

Speech of Director, CBI in the Second International Conference on Combating Human Trafficking

Rome, 09-10 April, 2014

Human Trafficking is more or less organised crime with the grave human rights violations. It is the combination of several crimes in itself like physical, mental, sexual exploitation, debt bondage, commoditization human beings, etc.

Though, the human trafficking is distinct from illegal migration, both have certain common features whereas in human trafficking the person does not give informed consent, in illegal migration the person consent is distinct. However, an illegal immigration can be eventually trafficked.

The recent series of cases from Kerala being investigated by CBI is a clear example of human trafficking taking place in the facade of illegal migration.

Human trafficking is not being understood appropriately across the globe. However, in India, the National Human Rights Commission had undertaken a comprehensive research in 2002-04. This action research survey has brought out the dimensions of human trafficking, the deficiencies in the respond system, the methods of improving the same etc.

The findings of this research were implemented by UNODC in a mega project which were run in partnership with Government of India and US Government. In this project, several outstanding achievements were made.

- (a) Anti-Human Trafficking Unit was set up for the first time in the country.

Anti-Human Trafficking Unit is a comprehensive system wherein law enforcement agencies along with NGOs are brought together, trained together, empowered and assigned the task of preventing trafficking, investigating trafficking, prosecuting trafficked crimes as well as rehabilitating trafficked persons. AHTU has made tremendous impact in India. Based on the findings of external evaluated and taking cognizance to the fact that AHTU has made tremendous impact in the country, Government of India has replicated AHTU to more than 220 Districts in India.

- (b) Capacity building of all stakeholders was undertaken in a comprehensive manner bringing in a qualitative mechanism.
- (c) Innovative programs were undertaken for preventing human trafficking at the source area, in partnership with local agencies.
- (d) Concerted efforts were taken in addressing demand, whereby trafficking would be contained in an effective manner.
- (e) Professional and user friendly tools including handbooks, standard operating procedures, etc. were brought out in this project and were put to use. (It is worth to mention here that Dr. P.M. Nair was the Principal Researcher-cum-Investigator of the NHRC Project and he was again appointed by the UN as the Project Coordinator for the above said project). Therefore, this is the first time in the country where an

organised crime was well researched and the findings of the research implemented on ground. This shows that there is a need for in-depth research into organized crime like this and taking appropriate steps based on the research.

(f) It was the country in India several innovations were adopted and implemented in various aspects of preventing and combating human trafficking. A few of them are listed below:-

- (i) Tele-Conference across the borders. A girl child trafficked from Nepal was rescued in Mumbai and was rehabilitated to Nepal since he was reluctant and unwilling to come to the court of law at Mumbai, for various reasons, it was decided to conduct the judicial trial through tele-conferencing. The girl child examination as a witness was conducted through camera. The case was eventually convicted.
- (ii) Government of India and State Governments have come up with several victims' support systems and programs. This includes financial support, legal support, psychological/ emotional support, administrative support, providing counsellors and child-minders etc.
- (iii) In order to undertake best prevention strategies, several measures have been taken. This includes mapping, vulnerability factors and addressing these factors in a comprehensive manner.

- (iv) The important initiative in preventing trafficking in the source area and in containing demand is involvement of religious priests and Inter Religion Priest Forum (IRPF) was set up in several States in India like Bihar, Jharkhand, etc. These forums had religion priests from different communities and religions in India. It is known that India is a country of different religions and the duty of India lies in unity in diversity. Taking cue from this principle, IRPF has made tremendous impact in preventing and combating human trafficking. Certainly this is a good practice nodal which could be replicated elsewhere in the world.
- (v) One important issue in trafficking is the issue of missing persons especially missing children. On an average in India, more than 1,10,000 children are reported missing and out of which more than 40,000 remain untraced. The scenario is more or less the same in adjoining States of Nepal and Bangladesh except that the total numbers may be 1/3rd of the same. Considering the fact that these three countries have issues uncommon and that there is need for technological integration in addressing the issue of missing children and thereby trafficking, an international agency by named PLAN International has come out with a project titled "Missing Children Alert (MCA)". This project is in the beginning stage. It envisaged providing technology to the law enforcement and other agencies on ground so as to looked missing children immediately on report of missing, facilitating replication and rehabilitation and thereby preventing trafficking.

(vi) What we can do in the given context? This conference can indeed make tremendous impact across the globe in several ways. Some of the suggestions in this context are as follows:-

(a) The best practices and commendable initiatives could be institutionalized and replicated (for example IRPF, AHTU, capacity building program of law enforcement agencies etc. mentioned above).

(b) Congregation of religious priests from different communities and religions can be organized across the globe in taking their support in addressing the issue of human trafficking. It could be titled "Global meet of religious priests against trafficking".

(c) There are several NGOs on ground doing commendable work. Many of them remain unnoticed and unsung. Only few NGOs are able to project their work. These are the ones who get financial and other support from Government agencies as well as international agencies. There is a need for channelizing funds to the unknown NGOs on ground. The mechanism can be devised by which this is made possible across the globe. CBI can set up a nodal agency with the help of experts and this agency can be the facilitating body for channelization of funds, if required.

(d) There is a need for political awakening and awareness in the issues of human trafficking. Presently, the scenario across the globe is uneven. Political leaders, if they are aware of the dimensions and consequences of trafficking

and are made sensitized and committed to the cost, can made a tremendous impact in addressing the issue in a concerted manner. This conference can call upon the appropriate world bodies like UNODC to organize conference of political leaders regionally or nationally and elicit their support in addressing the issues.

Thank You.
