

## Human Trafficking Awareness Programme by AICUF, St. Xavier's College

The Justice Unit of the AICUF Unit, St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, organized a Human Trafficking Awareness Programme on 29th August 2025. Led by Father Anburaj Manuel SJ. The session aimed to sensitize students to the scale, causes, and consequences of human trafficking, while highlighting legal remedies and preventive strategies.

The programme combined slide presentations with survivor video testimonies, making the issue both data-driven and emotionally impactful. Survivors' accounts of coercion, exploitation, and prolonged suffering highlighted the grave human cost of trafficking. The session addressed the magnitude of trafficking in India and globally: over 10,000 cases reported in India but only 1,031 convictions; a conviction rate of 4.8% between 2018–2022. Globally, traffickers earn an estimated \$150 billion annually, exploiting 21 million victims—71% women and girls, and 29% men and boys—primarily through sexual exploitation (54%) and forced labour (38%).

Participants were introduced to key legal provisions under the Indian Penal Code, including Sections 363, 363A, 366, 366B, and 368, covering kidnapping, abduction, and trafficking-related crimes. The session also explored root causes such as poverty, unemployment, violence, and political instability, alongside demand factors like cheap labour and the sex trade. Pathways into trafficking often involve deception, coercion, threats, and control mechanisms.

The “way forward” emphasized education on safe migration, stronger child protection laws, community vigilance, ethical recruitment practices, and collaboration with NGOs. Victim-centered rehabilitation and advocacy for better data and faster trials were also stressed.

The session successfully combined legal knowledge, statistics, and human stories to provide a holistic understanding of trafficking. Students left with a clearer sense of the systemic challenges and concrete actions they can support in prevention, protection, and advocacy.

