



A Comparative Analysis Of Women's Human Rights And Initiatives To Combat Human Trafficking: *India's 'Viksit Bharat' Vision In Perspective With Bangladesh And Pakistan.*

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Abstract: As India pursues the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' vision, this study investigates how the evolving legal and technological frameworks in India compare with the socio-legal strategies of Bangladesh and Pakistan in protecting women's human rights and dismantling human trafficking networks. It specifically asks: To what extent does regional geopolitical instability and disparate legal enforcement hinder the collective goal of a trafficking-free South Asia? This research employs a qualitative comparative methodology, utilizing a desk-based review of primary and secondary sources. Primary data includes constitutional provisions, recent legislative reforms (such as India's Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Pakistan's TIP Act 2018), and official reports from the NCRB (India) and UNODC. Secondary data comprises academic journals, NGO reports (e.g., BRAC, Prajwala), and situational analyses of the Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Pakistan border dynamics. A "Human Security" framework is applied to evaluate the transition from state-centric to victim-centric protection models. The study anticipates revealing that while India's 'Viksit Bharat' initiatives provide a superior technological template for surveillance and recovery, Bangladesh offers more effective community-level integration for female economic empowerment. Conversely, Pakistan's efforts remain hampered by internal legal dualism. The expected conclusion emphasizes that India's developmental goals cannot be fully realized in isolation; the outcome proposes a Synchronized Regional Protocol (SRP) for real-time intelligence sharing and standardized rehabilitation. Ultimately, the research provides a strategic roadmap for policy harmonization to transform South Asia from a trafficking "hotspot" into a secure zone for women.

Keywords: Viksit Bharat, Human Trafficking, Comparative Jurisprudence, South Asian Security, Women's Empowerment.

1. Introduction:

The protection of women's rights and the prevention of women trafficking constitute some of the most critical human rights and security challenges in modern state systems. In the era of globalization, as economic development, labour market expansion, and cross-border connectivity have increased, organized crimes such as human trafficking have acquired new dimensions. According to the United Nations, a large proportion of trafficking victims are women and girls, who are pushed into sexual exploitation, forced labour, and slavery-like conditions (UNODC, 2022). In this context, women's rights are not merely a matter of social justice; they are intrinsically linked to a state's overall development, security, and democratic stability.

South Asia is one of the most densely populated regions in the world, where India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan are closely connected through historical, cultural, and geographical ties. At the same time, the region has been identified as a high-risk zone for violence against women and women trafficking due to patriarchal social structures, economic inequality, poverty, border complexities, and political instability (Kara, 2017). Consequently, a comparative analysis of state initiatives for the implementation of women's rights and the prevention of trafficking is essential for understanding South Asia's development dynamics.

India is currently advancing toward economic growth, technological development, and the construction of a socially inclusive state under the national vision of "Developed India 2047" (Viksit Bharat @2047). According to Indian government policy, development becomes sustainable only when women are safe, empowered, and actively participate in decision-making processes (Government of India, 2023). This perspective is reflected in India's women-related legislation, political reservation mechanisms, and anti-trafficking initiatives.

On the other hand, Bangladesh has emerged as a significant example of women's empowerment in South Asia. In particular, the large-scale participation of women in the garment industry has enhanced economic independence, which has helped reduce the risk of trafficking (World Bank, 2021). At the same time, the Government of Bangladesh has strengthened state capacity by adopting a National Action Plan to prevent human trafficking and by reinforcing border security. Nevertheless, poverty, climate change-induced displacement, and geographical complexities along the borders remain major challenges.

The situation in Pakistan is comparatively more complex. There, the issue of women's rights is often obstructed by social conservatism, divergent religious interpretations, and the slow pace of the judicial system (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2022). Although the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2018 represents an important legal step, its effective implementation remains limited. In particular, the Afghan refugee crisis and instability in border regions pose significant barriers to preventing women trafficking.

Women trafficking is not merely a social problem; it is an organized transnational crime that directly challenges state sovereignty, law and order, and human security (Bales, 2016). In South Asia, open or extensive borders, weak surveillance systems, and the active presence of trafficking networks have further

complicated the problem. The India–Bangladesh border, in particular, has been identified as a high-risk zone for human trafficking (UNICEF, 2020). In this reality, regional cooperation, information sharing, and joint initiatives have become critically important.

