no return to a pre-trafficked situation. Trafficked persons have often faced extreme psychological stress such as isolation, fear, sexual abuse, rape and other forms of physical and mental violence that in turn leads to trauma, depression and in some cases suicide.

There are evidence of mistreatment and torture of child camel jockeys by traffickers and their employers, including depriving them of adequate food and subjecting them to physical harm, for example by burning or beating them. The mental stress in the early age results in long term effect on their ability to live their life normally. The use of children as jockeys in camel racing is itself extremely dangerous and can result in serious injury and even death. Rescued children often experience feelings of guilt, low self-esteem and depression. These harms are both short term and long term having the enormous impact of post-traumatic stress over many years that might influence the capacity of the victim to care for her family or negotiate through future emotional challenges once the original harm has stopped.
Human Trafficking

Vulnerability of Women and Children

Trafficking is essentially a gender and age specific phenomenon; it affects particularly women and children.73 Usually, Men are smuggled or illegally transported whereas women and children are trafficked. Gender-based differences and attitudes play an important role in both the supply and demand dynamics of trafficking.74 In Bangladesh, it appears that the “worst forms” of trafficking relate to the illegal movement of women and children for the purposes of exploitation in sectors such as commercial sex work, and child labor of all forms, and the low status of women increases their vulnerability as targets of traffickers and limits their options as survivors seeking a new life.75 Most of the girls found to be trafficked were adolescent girls, since they can be easily manipulated and frightened into accepting the work, and good money can be got from their fresh youth.76 According to a survey conducted by UNICEF at 10 villages of the country 55 percent of the trafficked women are of the 17-24 age group while 25 percent are aged between 25 and 32, and 95 percent of the age groups are illiterate.77

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation is the foremost human security concern of the trafficking victims. Sexual abuses include injection with sedatives for making them unconscious for days, breaking their resistance to forced sex by means of threat, torture, rape, group rape, keeping them starve, forced drinking of liquor and verbal assault.80 Children, both girls and boys, in the trafficked state are forced to experience unsafe sex.81 For many victims, the first sexual assaults begin with the traffickers as well as border security personnel on either side of the border.82 Many of them are either raped by border security personnel or abused sexually by the agents during transit.83 In the brothels, girls as young as 10 to 14 year-old have to serve an average of 10 clients daily84 which is extremely risky to their health.

Besides, there are forced ‘marriages’ whereby women or girls are required to provide domestic labor while being held as virtual prisoners, raped continually by their ‘husbands’ and often forced to become pregnant for the purpose of providing their ‘husbands’ with children, while having no control over their own body or sexuality.85 For these children,
the gender-biased division of labor makes no other job as accessible as prostitution which makes them vulnerable to sexual abuse, reduce their choice of profession and thereby make them highly vulnerable to prostitution. Sexual infection and hemorrhage risk is very high since they practice dangerous and unhealthy ways to carry out abortion.

Chronic Diseases
Another substantial security concern derived from the exploitation of trafficked women and children is their susceptibility to chronic diseases. Women and children located in the commercial sex sector face higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other diseases. There is growing link between Aids and other sexually transmitted diseases with the sexual abuses of trafficked girls from Bangladesh in the sex industry of India and Pakistan. In the Indian brothels, the girls and women are made to entertain clients ranging from five to 20 a day; and it does not take long for them to develop various sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV/AIDS. 60 percent of the women and children rescued from the prostitution have found with HIV positive. In addition, the links between trafficking and HIV/AIDS inadvertently conveyed the message to fearful communities that all trafficked persons were infected with the disease leading to further stigmatization of all women returning to their communities. Besides, the trafficked children working as camel jockey, in most of the time, had sustained irreversible damage to both kidneys, probably from being deprived of water in order to make him lose weight.

