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The Hindu: International Reports-Page 12

27.6 million people engaged in forced labour in 2021: ILO

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NEW DELHI

A study by the International Labour Organization (ILO), released in Geneva on Tuesday, has found that forced labour generates illegal profits worth \$36 billion per year.

This is an increase of 37% of such illegal profits since 2014 and the study said this is fuelled by both a growth in the number of people forced into labour, as well as higher profits generated from the exploitation of victims. For the study, surveys have been conducted among workers, including Indians in Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

The report titled “Profits and poverty: The economics of forced labour” also estimates that traffickers and criminals are generating close to \$10,000 per victim, up from \$8,269 (adjusted for inflation) a decade ago. “Total annual illegal profits from forced

It perpetuates cycles of poverty and strikes at the heart of human dignity, says report

labour are highest in Europe and Central Asia (\$84 billion), followed by Asia and the Pacific (\$62 billion), the Americas (\$52 billion), Africa (\$20 billion), and the Arab States (\$18 billion),” the report said.

The report also said forced commercial sexual exploitation accounts for more than two-thirds (73%) of the total illegal profits, despite accounting for only 27% of the total number of victims in privately imposed labour. “After forced commercial sexual exploitation, the sector with the highest annual illegal profits from forced labour is industry, at US\$35 billion, followed by services (US\$20.8 billion), agriculture (US\$5.0 billion),

and domestic work (US\$2.6 billion). These illegal profits are the wages that rightfully belong in the pockets of workers but instead remain in the hands of their exploiters, as a result of their coercive practices,” ILO Director-General Gilbert F. Houngbo said.

“Forced labour perpetuates cycles of poverty and exploitation and strikes at the heart of human dignity. We now know that the situation has only got worse. The international community must urgently come together to take action to end this injustice,” said the ILO Director-General.

There were 27.6 million people engaged in forced labour on any given day in 2021, the report said, meaning 3.5 people for every 1,000 people in the world. “Between 2016 and 2021, the number of people in forced labour increased by 2.7 million,” it said.

- The report titled “**Profits and poverty: The economics of forced labour**” was released by the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- It has found that forced labour generates illegal profits worth \$36 billion per year.
- This is an increase of 37% of such illegal profits since 2014 and this is fuelled by both a growth in the number of people forced into labour, as well as higher profits generated from the exploitation of victims.
 - For the study, surveys have been conducted among workers, including Indian workers in Saudi Arabia and Qatar.
- Total annual illegal profits from forced labour are highest in **Europe and Central Asia** (\$84 billion), followed by **Asia and the Pacific** (\$62 billion), the Americas (\$52 billion), Africa (\$20 billion), and the Arab States (\$18 billion).
- There were 27.6 million people engaged in forced labour on any given day in 2021, meaning 3.5 people for every 1,000 people in the world.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu: Space

T.N. start-up to launch its first rocket on Friday



- The Chennai headquartered space start-up **Agnikul Cosmos Private Limited** will be launching its first rocket Agnibaan Sub Orbital Technology Demonstrator (SOrTeD) from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, in Sriharikota.
- Agnibaan SOrTeD — will be India's first launch from a private launchpad, India's first semi-cryogenic engine powered rocket launch and the world's first single piece 3D printed engine designed and built indigenously.
- Agnikul Cosmos became the first company in the country to sign an agreement with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) under the **IN-SPACE initiative** to have access to the space agency's expertise and its facilities to build Agnibaan in December 2020.
- "This would be India's first liquid oxygen-kerosene rocket flight in India, from India's first privately developed launchpad, in Sriharikota."
- Agnikul's rocket is the second privately-developed rocket in India. In 2022, **Vikram-S** (designed and developed by **Skyroot Aerospace**), India's first privately-developed rocket, lifted off from a launchpad in Sriharikota.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu: IR/Environment

India to join U.S.-led carbon market project



- India has decided to join at least one of the four cooperative work programmes unveiled last week under the '**clean energy pillar**' of the Indo Pacific Economic Framework (**IPEF**).
- The IPEF, an initiative led by U.S. President Joe Biden, was unveiled in May 2022, bringing together 14 regional partners — Australia, Brunei, Fiji, **India**, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the U.S. and Vietnam.
- IPEF seeks to strengthen economic engagement among partner countries with the goal of advancing growth, peace and prosperity in the region.
- The framework is structured around **four pillars** relating to Trade (Pillar I); Supply Chains (Pillar II); Clean Economy (Pillar III); and Fair Economy (Pillar IV). **India had** joined Pillars II to IV of IPEF while it has an **observer status in Pillar-I**.
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HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Indian Express: Environment

WORLD AIR QUALITY REPORT

Delhi tops the list — world's most polluted capital city in 2023

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 19

DELHI WAS the most polluted capital city in the world last year, and the third most polluted city in India after Begusarai and Guwahati in terms of PM (Particulate Matter) 2.5 levels, according to the World Air Quality Report for 2023.

The report was prepared by IQAir, a Swiss air quality technology company. It uses data from monitoring stations of government agencies, educational institutions, and non-profits across the world, the report said.

In 2023, Delhi's annual average PM 2.5 level was 92.7 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ — placing the Indian national capital at the top of a list of 114 capital cities in the world. This was followed by Dhaka in Bangladesh,

DELHI'S PM 2.5 LEVELS IN 2023



- The 'World Air Quality Report 2023' by IQAir revealed that **Seven countries met the WHO annual PM2.5 guideline** (annual average of 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ or less): **Australia, Estonia, Finland, Grenada, Iceland, Mauritius, and New Zealand.**
- The top five most polluted countries in 2023 were:
 - Bangladesh (79.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) more than 15 times higher than the WHO PM2.5 annual guideline
 - Pakistan (73.7 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) more than 14 times higher than the WHO PM2.5 annual guideline
 - India (54.4 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) more than 10 times higher than the WHO PM2.5 annual guideline
 - India had eight of the world's 10 most polluted cities.
 - Tajikistan (49.0 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) more than 9 times higher than the WHO PM2.5 annual guideline
 - Burkina Faso (46.6 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) more than 9 times higher than the WHO PM2.5 annual guideline

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Indian Express: Environment

2023 warmest year on record, 2014-23 warmest decade ever, confirms WMO

In its annual State of the Climate Report, the WMO has said that global mean surface temperature in 2023 was 1.45 degree Celsius higher than the average of the 1850-1900 pre-industrial period.



- The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) has made it official: 2023 was the warmest year on record, while the past decade (2014-23) was the warmest ever,
- In its annual **State of the Climate Report**, the WMO has said that the global mean surface temperature in 2023 was 1.45 degrees Celsius higher than the average of the 1850-1900 pre-industrial period.
- The decadal average of the global mean surface temperature between **2014 and 2023 was 1.2 degrees Celsius** higher than the pre-industrial average, making it the warmest 10-year period on record.
- The WMO report noted that the observed concentrations of three main greenhouse gases — carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide — also touched new records in 2022, the last year for which consolidated global figures were available.
- According to WMO, at least 32 per cent area of the total global oceans suffered from marine heatwave everyday last year (23 per cent area during the 2016 El Nino episode).