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#### ABOUT US

WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal providededicated to express views on topical legal issues, thereby generating a cross current of ideas on emerging matters. This platform shall also ignite the initiative and desire of young law students to contribute in the field of law. The erudite response of legal luminaries shall be solicited to enable readers to explore challenges that lie before law makers, lawyers and the society at large, in the event of the ever changing social, economic and technological scenario.

With this thought, we hereby present to you

LEGAL

CHILD TRAFFICKING AND FORCED LABOUR: LEGAL PROTECTIONS AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES

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**ABSTRACT** 

Child trafficking and forced labour persist as egregious violations of human rights in India, perpetuating exploitation and vulnerability among marginalized communities. These practices deprive children of their innocence and dignity, exacerbated by factors like poverty, lack of education, and social inequality. This article provides an overview of their prevalence, legal framework, and associated challenges. The Indian government has enacted several laws and measures to address these crimes and protect children's rights such as the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, Juvenile Justice Act, and Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act to combat these crimes and safeguard children's rights. However, challenges persist, including lack of awareness, weak enforcement, and societal norms fostering exploitation. This article highlights the International conventions like the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Convention on the Rights of the Child offer global frameworks for action. Effective intervention demands a multifaceted approach, encompassing legislative reforms, enforcement mechanisms, and community empowerment. This article underscores the urgent need for action, emphasizing the importance of addressing implementation challenges and government initiatives to prevent and address these human rights violations.

**Key words:** Child trafficking, Forced labour, India, Legal protections, Preventive measures.

Introduction

Child trafficking and forced labour are serious human rights violations that continue to plague societies around the world, including India. These practices involve the exploitation of vulnerable children for labour or sexual purposes, often through coercion, deception, or violence. Child

trafficking and forced labour not only violate the fundamental rights of children but also undermine their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being, hindering their development and future prospects. India has taken several legal and policy measures to combat child trafficking and forced labour. The Constitution of India guarantees the right to life and personal liberty, which includes the right to be free from slavery and forced labour. The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, provide legal protections for children against trafficking and forced labour. The National Policy for Children, 2013, and the National Plan of Action for Children, 2016, outline the government's commitment to promoting the welfare and rights of children. Preventive measures are also crucial in addressing child trafficking and forced labour. In this article, will discuss the legal protections and preventive measures in India against child trafficking and forced labour and examine the current legal framework, the challenges in implementation and enforcement, and the initiatives taken by the government and other stakeholders to prevent and address these human rights violations.

#### **Historical Context on Protection of Child Labour**

The historical context of child labour protection in India and globally underscores the enduring struggle to safeguard the rights and well-being of children. Before independence child labour was widespread due to economic necessity and colonial exploitation, despite early legislative efforts such as the Factories Act of 1881, which aimed to regulate working conditions, enforcement remained weak.<sup>2</sup> Post-independence, India committed to socio-economic development, social justice and welfare. The adoption of the Constitution of India in 1950 laid down the framework for protecting the rights of children and ensuring their access to education. This pivotal document underscored India's commitment to social justice and welfare. Subsequently, legislative measures such as the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 1986 were enacted to address the issue of child labour. Globally, the Industrial Revolution led to widespread child labour, prompting international efforts such as the International Labour Organization's conventions and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution of India,1950. which states, "No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bhargava, Gopal. *Child Labour*. Kalpaz Publications, 2003.

#### Meaning of Child Labour and Trafficking

- ➤ Child Labour: Children are employed in a variety of occupations, many of which are hazardous, and are exposed to machinery, pesticides, dust, fumes, chemicals, acids, cotton, and wool fibre, which are detrimental to health³. A large number of children are held in bonded servitude, and in urban areas, children are employed as domestic helpers and engaged in eateries and auto-repair work.
- > *Trafficking*: Trafficking and trading of children for work and sexual slavery are also major concerns. Children are trafficked for commercial sexual work, exploitative labour, or other forms of employment, and are also trafficked for employment in organized industries, domestic servitude, and various other forms of work.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Understanding the Scope of the Issue**

Child trafficking and forced labour encompasses a range of exploitative practices, including forced labour, sexual exploitation, and organ trafficking. In India, vulnerable children, often from impoverished rural areas, are trafficked to urban centres or other countries, where they are subjected to labour in industries such as agriculture, construction, and domestic work. This exploitation violates their fundamental rights and jeopardizes their physical and psychological well-being.