The primary objective of this research paper is to present a comparative analysis of state initiatives undertaken to protect women’s rights and prevent women trafficking in three major neighbouring South Asian states—India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. The analysis will focus specifically on:

- (a) legal and constitutional frameworks related to women’s rights,
- (b) women’s participation in political and economic spheres,
- (c) state policies and administrative mechanisms for trafficking prevention, and
- (d) the role of regional cooperation.

Through this comparative discussion, the study seeks to understand why India has taken a leading role in certain areas, why Bangladesh has demonstrated success in specific indicators, and why Pakistan continues to suffer from structural weaknesses. At the same time, an important dimension of this research is to examine how women’s security and empowerment can be viewed as a development strategy within the framework of “Developed India 2047.” The protection of women’s rights and the prevention of women trafficking are not merely matters of moral or humanitarian obligation; they are prerequisites for a state’s development, social justice, and regional stability. In a sensitive region such as South Asia, a comparative analysis of this issue can provide realistic and effective policy guidance for policymakers.

2. The Current Context of Women’s Rights: A Comparative Overview

Women’s rights are a multidimensional concept encompassing political participation, legal protection, economic empowerment, education, health, and social status. In modern state systems, women’s rights are not merely a matter of humanitarian justice; they are also considered a key indicator of development, democracy, and social stability (Sen, 1999). In the South Asian context, although India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan share common historical experiences and social structures, their progress and limitations in the realization of women’s rights have evolved along different trajectories.

The legal framework constitutes the fundamental basis for the implementation of women’s rights. The Indian Constitution guarantees equal rights for women and men (Articles 14, 15, and 16). The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act), and the recent Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), which includes stringent provisions against violence and trafficking, have provided India with a comparatively strong legal framework (Government of India, 2023). In addition, the abolition of the triple talaq bill, the extension of maternity leave, and the Women’s Reservation Act (2023) represent significant examples of India’s legal progress.

Bangladesh also possesses a relatively coherent legal framework for women's rights. Article 28 of the Constitution guarantees equal rights for women. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017, and the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010, have played important roles in safeguarding women (UN Women, 2021). However, in practice, social conservatism and administrative weaknesses partially limit the effectiveness of these laws.

In Pakistan, the legal framework is comparatively complex and ambivalent. The coexistence of Sharia law and civil law often creates ambiguity in the implementation of women's rights (HRCP, 2022). In areas such as honor killing, inheritance, and laws of evidence, women continue to face discrimination. Although some progressive laws have been enacted, their enforcement remains weak due to social norms and religious interpretations.

Political participation is a key indicator of women's empowerment. In India, a 33 percent reservation for women has long been in place in the Panchayati Raj system, and the passage of the Women's Reservation Bill in Parliament in 2023 marks a historic milestone (Election Commission of India, 2024). This has visibly increased women's leadership at both local and national levels. In Bangladesh, reserved seats for women exist in Parliament, and women's presence in key positions such as Prime Minister and Speaker has received international recognition. Women's participation in local government is also relatively strong (World Bank, 2021). Nevertheless, a patriarchal political culture continues to limit women's independent decision-making.

In Pakistan, although reserved seats for women exist in Parliament, social barriers, security risks, and family control restrict women's political participation (UNDP, 2020). As a result, political representation is often numerical rather than reflective of effective empowerment.

Economic empowerment provides the material foundation for women's rights. In India, female labor force participation has increased in recent years to around 37 percent, although it remains below the global average (ILO, 2023). Programs such as Atmanirbhar Bharat and the Developed India initiatives place special emphasis on women entrepreneurs and self-help groups (SHGs). Bangladesh represents an exceptional case in South Asia in this regard. The participation of millions of women workers in the garment industry has enhanced women's financial independence and played a significant role in poverty reduction (World Bank, 2021). Studies show that economic self-reliance helps reduce the risk of women trafficking (Kara, 2017).

In Pakistan, women's participation in the labor force is comparatively low and largely confined to agriculture and the informal sector. Social conservatism, lack of education, and security concerns constitute major barriers to women's economic advancement (ILO, 2022).

Education is the foundation of women's rights. Although female literacy rates in India have increased significantly, disparities between rural and urban areas persist (UNESCO, 2022). In Bangladesh, girls' participation in primary and secondary education has increased notably, indicating positive trends in women's empowerment. In Pakistan, female education rates are comparatively low and particularly

alarming in rural regions. Lack of education reduces awareness of women's rights and increases vulnerability to trafficking (UNICEF, 2020).