High Economic Cost and Wage Exploitation and Family Economic Consequences
Economic losses to communities are also vital source of vulnerability induced from human trafficking. People with limited recourses are usually more prone to go abroad to earn. They have to sacrifice or sell the very last resort of their survival to manage the cost of travel, visa, work permit and the share of the brokers with the hope of a better tomorrow. They borrow money to provide these costs. But in most of the cases, they end up with deception resulting in losses of both the present means of income and the future livelihood options. Since they are poor, the cost of migration is far higher than any other segments. Besides, most often they face wage discrimination as the owners pay only little part of the amount the trafficked or enslaved persons earn either from forced labour or sexual work. What is grave is that the dependant family becomes largely impoverished due to loss of their means of income, burden of loans and discriminated wages. The situation gets direr, if the trafficked persons or illegal migrants get caught by the police and sent in prison for a long period. It breaks the entire family livelihood.

Slavery and Trade of Human Dignity
Trafficking in persons is a kind of modern slavery. It makes people particularly women and children vulnerable to be sold like commodities and to be consumed breaching their rights and freedoms. The very human dignity for which the civilization of today is fighting is under strain because of this slave trade. It denies the fundamental rights of people and their basic needs. Trafficked people are forced to live like service animal where their vulnerabilities are nothing but things of others profit and enjoyment.

Family Fragmentation and Social Incoherence
Another security concern is the drastic impact of trafficking on the key social organization that is family. The incidents of trafficking and even the forced domestic servitude by the women in most cases lead to the breakdown of family further stigmatizing and victimising women in our society. The resultant consequence is the incoherence within the social fabric and cultural irregularities breaking the bondage on which socio-economic composition depends.

National Security Perspective
Massive Trafficking, Smuggling-Crime Nexus, Destabilized Border and Threat to State Entity
Human trafficking, in addition to its human security colligation, poses substantial national security threat to Bangladesh. It constitutes a threat to national security. It is an acute condition, having a massive, uncontrolled character. Despite increasing investments from government, donors and civil society organizations, an increasing incidence of human trafficking persists. There is a growing nexus between smuggling, human trafficking and terrorism which largely affect the country’s security that appears to be very difficult to combat. The
inability of the government reflects the poor status of law and order within the country and people are losing their faith in the ability of the government to ensure public safety. The porous border of the country through which traffickers and illegal migrants pass regularly without effective control by the Border Guard of Bangladesh is another source of national insecurity.

Trans-boundary Migration, Transnational Crimes and Inter-state Conflict

The trafficking of women across into border towns of India forms one part of the larger issue of migration of Bangladeshis into India that stimulates tension in the bilateral relationship between the two countries. The Indian government conveniently overlooks the great demand that exists within its own borders for cheap labour from overpopulated and labour-surplus Bangladesh, and treats all border crossers as undocumented immigrants to be pushed back unceremoniously. The frequent claims by India on the issue of illegal migration to India and the accuse of immigrants’ involvement in transnational crimes such as terrorism fuel tension between Bangladesh and India that has potential to escalate into conflicts, if not managed effectively.

Enlisting of Bangladesh in U.S. Watchlist and Future Security Concern

Recent increase in the trafficking volume and unsatisfactory performances by the Government of Bangladesh in trafficking control put the country into the US expanded watchlist on human trafficking. The Obama administration included many new countries in the U.S. watchlist of countries suspected of not doing enough to combat human trafficking, putting more than four dozen nations on notice that they might face sanctions unless their records improve. In the State Department’s annual “Trafficking in Persons Report placed 52 countries and territories—mainly in Africa, Asia and the Middle East—on the watchlist. Several previously cited nations were removed from the list, but new countries cited for human trafficking problems include Angola, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Iraq, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, Senegal and the United Arab Emirates. Inclusion of Bangladesh on the watchlist means the governments are not fully complying with minimum standards set by U.S. law for cooperating in efforts to reduce the rise of human trafficking—a common denominator in the sex trade, coerced labor and recruitment of child soldiers. If Bangladesh appears on the list for two consecutive years, it can be subject to U.S. sanctions which can include a ban on non-humanitarian and trade-related aid and U.S. opposition to loans and credits from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

Human Trafficking Control in Bangladesh

Legal Aspect

Trafficking in people is strictly prohibited in Bangladesh. The Government also recently adopted a National Plan of Action (NPA) on the sexual exploitation of children and trafficking. The country has now some tough laws against women and child trafficking, but due to lack of awareness and cumbersome process those are hardly practised.

