

THE DMN NEWS



NEPALI WOMEN ARE SOLD TO
CHINESE MEN AND FORCED
INTO PROSTITUTION, LABOR
EXPLOITATION

Taking advantage of the poor financial condition of vulnerable groups, racketeers of Chinese traffickers with support from Nepali collaborators are trafficking Nepali women to China with false promises of marriage and a better future.

Siromani Dhungana

Ram Kumar Shahi

Kathmandu: A number of Nepali women and girls are found to have been trafficked to different places of China by the nexus of Chinese racketeers and Nepali collaborators. The DMN News has obtained harrowing accounts of those who were lured into marriage with the Chinese men by Nepali agents and who were later subjected to mental, physical and sexual exploitation by the Chinese men who ‘marry’ them. Here are some tragic testimonies of not only the suffering of Nepali women and girls but which also expose how Nepali procurers are forcing them into sexual subjugation in China.

Samjhana, who came from a lower-middle-class family, started working in a café in Thamel after completing her high school. While working, an acquaintance brought her a marriage proposal with a Chinese man. Initially, she declined. However, the proposal from her acquaintance, promising a better life after becoming a Chinese citizen, lured her as she had always dreamed of achieving a good financial condition. She was told she would obtain Chinese residency five years after her marriage. Excited about the prospect of a better life, Samjhana met the

Chinese man and his family in a restaurant in Thamel. She was told that she needed to register her marriage with the Chinese man to reach China. Following this advice, they registered their marriage on March 27, 2023. Then, the newly-wed couple flew to China via Tribhuvan International Airport on April 14, 2023. She was taken to Xingtai, a southern Chinese city, by her 'husband'. Initially, the relationship between them was okay. However, 10-12 days later, her 'husband' forced her to have sex multiple times without her consent. She says, "He used to take sex stimulating pills and have sex with me up to 5-6 times a day." Things worsened when she resisted. Samjana was forced into prostitution by the Chinese man she 'married.' "I attempted suicide, but unfortunately, I did not die," she said. Samjhana later learned from the Chinese man that he had purchased her for Rs 500,000 from Nepal for prostitution. Somehow, she managed to contact the Nepal Embassy in Beijing. She has since been rescued from China.

In 2019, **Parbati** was planning to go abroad as a migrant worker. She met the brother of Asha Tamang. The guy she met told Parbati that his sister got married with a Chinese national and is living a well off life. The guy also assured her to arrange a meeting with a woman from Sindhupalchowk who also had a Chinese husband. He arranged a meeting with Bibirani Tamang at Machhapokhari of Balaju. She was lured by a local agent Bibirani Tamang, a local agent. Bibirani told Parbati that a Chinese national is staying at Thamel. If he [Chinese national] likes you, he will marry you, she told her. She also said that you can earn a lot of money. Following the conversation, she took me to a hotel in Thamel and met a Chinese national. They managed all the required documents including registration of a single status, relationship status and other documents. On 13 July, 2019, they left for Shandong, China on a visit visa.

Two other women from Lamjung were also with them. As her visa was valid for a month, she came back after a 15 days stay in China. Her visa extended on August 28, 2019 for six months. She again left for China and started living at the residence of a Chinese national she had met in Nepal.

This time, she did not get good treatment. The Chinese national started abusing her physically and mentally. Apart from physical abuse, she was forced to work until late night without proper food. She fell sick. Later, the Chinese national informed her that she was sold by Nepali agents at Rs 1.75 million. Following brutal treatment from the Chinese national, she managed to flee the house with help from another Nepali woman who used to stay in China. On September 26, 2019, she returned to Nepal with all but unpleasant and horrific experiences.

Roshana, facing financial strain in her family, moved to Chyasal, Lalitpur, to make thangka paintings about five years ago. There, she met Kiran Tamang, a guide and translator for Chinese tourists. After connecting on Facebook, Kiran suggested she could earn more in China and offered to arrange her travel. Despite her initial refusal, Kiran convinced her to go to China for trade, covering her travel expenses.

On January 10, 2020, Roshana flew to China with Kiran. Upon arrival, they were met by a Chinese national, Kiran's friend, who took her to Heze city, Shandong province. Initially, she was treated well, but soon the Chinese man began locking her up and beating her. When Roshana sought help from Kiran, he blocked her and revealed she had been sold for Rs 80,000. Her situation worsened until she contacted Maya Magar on TikTok, who informed the Nepali embassy in Beijing.

In coordination with Shandong police, they raided the house, stopping the abuse. Though allowed to work outside for three months, Roshana's earnings and documents were confiscated by the Chinese family.

With the help of the Nepali embassy and Shandong police, her visa was extended, and she was safely returned to Nepal in October 2020.

“Once the victims cross the border it becomes difficult to track them and provide them justice.”

The victims understand what has been done to them only after reaching China.

Tika Maya, also from a lower-class family, went to Oman on a working visa after completing her SLC. While in the Middle East, Tika Maya was earning modestly when she connected on Facebook with Sundari Rai through one of her relatives, Sarita Tamang. Sundari Rai told Tika Maya that she had been married to a Chinese man for the last ten years and was living happily in China. Through her, Tika Maya received a marriage proposal from a Chinese man.