Evidence suggests that where women's rights are weak, the risk of women trafficking is higher (Bales, 2016). While India's strong legal framework and digital surveillance mechanisms support trafficking prevention, social inequalities remain a challenge. In Bangladesh, economic participation has reduced trafficking risks, but border vulnerabilities continue to pose problems. In Pakistan, weaknesses in women's rights protection and the judicial system create opportunities for traffickers. Overall, India leads in legal and institutional frameworks, Bangladesh has shown relative success in economic and social indicators, and Pakistan lags behind due to social conservatism and institutional weaknesses.

3. State Initiatives to Prevent Women Trafficking:

Women trafficking poses a serious security and human rights challenge for modern state systems. It is not merely the outcome of social decay; rather, it represents the combined effects of poverty, gender inequality, weak border controls, organized crime, and administrative inefficiency (UNODC, 2022). In South Asia, India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan are involved in all three roles—source, transit, and destination countries. Therefore, analysing state initiatives to prevent women trafficking is crucial for understanding human security in this region.

The United Nations has identified human trafficking as a form of transnational organized crime, in which women and girls are the most exploited (UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, 2000). Trafficking not only deprives individuals of their freedom but also undermines a state's law and order, border security, and international image (Bales, 2016). In this context, South Asian countries have begun to view women trafficking not merely as a social crime but as a matter of national security.

India has developed a relatively coherent and multidimensional state framework to combat women trafficking. Its geographical position—characterized by long land borders and extensive coastal areas—has made it a significant transit and destination country for trafficking (UNODC, 2022). In India, both the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the recent Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) recognize human trafficking as a serious criminal offense. Provisions for stringent punishment serve as a strong deterrent against traffickers (Government of India, 2023). The Government of India has established Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) at the district level, which are responsible for rescue, investigation, and rehabilitation. In addition, the Ujjwala Scheme plays an important role in the rescue, rehabilitation, and social reintegration of trafficked women and girls (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2022). In line with the vision of "Developed India," India has increased the use of technology in women's safety, such as women's helplines (181), tracking applications, and online complaint systems. Studies indicate that digital governance enhances state capacity to prevent trafficking (World Bank, 2021).

Bangladesh has made notable progress in recent years in preventing women trafficking, particularly in improving conviction rates (UNODC, 2021). The Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act, 2012, recognizes trafficking as a serious crime and provides for stringent punishment and confiscation of

property belonging to traffickers (Government of Bangladesh, 2019). The Government of Bangladesh has adopted a National Action Plan to prevent women and child trafficking, emphasizing prevention, protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration (UN Women, 2021). The India–Bangladesh border is one of the longest and most complex borders in the world. To prevent trafficking along this border, special task forces have been formed through coordination among the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), police, and local administration. Moreover, the involvement of NGOs and local communities has emerged as an effective model for trafficking prevention (UNICEF, 2020).

In Pakistan, women trafficking is intertwined with complex social and political challenges. Poverty, social conservatism, and security concerns pose major obstacles to trafficking prevention (HRCP, 2022). The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2018, represents a significant legal step in Pakistan, recognizing human trafficking as a serious crime and providing penalties against women trafficking (UNODC, 2020). However, implementation of the law remains weak. Due to the slow judicial process, corruption, and social pressure, many cases fail to reach effective outcomes. The Afghan refugee crisis and instability in border regions have further complicated efforts to prevent women trafficking (HRCP, 2022).

Because women trafficking is a transnational crime, regional cooperation is critically important. The SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children (2002) provides an important framework for South Asia. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and joint task forces between India and Bangladesh have played an effective role in preventing trafficking (UNICEF, 2020). However, due to the deterioration of India–Pakistan political relations, joint initiatives between these two countries have remained limited.

From a comparative perspective, India is ahead in terms of legal frameworks, institutional capacity, and the use of technology; Bangladesh has demonstrated success through community-based and border-focused models; and Pakistan, despite having laws in place, continues to suffer from structural weaknesses.

4. Regional Cooperation in Preventing Women Trafficking (SAARC and Bilateral Relations):

Women trafficking is a transnational organized crime that is not confined within the borders of any single state. Effective suppression of this crime is possible only when states work jointly through information sharing, legal coordination, and border surveillance (UNODC, 2022). In a region like South Asia—characterized by long borders, dense populations, and pronounced socio-economic inequalities—the importance of regional cooperation in preventing women trafficking becomes even greater. In this context, SAARC and bilateral relations are regarded as key frameworks for combating women trafficking.