### Risk Factors for Child Trafficking and Forced Labour

Several factors contribute to the vulnerability of children to trafficking and forced labour in India. Some of the key contributing factors include:

➤ **Poverty:** Poverty serves as a significant driver of child trafficking and forced labour in India. Families facing extreme poverty may feel compelled to send their children to work in order to supplement household income or repay debts<sup>5</sup>. In many cases, lack of alternative

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> ILO Convention No. (No. 182) Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/faqs.html: According to UNODC's <u>2022 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons</u> which is compiled using official figures from over 141 countries, female victims continue to be the primary targets. The Report shows that in 2020 42 percent of detected victims were women and 18 percent girls.

- opportunities and economic desperation make families susceptible to the promises of traffickers who exploit their vulnerabilities for profit.
- ➤ Lack of Education: Limited access to quality education, particularly in rural and marginalized areas, leaves children vulnerable to exploitation. When children are denied education, they lack awareness of their rights and are more susceptible to manipulation and coercion by traffickers. Additionally, Parents lack of awareness about the dangers of trafficking and their children's rights further exacerbates the problem.
- ➤ Social Discrimination: Children from marginalized communities face heightened vulnerability due to social exclusion and discrimination. Limited access to basic services such as healthcare and sanitation further amplifies their susceptibility to exploitation. Discriminatory practices and prejudices against certain communities create environments where traffickers can easily prey on vulnerable children.
- Family Instability and Displacement: Children living in unstable environments, such as those affected by conflict or forced migration, are at a heightened risk of exploitation. Disrupted family and community networks, as well as the breakdown of protective structures, leave children more vulnerable to exploitation by traffickers who exploit their vulnerability and lack of support systems.
- ➤ Lack of Legal Protection and Enforcement: Weak legal frameworks and corruption contribute to the persistence of child trafficking and forced labour. Inadequate laws and enforcement mechanisms fail to adequately address the issue, allowing perpetrators to operate with impunity. Limited access to justice and the failure to hold traffickers and exploiters accountable perpetuate the cycle of exploitation.
- Gender Inequality: Gender biases and discriminatory practices, such as child marriage and gender-based violence, increase the vulnerability of girls to exploitation. Discriminatory norms and practices limit girl children access to education and economic opportunities, making them more susceptible to trafficking and forced labour. Girls are often disproportionately affected by exploitative situations, including sexual exploitation and domestic servitude, due to entrenched gender inequalities.

#### **Legal Framework for Child Protection**

India has a comprehensive legal framework aimed at addressing child trafficking and forced labour. Key legislations include:

- The Constitution of India, 1950: Article 21A of the Constitution mandates that, the State shall provide free and compulsory education for children aged six to fourteen, ensuring access to education and aiding in the prevention of child labour and exploitation. Article 24, specifically addresses the protection of children from exploitation, encompassing issues like child trafficking and forced labour. This constitutional provision explicitly prohibits the employment of children under the age of fourteen in hazardous occupations. Article 39(e)<sup>6</sup> and (f)<sup>7</sup> of the Directive Principle of State Policy advocate for state policies aimed at protecting children and youth from exploitation, ensuring their access to a dignified upbringing free from moral or material abandonment.
- ➤ The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956: The Act stands for Procuring or Trafficking for Prostitution, which criminalizes trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation. Section 3 states, procuring, inducing, or detaining a person for prostitution, Imprisonment for a term of 7 to 10 years and a fine. Section 5 forbids Trafficking of a minor for prostitution, Imprisonment for a term of 7 to 10 years and a fine.
- The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976: Which prohibits bonded labour and mandates the rehabilitation of bonded labourers. *Section 16* punishes employers of bonded labourers with imprisonment for up to 3 years and a fine, while *Section 17* prohibits extracting forced labour or compelling individuals to work under the bonded labour system with imprisonment for a term up to 3 years and a fine.
- ➤ The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986: Section 2, defines a "child" as any individual below fourteen years of age. Section 3 of the Act prohibits their employment in hazardous occupations listed in the Schedule, aiming to safeguard their health and safety for children aged 14 to 18 years. Section 7 regulates their employment conditions, ensuring it

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Article 39(e) of the Indian constitution 1950, states that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Article 39 (f) of the Indian constitution 1950, states that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.

doesn't hinder education and adheres to specified working hours and health provisions. *Section 14* of the Act, 1986, outlines penalties for contravening the Act. Employing a child in violation of the Act may result in a fine of up to twenty thousand rupees. In case of repeated offenses by an employer, imprisonment for up to one year and a fine of up to twenty thousand rupees may be imposed.