Special laws for combating trafficking in women and children were enacted from time to time. These laws are:

a. Cruelty to Women (Deterrent Punishment) Ordinance 1983, which contains specific penalties for trafficking in women with a provision of imprisonment that could extend up to 14 years;

b. Women and Children Repression Prevention (Special Provision) Act 1995- this contains specific penalties for trafficking in women and children with a provision for life imprisonment;

c. Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000- this contains specific punishment for trafficking in women and children with a provision for death sentence or life imprisonment; and

d. Amendment to Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2003- in this revision a child has been defined as a person of the age of 16. At present all offences relating to trafficking in women and children are tried under the Act of 2000, as mentioned up to 2003.
The Oppression of Women and Children (Special Provisions) Act 1995 and the Suppression of Violence Against Women and Children Act 2000 (which replaced the 1995 Act) both outlaw trafficking for prostitution and other forms of unlawful exploitation. These Acts provide for the punishment of trafficking with maximum penalties of life imprisonment or the death penalty. Besides, the Suppression of Immoral Trafficking Act, 1993, that provides stringent penalties for forcing a girl into prostitution and the Anti-terrorism Ordinance of 1992 that makes all types of terrorism including the abduction of women and children a punishable offence are promulgated at the national level which deal either directly with trafficking or related offences. In January 2002, Bangladesh signed the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Convention on Prevention and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.

Government Initiatives and Limitations of Its Actions

The government of Bangladesh has prioritized trafficking as one of its key social issues and pledged to combat it with urgency. Towards that end, in 2000 the Government of Bangladesh took a ground breaking step initiating a 3 year project to combat trafficking in children. As a result, a countertrafficking framework report was published to help the Bangladesh government with its future countertrafficking plan of action. The National Task Force for Anti-Child Trafficking was formed under this project. The task force is comprised of the representatives of 10 ministries and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Besides, as a part of the National Plan of Action for Children, the government established mechanisms to regularly review the situation of trafficking in people and of programs to prevent child trafficking and punish the perpetrators. What makes it difficult to implement government initiatives is that reliable data on both internal and cross border trafficking of women and children do not exist. MWCA operates support centers at six divisional levels that offer shelter and training for rehabilitation and also hosts a rehabilitation center for destitute children and a home for boys. Recently, the Government of Bangladesh through Ministry of Home Affairs has undertaken a number of measures and initiatives to deter trafficking in women and children. The measures include the establishment of a monitoring cell at the police Headquarters; screening of persons at the Airports and Land ports; training of officials like prosecutors, immigration officials, border security officials and the like; regular flow of timely and correct information from the districts to the Ministry of Home, establishment of a mechanism for recovery and repatriation of children used as camel jockeys and apprehension of traffickers; and the prosecution of officials having complicity in trafficking in women and children.

Despite efforts by the Government of Bangladesh to eliminate trafficking, the growing volume of trafficking in persons strongly indicates that legislation has not been effectively implemented to prevent the trafficking of children from Bangladesh. However, Bangladesh does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; government did not demonstrate evidence of increased efforts either to prosecute and convict labor trafficking offenders, particularly those responsible for the fraudulent recruitment of Bangladeshi workers for the purpose of forced labor overseas or to prevent the forced labor of Bangladeshi workers overseas through effective controls on high recruitment fees and other forms of fraudulent recruitment.

The Role of International Organizations and NGOs

On the non-governmental level, there have been many efforts to raise awareness and reduce trafficking volume in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh chapter of Action against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children (ATSEC) which is a coalition of 15 NGOs working in Bangladesh to prevent trafficking in children and women for sexual exploitation established a national resource center for information dissemination on trafficking issues and has worked on a program to sensitize and mobilize policy planners on the issue of trafficking in Bangladesh.