According to international relations theory, cooperation among states is essential to address non-traditional security threats such as human trafficking (Buzan, 1991). Women trafficking exploits weaknesses in state borders, legal systems, and judicial mechanisms, allowing it to expand across regions. As a result, the laws or administrative measures of a single state often prove insufficient. In this reality, regional organizations play a crucial role in formulating coordinated policy frameworks, common definitions, and joint action plans (Bales, 2016).

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has provided an important regional platform for preventing trafficking in women and children. The SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution (2002) recognizes women trafficking as a regional problem in South Asia. Under this convention, member states commit to preventing trafficking, protecting victims, and ensuring punishment of offenders (SAARC Secretariat, 2002).

The convention offers a common definition of women trafficking and emphasizes extradition, legal assistance, and information exchange. Studies suggest that this agreement has brought the issue of women trafficking to the center of political and diplomatic discourse in South Asia (UN Women, 2021). However, significant gaps remain in implementation, largely due to limited administrative capacity and a lack of political will among member states.

Despite providing an important framework, SAARC's effectiveness has been limited. First, SAARC decisions are not legally binding, which often leads member states to fall short in fulfilling commitments (Acharya, 2014). Second, political tensions between India and Pakistan frequently paralyze SAARC's functioning. As a result, regional-level coordinated databases or joint operations on trafficking have not been effectively established (UNODC, 2020).

In contrast, India–Bangladesh bilateral cooperation represents a relatively successful example of preventing women trafficking in South Asia. The long and porous border between the two countries has been a major route for trafficking (UNICEF, 2020). In response, both countries have signed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to ensure the repatriation, rehabilitation, and legal assistance of rescued trafficking victims. Regular meetings, joint patrols, and information sharing between the border security forces of India and Bangladesh—the BSF and BGB—have played an effective role in preventing trafficking (Government of India, 2023). Research indicates that these bilateral initiatives have helped dismantle trafficking networks (UNODC, 2021).

By contrast, cooperation between India and Pakistan in preventing women trafficking remains weak. Political tensions, border conflicts, and diplomatic mistrust have resulted in an almost complete absence of joint initiatives (HRCP, 2022). Consequently, mechanisms for information sharing, joint investigations, or extradition related to trafficking have failed to develop effectively. Scholars argue that this gap creates a “safe haven” for traffickers (Bales, 2016).

Beyond SAARC and bilateral initiatives, international organizations such as UNICEF, UNODC, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) play significant roles in preventing women trafficking in South Asia. These organizations enhance state capacity through technical assistance, training, and research (UNODC, 2022). Community-based programs, particularly in border regions, have shown positive outcomes in preventing women trafficking (UNICEF, 2020).

Overall, while SAARC provides a policy and structural platform, it remains weak in implementation; India–Bangladesh bilateral cooperation has proven relatively effective; and the fragile nature of India–Pakistan relations constitute a major obstacle to regional anti-trafficking efforts.

Regional cooperation is indispensable for preventing women trafficking. Without strengthening and making SAARC's framework more effective and binding, it will not be possible to fully control women trafficking in South Asia. At the same time, the success of bilateral cooperation demonstrates that cross-border crime can be addressed when political will exists. To achieve the goal of "Developed India 2047," India must further strengthen its role as a regional leader, placing women's security at the centre of its development strategy.

5. "Developed India 2047" and the Role of Women:

"Developed India 2047" (Viksit Bharat @2047) is a long-term roadmap aimed at building an inclusive, secure, and developed state by the centenary of India's independence. At the core of this vision lie human development, social justice, and economic participation—dimensions that are intrinsically linked to women's rights and security (Government of India, 2023). According to modern development theory, a state can be considered truly developed only when women are able to participate equally in political, social, and economic activities in an environment free from violence and exploitation (Sen, 1999).

According to economist Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, development is not merely about income growth, but about the expansion of human capabilities and freedoms (Sen, 1999). Women trafficking directly destroys these capabilities by depriving women of their freedom, dignity, and human potential. Therefore, preventing women trafficking is a structural prerequisite for achieving the goals of "Developed India." Research indicates that increases in women's education, employment, and participation in decision-making significantly reduce the risk of trafficking (Bales, 2016). From this perspective, the Government of India views women's security and trafficking prevention not only as law-and-order concerns but also as integral components of its development strategy.