Lured by the promise of a well-off life, Tika Maya returned to Kathmandu from Oman on November 10, 2023. She met the Chinese man through Sundari Rai in Kathmandu. Tika Maya said she would need to tell her family the whole story to get married to the Chinese man. However, she was stopped from doing so, as the Chinese side and Sundari Rai said her family would not allow her to marry a Chinese man.

After completing all the procedures, Tika Maya flew to China with the Chinese man from Tribhuvan International Airport,

hoping to get married there. She was taken to Harbin, China, where they got married.

A week later, the Chinese man began raping her. Only then did she learn that she had been sold for Rs 150,000. She somehow managed to escape from China on June 23, 2023, with the help of a Nepali she met on TikTok.

One and off, Nepal Police becomes able to bust the trafficking racket but those to be arrested are mostly Nepali procurers while the Chinese nationals complicit in the crime go scot-free.

If all four stories the method employed to lure the victims into trafficking appear to be the same. Vulnerable women and girls from low income families in Nepal's rural hills in districts bordering China are offered lucrative jobs and better off life in China by Nepali procurers in exchange for their agreeing to marry Chinese nationals.

Nepali procurers prepare the documents, probably by bribing the local authorities, and then take the Nepali women to China and hand them over to the Chinese nationals.

Promises of good jobs.

Assurance of a better life.

Words of marriage. Dream of lavish living standards. These are the tricks used by rackets to convince family members and women before the victims know that these promises and assurances are false only when they are trapped in the nightmare of abuse, including sex trafficking.

The victims understand what has been done to them only after reaching China but by then it is too late and they are not in a

position to do anything about it as they are often denied access to Nepali authorities in Beijing.

One and off, Nepal Police becomes able to bust the trafficking racket but those to be arrested are mostly Nepali procurers while the Chinese nationals complicit in the crime go scot-free. This is not the first case where investigation authorities fail to bring the Chinese side to book.

In 2015, for example, the Central Investigation Bureau of Nepal Police busted a China, Korea marriage racket, one of the biggest trafficking schemes of the time. Initially, Nepal Police had pledged to investigate the magnitude of the crime. The police, however, failed to uncover the collaborators from the China side.

Nepal Police officials say that lack of coordination and cooperation from the Chinese side as well as the nature of crime being transnational and organized make it difficult to bring the culprits to book.

“Once the victims cross the border it becomes difficult to track them and provide them justice,” said Hemanta Malla Thakuri, a former Deputy Inspector General of Nepal Police. “Besides, there is a lack of coordination, cooperation and communication with the Chinese side in this matter,” he added.

“The Chinese side does not cooperate with Nepali investigating authorities as much as they should.”

Thakuri was Director at Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) when Nepal Police busted a racket in 2015 that used to run a marriage bureau in Kathmandu and used to lure young girls into marriage with Korean and Chinese men. We did not get enough support and cooperation in the investigation process in that case too, Thakuri recalled.

According to Superintendent Gautam Mishra, spokesperson for the Anti Human Trafficking Investigation Bureau, so far six cases of luring Nepali women into marriage and selling them into prostitution have been registered with Nepali Police, four of them accusing involvement of the Chinese nationals.

“Victims do not come to the police due to fear, and also because communities and family members are non-cooperative,” he said. “Even when cases are reported to the police, the victims often withdraw their complaints as they are lured with financial support and they turn hostile while giving testimony at the court.”

Talking to The DMN News, a local from Nuwakot shared, “Last year, a local woman from a remote village in Nuwakot disappeared for over a year. In February this year, she reappeared in the village with two Chinese nationals.

She informed the villagers that she had married a Chinese man and that the Chinese nationals accompanying her were her relatives.”

A few days later, she was found approaching her relatives and neighbors, convincing them to marry off their daughters to Chinese men for cash and better lives. The police received a tip-off about their plan. However, by the time the police reached the community, they had already fled the village.

This is just one example of how Chinese trafficking networks operate at the local levels. They recruit informal intermediaries within the community. These intermediaries are often individuals known and trusted by the community, such as relatives, neighbors, friends, community leaders, or influential figures.

Recently, the racket has also started mobilizing women who are either already married to Chinese men or pretend to be married, to lure locals by showcasing a seemingly prosperous life.

“The rackets have started mobilizing well-dressed women with abundant cash at the local level to entice impoverished villagers,” the local added. The 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report mentioned some forced marriage cases in China, many of which continued to demonstrate corollary indicators of sex trafficking and forced labor,

were mediated at the village level; these proceedings rarely culminated in a guilty verdict through which to grant restitution to the victims. The 2022 Trafficking in Persons Report states that some Nepali women who agree to arranged marriages through Nepali companies to men in China and South Korea are forced into domestic servitude.

***All names of the victims have been changed for their safety, and to protect their identities.**

We encourage the free republication and sharing of our stories. The DMN News must be credited. Kindly please include a line that reads: “This story was originally published by The DMN News.” If the stories and articles are republished in online platforms, you must link the words “The DMN News” to the original URL of the story on thedmnnews.com.

THE
DMN
NEWS

Democracy Media Network
+977 9851364909
info@thedmnnews.com

Democracy
Media Network