ATSEC, in March 2004, organized a daylong workshop jointly with Bangladesh Forum against Human Trafficking on anti-trafficking Issue for Media Representatives. Resource Bangladesh, an NGO, organized the Children’s Congress, a platform from which disadvantaged children can speak about the conditions of their lives.

Multi-national NGOs also have, though limited to advocacy and awareness campaign, definite role in the human trafficking control in Bangladesh. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) undertook regional technical assistance in July 2001 in India, Bangladesh, and Nepal aiming at increasing its understanding of how its existing country programs and regional policy could be used to support and strengthen anti-
human trafficking initiatives in the region. In November 2001, the Bangladeshi government and UNICEF jointly organised a 3-day South Asia Consultation for the Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. UNICEF again in September 2004, sponsored another 3-day long meeting between representatives of South Asian governments, UN agencies, and NGOs that took place in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Government of Bangladesh along with other South Asian countries signed a five-point joint statement, agreeing that children in South Asia deserve better protection from traffickers and sexual abusers. On February 8, 2004, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Dhaka, MWCA, and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation jointly organized a conference to review the Bangladeshi government’s efforts to combat trafficking in women and children that eventually resulted into a permanent task force to be established within the MWCA.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Human trafficking is becoming gradually a grave concern for human rights and security in Bangladesh. Government efforts could not prove to be effective mechanism in addressing the issue. Since trafficking in persons is both a national and human security threat, it requires a great deal of attention and actions.

To break the trafficking network and to reduce the volume of trafficking, Bangladesh is required to:

- draft and enact legislation criminalizing the forced labor of men;
- integrate anti-labor trafficking objectives into national anti-trafficking policies and programs;
- significantly increase criminal prosecutions and punishments for all forms of labor trafficking, including those involving fraudulent labor recruitment and forced child labor;
- consider establishing special courts to prosecute labor trafficking offenses;
- fortify border control particularly in the trafficking hotspot areas; establish more police checkpoints in the border areas;
- greatly improve oversight of Bangladesh’s international recruiting agencies to ensure they are not promoting practices that contribute to labor trafficking;
- provide protection services for adult male trafficking victims and victims of forced labor, including improving consular assistance in embassies abroad;
- increase awareness campaigns targeted at potential domestic and international migrants and,
- ensure that all law enforcement officials who deal with trafficking cases receive comprehensive human rights training specifically on trafficking issues.

Besides, the government has to—

- Strengthen understanding and competencies of linkages between and among mobility, human trafficking, and HIV through evidence-based research and analysis of statistical data, informing policies and programs accordingly in order to mainstream HIV issues into migration and human trafficking sectors.
- Develop mechanisms for registration of all migrant workers, including those from rural areas and crossborder points, in order to check undocumented migration and combat human trafficking.

Repositioning and reprioritizing the human trafficking in women and girl children as a human security threat so as to provide more effective and systemic elimination measures can help to escalate both governmental and nongovernmental- NGOs, international campaign to ban and combat this inhuman practice and to give the issue more international gravitas and national prioritization. Equal emphasis should be placed upon the capture and prosecution of locals, foreigners, and government officials alike, which contributes to the atmosphere of impunity. Prosecution of crimes related to violence against women, including rape, must be increased along with the stiffening of sentences for those persons convicted. We have to promote and fund more community outreach programs to educate the entire population about gender equality, human rights, violence against women, economic development, and physical security. Media should come up forward with coverage, campaign and advocacy against these slave-like exploitations.

Nongovernmental and international community should give clearer funding priorities to the issue and ensure that women and girl children receive the physical and psychological protection. In addition, more coordination is needed between the national and international humanitarian, human rights, anti-trafficking, and anti-corruption movements to avoid repetition, wasteful spending, and confusing mandates.

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