

Oral statement: 53rd regular session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children

Delivered by Jharna Das
On behalf of the International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN)

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Mr. President,

IDSN and Parittran welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur's visit to Bangladesh, which highlighted the vulnerabilities of Dalit children to child trafficking. Dalit children are often mistreated in schools and subjected to abuse from both students and teachers. These factors, in addition to inadequate support and pressure to provide for the family, lead to high dropout rates. Many of these children also fall victim to sexual exploitation and bonded labour trafficking.

Dalit girls suffer multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination due to both caste and gender. Facing sexual and psychological harassment in educational institutions further discourages them from attending schools or colleges. Studies have found only 6% of Dalit girls complete a secondary level education. Dalit women and girls are often victims of many kinds of violations, including sexual abuse and violence. They are displaced; pushed into forced or bonded labour, prostitution and trafficking.

We call on Bangladesh to develop and implement a National Action Plan to eliminate caste-based discrimination, with an emphasis on Dalit women and girls. Thank you.