Within the policy framework of "Developed India 2047," women's security has been identified as a priority area. Various programs of the Ministry of Women and Child Development—such as the Ujjwala Scheme, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, and Mission Shakti—are directly linked to the prevention of women trafficking and the rehabilitation of survivors (Ministry of WCD, 2022). In addition, the Women's Reservation Act (2023) is expected to ensure women's participation in political decision-making and, in the long run, facilitate the formulation of women-centered policies (Election Commission of India, 2024). Political empowerment plays a structural role in trafficking prevention, as it allows women's voices to be reflected in state policy.

One of the key pillars of "Developed India" is digital governance. The use of technology in women's security has created new possibilities for preventing trafficking. Women's helplines (181), online grievance redress systems, GPS-based tracking, and data-sharing platforms have enhanced state capacity to identify trafficking networks (World Bank, 2021). According to UNODC, digital surveillance and data analysis reduce response times and make rescue operations more effective in combating trafficking (UNODC, 2022). In this respect, India presents a technology-driven model in South Asia.

In the economic framework of “Developed India,” women’s employment and entrepreneurship development are key components. Through self-help groups (SHGs), Startup India, and Skill India programs, the enhancement of women’s skills and income has contributed to reducing the risk of trafficking (ILO, 2023). In other words, economic dependence is one of the primary causes of women trafficking (Kara, 2017). Therefore, women’s economic empowerment is not only a means of poverty reduction but also an effective strategy for preventing trafficking.

“Developed India 2047” is not solely an agenda for internal development; it also reflects India’s aspiration for leadership in South Asia. Since women trafficking is a regional problem, a successful Indian model of women’s security could serve as a reference point for neighboring states (Acharya, 2014). India–Bangladesh bilateral cooperation provides a practical example of this potential. If India assumes a more proactive role within the SAARC framework, regional coordination in preventing women trafficking could be strengthened (UN Women, 2021).

Although the vision of “Developed India” is ambitious, certain limitations persist in practice. Rural–urban disparities, entrenched patriarchy, and administrative weaknesses often reduce the effectiveness of women’s security initiatives (UNICEF, 2020). Therefore, achieving the goals of Developed India requires not only sound policies but also equal emphasis on effective implementation. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the concept of “Developed India 2047” has brought women’s security and trafficking prevention into the mainstream of development strategy. The integration of women’s empowerment, technological innovation, and legal reform has created the potential to position India as a leader in South Asia.

6. Findings:

This study has analysed state initiatives for the protection of women’s rights and the prevention of women trafficking in India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan from a comparative perspective. Drawing on the legal frameworks, political and economic empowerment, anti-trafficking measures, and regional cooperation discussed in previous chapters, this section presents the key findings of the research.

India has developed the most comprehensive and modern legal framework for the protection of women’s rights and the prevention of trafficking. The Indian Constitution, the POSH Act, and the recent Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) provide stringent provisions for women’s protection and anti-trafficking efforts (Government of India, 2023). Legal clarity and strict punishment function as strong deterrents against traffickers. In Bangladesh, the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act, 2012, is an effective law, though its implementation largely depends on administrative capacity. However, the increasing rates of case disposal and convictions in recent years demonstrate the law’s effectiveness (UNODC, 2021). In Pakistan, despite the existence of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2018, the slow pace of the judicial system and social pressure have limited its effectiveness (HRCP, 2022). As a result, although a legal framework exists, practical outcomes remain comparatively weak.

Women’s political participation plays an indirect yet significant role in trafficking prevention. In India, the 33 percent reservation for women (in Panchayats and Parliament) has facilitated the formulation of women-

centered policies (Election Commission of India, 2024). Research shows that higher levels of women's political representation are associated with stronger social protection policies (UN Women, 2021). In Bangladesh, although women participate in Parliament and local government, the patriarchal nature of political culture limits women's independent decision-making. In Pakistan, despite reserved seats, social and security-related barriers weaken effective political empowerment of women (UNDP, 2020).

Economic analysis reveals that Bangladesh is comparatively ahead in this domain. Large-scale participation of women in the garment industry has contributed positively to poverty reduction and to lowering the risk of trafficking (World Bank, 2021). This demonstrates that economic self-reliance is an effective social strategy for preventing women trafficking. In India, although women's labour force participation has increased, regional and social disparities persist (ILO, 2023). In Pakistan, women's economic participation remains limited and is largely concentrated in the informal sector, which increases vulnerability to trafficking (ILO, 2022).