- ➤ Amendment to the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 2016: This landmark legislation prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 in all occupations and certain hazardous occupations and processes listed in the Act, with stringent conditions. It also regulates the working conditions in non-hazardous occupations, emphasizing the importance of education and rehabilitation for child labourers, further strengthens the legal framework for combating child labour in India.<sup>8</sup>
- ➤ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009: This act mandates free and compulsory education for all children aged 6 to 14 years recognizing education as a fundamental right. It prohibits the employment of children in any form of labour that may interfere with their right to education, thereby addressing the root causes of child labour.
- The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015: The JJ Act focuses on the care, protection, and rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection, including victims of trafficking. Section 76 specifically addresses trafficking of children, imposing penalties, including imprisonment for up to 7 years and fines. The Act mandates the establishment of Special Juvenile Police Units and Child Welfare Committees to handle cases of child trafficking and ensure the welfare of victims. Section 77 pertain to penalty employing a child in contravention of the Act may incur a fine of up to fifty thousand rupees.
- > Section 370 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC): Section 370 prohibits trafficking, including of children for exploitation through recruitment, transportation, harbouring, threat, coercion, abduction, or deception. Offenders engaging in forced labour, sexual exploitation, or organ removal face severe penalties, including imprisonment from seven years to life. Fines may also be imposed, varying based on the severity of the offense and court discretion. This

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Amendment to the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 2016, s. 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, s. 3.

- provision aims to deter trafficking activities, ensuring justice for victims and combating this violation of human rights.
- ➤ Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013: This amendment introduced various provisions related to sexual offenses, including trafficking of minors, *Section 370A* of IPC Trafficking of a minor with rigorous imprisonment up to life imprisonment and a fine.
- ➤ Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012: Section 6 of the Act, pertain to penalty for, Aggravated forms of trafficking of children for sexual purposes: rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to life imprisonment and a fine.

#### **Significant Judicial Precedents**

- In the case of *National Campaign Committee for Central Legislation on Construction Labour v. Union of India*, <sup>10</sup> the court addressed concerns regarding child labour within the construction industry. The Supreme Court's verdict emphasized the necessity of implementing welfare measures aimed at improving the conditions of construction labourers, including provisions for children's education and healthcare.
- In *M.C. Mehta v. State of Tamil Nadu*, <sup>11</sup> The Supreme Court addressed child labour in hazardous industries, notably in the firecracker industry in Tamil Nadu, emphasizing the state's duty to protect children's rights under Article 24. The court prohibited the employment of children in hazardous industries and mandated the rehabilitation of affected children, affirming the state's obligation to enforce child labour laws.
- Simalarily in *Kailash Satyarthi v. Union of India*, <sup>12</sup> This case highlighted the issue of child trafficking and forced labour, emphasizing the state's responsibility to combat these practices under Article 23. The Supreme Court directed the government to implement measures to prevent child trafficking, rescue and rehabilitate trafficked children, and prosecute traffickers, emphasizing the state's obligation to protect children from exploitation.
- In *Bachpan Bachao Andolan v. Union of India*, <sup>13</sup> the case addressed the prevalence of child labour in various industries and underscored the state's obligation to enforce the Right to Education (Article 21A) to prevent child labour. The Supreme Court directed the government

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>AIR (1996) 2 SCC 616.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>AIR (1997) 1 SCC 388.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> AIR (2011) 6 SCC 158.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> AIR (2013) 15 SCC 754.

- to ensure the implementation of the Right to Education Act, providing free and compulsory education to children, thereby reducing the incidence of child labour.
- ➤ In *Vishal Jeet v. Union of India*, <sup>14</sup> the Supreme Court of India emphasized the need for stringent enforcement of anti-trafficking laws to protect children from exploitation.
- In *Sampurna Behrua v. Union of India*, <sup>15</sup> This case dealt with the rescue and rehabilitation of child labourers employed in hazardous industries, including mica mining in Jharkhand. The Supreme Court directed the government to take immediate steps to rescue and rehabilitate child labourers, ensuring their access to education and healthcare.

#### **National Initiatives and Policies for Child Protection**

- ➤ National Child Labour Project (NCLP): Under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the NCLP aims to rehabilitate child labourers by providing them with education, vocational training, and financial assistance to enable their reintegration into mainstream society. <sup>16</sup>
- ➤ The Integrated Child Protection Scheme: (ICPS) in India offers comprehensive support for vulnerable children through initiatives like Child Care Institutions (CCIs), rehabilitation services, and prevention programs. Operating under the Juvenile Justice Act, it emphasizes decentralized implementation and monitoring for effective child protection.<sup>17</sup>
- ➤ National Policy for Children, 2013: This policy outlines the government's commitment to protect the rights and interests of children, including measures to prevent child trafficking and exploitation, promote education, and provide comprehensive healthcare and nutrition services.<sup>18</sup>
- ➤ Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Shramev Jayate Karyakram (PDUSJK): Launched by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, this program aims to ensure the welfare and protection of workers, including children, by providing social security, promoting safe working conditions, and preventing exploitation.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> AIR (2016) 7 SCC 419.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> AIR (2018) 10 SCC 657.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> National Child Labour Project (NCLP), launched on October 1, 1988, under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) launched on April 1, 2009 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Government of India. "National Policy for Children, 2013." Ministry of Women and Child Development, August 26, 2013.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> (PDUSJK): was launched on October 16, 2014.

