

## INDIA FACTS ON PROSTITUTION



From the book "Falkland Road," a photograph of a prostitute, Kamia, with a customer behind curtains, in Bombay, India, Photo: [Mary Ellen Mark](#)

13-year-old Mira of Nepal was offered a job as a domestic worker in Bombay, India. She arrived at a brothel on Bombay's Falkland Road, where tens of thousands of young women are displayed in row after row of zoo-like animal cages. Her father had been duped into giving her to a trafficker. When she refused to have sex, she was dragged into a torture chamber in a dark alley used for 'breaking in' new girls.

She was locked in a narrow, windowless room without food or water. On the fourth day, one of the madam's thugs (goonda) wrestled her to the floor and banged her head against the concrete until she passed out. When she awoke, she was naked; a rattan cane smeared with pureed red chili peppers shoved into her vagina. Later she was raped by the goonda..... Afterwards, she complied with their demands. The madam told Mira that she had been sold to the brothel for 50,000 rupees (about US\$1,700), that she had to work until she paid off her debt. Mira was sold to a client who then became her pimp.



A photograph of Putla and Rekha, on Falkland Road, in Bombay. Photo: [Mary Ellen Mark](#)

India , along with Thailand and the Philippines, has 1.3 million children in its sex-trade centers. The children come from relatively poorer areas and are trafficked to relatively richer ones.

India and Pakistan are the main destinations for children under 16 who are trafficked in south Asia.

Districts bordering Maharashtra and Karnataka, known as the "devadasi belt," have trafficking structures operating at various levels.

The women here are in prostitution either because their husbands deserted them, or they are trafficked through coercion and deception. Many are devadasi dedicated into prostitution for the goddess Yellamma. In one Karnataka brothel, all 15 girls are devadasi.



Saradh, 36, is a prostitute in Chilakaluripet, India, a southern town along the national highway. The town is a center for H.I.V. infection. Photo: Tyler Hicks/The New York Times.

Women and children from India are sent to nations of the Middle East daily. Girls in prostitution and domestic service in India, Pakistan and the Middle East are tortured, held in virtual imprisonment, sexually abused, and raped.

In Bombay, children as young as 9 are bought for up to 60,000 rupees, or US\$2,000, at auctions where Arabs bid against Indian men who believe sleeping with a virgin cures gonorrhea and syphilis.

### **160,000 Nepalese women are held in India's brothels.**

About 5,000-7,000 Nepalese girls are trafficked to India every day. 100,000-160,000 Nepalese girls are prostituted in brothels in India. About 45,000 Nepalese girls are in the brothels of Bombay and 40,000 in Calcutta.

In 2006, 13 year old Tulasa was abducted from a village near Kathmandu in Nepal and sold to a brothel in Bombay. She was dressed in European-style clothes and taken to luxury hotels to serve mostly Arab clients until a hotel manager called the police. Hospitalized, Tulasa was found to be suffering from three types of venereal disease and tuberculosis. - There are approximately 10 million prostitutes in India.



**Throwing a stone at the police to protest against the sex racket.**

There are more than 100,000 women in prostitution in Bombay, Asia's largest sex industry center. At least 2,000 women are in prostitution along the Baina beachfront in Goa. There are 300,000-500,000 children in prostitution in India.

90% of the 100,000 women in prostitution in Bombay are indentured slaves. Of 1,000 red light districts all over India, cage prostitutes are mostly minors, often from Nepal and Bangladesh.

The red light district in Bombay generates at least \$400 million a year in revenue, with 100,000 prostitutes servicing men 365 days a year, averaging 6 customers a day, at \$2 each.

\* \* \* \* \*

DS