In terms of institutional capacity and technological use, India is relatively more advanced. Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs), digital helplines, and data management systems have enhanced India's capacity to prevent trafficking (UNODC, 2022). In Bangladesh, border-focused and community-based initiatives have been effective, but technology-driven coordination remains limited. In Pakistan, institutional weaknesses and resource constraints pose major obstacles to the use of technology (HRCP, 2022).

The analysis further indicates that where regional cooperation is effective, anti-trafficking outcomes are more positive. India–Bangladesh bilateral cooperation serves as a successful example in this regard (UNICEF, 2020). Conversely, limitations within the SAARC framework and political tensions between India and Pakistan have weakened regional coordination (Acharya, 2014).

The key findings of this research can be summarized as follows:

1. A strong legal framework is essential for trafficking prevention, but it is insufficient without effective implementation.
2. Women's economic empowerment is the most effective social factor in reducing the risk of trafficking.
3. Political empowerment strengthens women's security and anti-trafficking policies in the long term.
4. Technology-driven administration enhances state capacity to prevent trafficking.
5. Without regional and bilateral cooperation, transnational women trafficking cannot be fully controlled.

Although India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan have undertaken various initiatives to prevent women trafficking, social patriarchy, poverty, and border vulnerabilities continue to limit their effectiveness. The

research indicates that not only legal or administrative measures, but also broader social and economic reforms are essential (Bales, 2016).

6. Conclusion

Women trafficking constitutes a grave human rights crisis in South Asia. It is not merely a problem of law and order or border security; rather, it is the combined outcome of poverty, gender inequality, social patriarchy, and weak institutional structures. This study has comparatively analysed the causes of women trafficking, state initiatives, regional cooperation, and practical outcomes in the contexts of India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. The research findings reveal that although all three countries have formulated legal frameworks to prevent women trafficking, significant differences exist in their implementation. India has achieved some progress through relatively strong institutional capacity and technology-driven mechanisms. Bangladesh has set a positive example by reducing trafficking risks through economic empowerment, yet border management and rehabilitation frameworks remain weak. In contrast, despite having a legal framework, Pakistan continues to face limitations in trafficking prevention due to social barriers and administrative weaknesses (UNODC, 2022; HRCP, 2022).

The discussion further indicates that state initiatives alone are insufficient to prevent women trafficking. Regional cooperation—particularly inter-state information sharing, joint investigations, and coordinated victim rehabilitation mechanisms—is essential. Although the SAARC framework exists, its limited effectiveness has been identified as a major obstacle to combating women trafficking in South Asia (Acharya, 2014). Women trafficking is a multidimensional problem, and its solution must therefore be integrated, long-term, and human-centered.

Based on the findings, the following policy recommendations are proposed to prevent women trafficking:

- Alongside lawmaking, it is necessary to expedite the disposal of trafficking-related cases through fast-track trials, witness protection, and the establishment of special courts. In particular, improving the efficiency of investigation and judicial processes in Bangladesh and Pakistan is crucial (UNODC, 2021).
- The most effective preventive strategy against women trafficking is women's economic self-reliance. Skill development, microcredit, and the expansion of safe employment opportunities for rural women should be prioritized (World Bank, 2021).
- Digital border surveillance, biometric verification, and data-driven risk analysis should be introduced. The experience of joint task forces along the India–Bangladesh border could be replicated in other contexts (UNICEF, 2020).
- To make the SAARC Anti-Trafficking Convention more effective, mandatory information sharing, joint training programs, and coordinated rescue procedures should be implemented. It is essential to adopt a principle whereby political differences do not obstruct human rights cooperation (Acharya, 2014).

- Rescued survivors of trafficking must be provided with psychosocial support, education, healthcare, and opportunities for re-employment. Victims should be treated not merely as witnesses, but as rights-bearing citizens (UN Women, 2021).
- In the long term, education and social awareness are indispensable for preventing women trafficking. Curricula on gender equality, human rights, and safe migration should be incorporated at school and community levels (UNDP, 2020).

In conclusion, preventing women trafficking is not solely a state responsibility; it is a collective social and regional obligation. To ensure human dignity, gender justice, and sustainable development, the adoption of coordinated and sincere initiatives to combat women trafficking has become an urgent necessity.

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