- ➤ **Ujjawala Scheme:** Implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, this scheme focuses on the rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration of victims of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation. It provides support services such as shelter, counselling, and skill development.<sup>20</sup>
- ➤ National Action Plan for Children, 2016: This Plan outlines measures to prevent trafficking, rescue victims, and prosecute offenders. Building upon previous initiatives, this action plan focuses on addressing emerging challenges faced by children, including child trafficking and exploitation, through targeted interventions, awareness campaigns, and strengthened enforcement mechanisms.<sup>21</sup>
- ➤ NHRC & NCPCR: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)<sup>22</sup> and National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)<sup>23</sup> monitor and enforce child rights laws.

#### In The International Arena

Several international conventions and agreements address the issue of child trafficking and forced labour. Here are some key provisions:

- ➤ United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: (UNTOC) and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Article 3 of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol defines trafficking in persons, emphasizing the exploitation of vulnerability, such as that of children. Article 6 of the Protocol requires state parties to criminalize trafficking in persons, particularly children, within their domestic legal systems.
- ➤ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): The CRC is a comprehensive international treaty that outlines the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of children. *Article 32* specifically calls for measures to protect children from economic exploitation and hazardous work, ensuring their right to education, and setting a minimum age for employment. *Article 35* of the CRC requires state parties to take all

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup>Government of India. Ministry of Women and Child Development. Ujjawala Scheme. 1 Apr. 2016.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> The National Plan of Action for Children, 2016 was launched on May 11, 2016 by the Minister for Women and Child Development, Government of India.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> National Human Rights Commission. "NHRC is a statutory body established under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993," Indian Government.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, "NCPCR is a statutory body established under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005," Indian Government.

- appropriate national, bilateral, and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction, sale, or trafficking of children for any purpose or in any form.
- ➤ International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions: The ILO has adopted several conventions related to child labour, forced labour, and human trafficking. *Convention No. 29* on Forced Labour, this convention requires member states to suppress forced or compulsory labour in all its forms, including trafficking for labour exploitation, *Convention No. 138*, this convention sets the minimum age for admission to employment should not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling, and in any case, not less than 15 years old (or 14 in developing countries under certain conditions), *Convention No. 182* on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, this convention calls for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including trafficking of children for exploitative purposes.
- ➤ Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography: This protocol supplements the CRC and provides specific measures to combat the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. *Article 3* of the Optional Protocol requires state parties to criminalize the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography, as well as the involvement of children in any form of exploitative practices, including trafficking.<sup>24</sup>
- ➤ Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings: Although not specific to children, this convention provides a comprehensive framework for preventing and combating human trafficking. *Article 4* of the convention requires state parties to take measures to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings, with particular attention to protecting and assisting victims, including child victims.<sup>25</sup>

These international conventions and agreements set out obligations for states to prevent, investigate, prosecute, and provide remedies for child trafficking and forced labour. They also emphasize the importance of international cooperation and coordination in addressing these transnational crimes.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Adopted 25 May 2000 by resolution A/RES/54/263 at the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Council of Europe. "Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings." The Convention has been in force since 1 February 2008 and serves as an international treaty that offers a comprehensive framework for combating human trafficking, grounded in human rights principles and a victim-centred approach.

#### **Challenges in Combating Child Trafficking and Forced Labour**

- Lack of Awareness: Limited awareness among communities, especially in rural areas, about the dangers of child trafficking and forced labour hinders prevention efforts. Many families may not recognize the signs of exploitation or understand their rights.
- ➤ Weak Enforcement: Inadequate enforcement of existing laws and regulations due to corruption, lack of resources, and insufficient training of law enforcement officials can impede efforts to combat child trafficking and forced labour effectively.
- ➤ **Demand for Cheap Labour:** The demand for cheap labour in various sectors, including agriculture, construction, and domestic work, perpetuates the cycle of exploitation. Employers often exploit vulnerable children due to their willingness to work for low wages and their perceived lack of legal recourse.
- ➤ Cross-Border Trafficking: Cross-border trafficking networks complicate efforts to combat child trafficking, as perpetrators may exploit legal loopholes and evade law enforcement in multiple jurisdictions. Cooperation between countries is essential to disrupt these networks effectively.<sup>26</sup>
- ➤ Stigmatization and Social Norms: Stigmatization of victims and social norms that normalize child labour and trafficking can discourage reporting and hinder victim rehabilitation. Changing societal attitudes and addressing cultural norms are crucial in combating these practices.<sup>27</sup>

#### **Recommendations to Address the Challenges**

- Awareness Campaigns: Governments and non-governmental organizations conduct awareness campaigns to educate communities about the dangers of child trafficking and forced labour. These campaigns often include workshops, seminars, and media campaigns.
- ➤ Education and Training: Launch comprehensive education programmes campaigns targeting communities, schools, and vulnerable populations to educate them about the risks of child trafficking and forced labour. Investing in education and vocational training programs

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "An Introduction to Human Trafficking - Background Paper." https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> https://www.unicef.org/india/what-we-do/child-labour-exploitation.

- equips children and families with the skills and knowledge to resist exploitation. These programs also empower communities to identify and report instances of trafficking.
- ➤ Capacity Building for Law Enforcement: Provide specialized training for law enforcement agencies to effectively identify, investigate, and prosecute cases of child trafficking and forced labour. Strengthening coordination between relevant authorities at the local, regional, and national levels is essential.
- > Strengthening Legal Enforcement: Effective implementation and enforcement of laws are crucial in combating child trafficking and forced labour. Strengthening law enforcement agencies enhances their capacity to investigate and prosecute perpetrators. Continuously review and strengthen existing laws and regulations to address emerging challenges and gaps in the legal framework. This may include enacting stricter penalties for offenders and introducing specific provisions to address new forms of exploitation.
- ➤ Support for Victims: Rehabilitation programs provide support and assistance to victims, enabling their recovery and reintegration into society. Enhance support services for victims of child trafficking and forced labour, including access to shelter, healthcare, counselling, and education. Empower survivors to rebuild their lives through comprehensive rehabilitation programs tailored to their specific needs.<sup>28</sup>
- ➤ Free Legal Aid: Access to free legal aid services is crucial for child trafficking survivors. These services provide legal representation, psychosocial support, and rehabilitation to victims. <sup>29</sup>Example: The "Child Friendly Courts" initiative in Bangladesh ensures that child trafficking cases are handled with sensitivity, providing child-friendly spaces within courtrooms and specialized support services.
- ➤ Community Engagement and Empowerment: Community-based interventions empower communities to identify and report instances of trafficking and forced labour. Foster community-led initiatives to combat child trafficking and forced labour, emphasizing the importance of collective action and community ownership. Encourage the involvement of local leaders, NGOs, and grassroots organizations in prevention and intervention efforts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> International Labour Organization. Rehabilitation of the Victims of Child Trafficking: A Multidisciplinary Approach. 2006.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Legal Services Authorities Act. "Victims can access legal aid by contacting the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) or state legal services authorities. They can also reach out to NGOs or helplines dedicated to trafficking victims." 1987.

➤ International Collabouration: Strengthen cooperation with international partners and neighbouring countries to address cross-border trafficking effectively. Enhance information sharing, joint investigations, and capacity-building initiatives to disrupt trafficking networks and prosecute perpetrators.<sup>30</sup>

By addressing these challenges and implementing specific recommendations towards, eradicate child trafficking and forced labour in India and safeguard the rights and well-being of all children.

#### **Conclusion**

Child trafficking and forced labour are severe infringements on violations of human rights that demand urgent attention and concerted action. In India, legal protections and preventive measures have been implemented to combat these crimes and safeguard the rights of children. However, significant challenges remain, necessitating continued efforts to strengthen enforcement mechanisms, address root causes, and provide comprehensive support to victims. By working together, governments, civil society organizations, and communities can create a safer and more just society for all children, free from the scourge of trafficking and forced labour. International organizations also play a vital role in preventing child trafficking and forced labour by providing support and services to victims and advocating for policy and legal reforms. It is paramount to uphold the rights and dignity of each child, ensuring a future where they are free from exploitation and have the opportunity to flourish in a secure and supportive environment. Through united effort and steadfast dedication, we can establish a society where all children are shielded, esteemed, and afforded the possibility to reach their fullest potential. By doing so, India can take meaningful strides towards ending the cycle of child trafficking and forced labour, ensuring a safer future for generations to come.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Reichel, Philip L. "Cross-National Collabouration to Combat Human Trafficking: Learning From The Experience Of Others." July 2008.