



Social Justice

Call for Safer and Healthier Working Environments: ILO

Tags:

- GS Paper - 1
- Population and Associated Issues
- GS Paper - 2
- Government Policies & Interventions
- Human Resource
- Health

For Prelims: Safer and Healthier Working Environments, International Labour Organization, Asia-Pacific region, World Congress on Safety and Health at Work (WCSHW).

For Mains: Safer and Healthier Working Environments: ILO, Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Why in News?

Recently, the ILO (International Labour Organization) has released a report titled '**A Call for Safer and Healthier Working Environments**', which will be discussed at the **23rd World Congress on Safety and Health at Work (WCSHW)** in Sydney, Australia.

- The WCSHW, first held in 1955, is one of the largest international conferences for **work health and safety**. It aims to connect global leaders in safety and harm prevention from over 120 countries.

What are the Key Highlights of the Report?

- **Annual Deaths:**
 - Approximately 30 lakh (3 million) workers globally die each year due to work-related accidents and diseases.
 - **More than 63% of these** deaths occur in the Asia-Pacific region.
- **Major Causes of Deaths:**
 - Long working hours (55 hours or more per week) **led to the most fatalities in 2016**, accounting for nearly 7.45 lakh deaths.
 - Exposure to occupational particulate matter, **gases, and fumes resulted in around 4.5 lakh deaths.**
 - Occupational injuries caused approximately 3.63 lakh deaths.
- **Fatal Occupational Injury Rate (FOIR):**
 - Sectors such as mining and quarrying, construction, and utilities were identified as the **most hazardous globally based on fatal occupational injury rates.**
 - The FOIR is a **statistical measure used to quantify** the number of deaths resulting from work-related accidents or injuries within a specific occupational group, industry, or geographic region over a specified period.
- **ILO Conventions:**
 - So far 79 out of the 187 member countries **have ratified the ILO Occupational Safety and Health Convention**, while 62 countries have ratified the **Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006.**
 - **India has not ratified** both the conventions. Recently, in the wake of Uttarkashi tunnel incident , the Central

Trade Unions had urged the Union government to ratify the conventions.

- **Work-Related Diseases:**

- A significant portion of work-related deaths (26 lakh) is attributed to **work-related diseases**, including circulatory diseases, **malignant neoplasms (Cancerous tumours)**, and **respiratory diseases**.
- Changing trends in diseases due to occupational exposure, such as increased **cases of trachea, bronchus, and lung cancers attributable** to chromium exposure, and rising cases of mesothelioma due to asbestos exposure.

- **Decrease in Certain Health Risks:**

- Deaths due to exposure to asthmagens and particulate matter, gases, and fumes have decreased by over 20%.

- **Recommendations:**

- ILO called for five categories of **“Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work”** for ensuring safety and health at work. These principles include:
 - Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
 - Elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labor
 - Abolition of child labor
 - Elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
 - A safe and healthy working environment

What is the International Labor Organization?

- It is the only tripartite United Nation **(UN) agency**. It brings together governments, employers and workers of 187

member States (India is a member), to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.

- It received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969.

- It was established in 1919 by the Treaty of Versailles as an affiliated agency of the League of Nations and became the first affiliated specialized agency of the UN in 1946.
- Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. International Labour Organization's Conventions 138 and 182 are related to (2018)

- (a) Child Labour
- (b) Adaptation of agricultural practices to global climate change
- (c) Regulation of food prices and food security
- (d) Gender parity at the workplace

Ans: (a)

Exp:

☒ In 2017, the Union Cabinet, GoI approved ratification of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

☒ Convention No. 138: India is the 170th ILO Member state to ratify Convention No. 138, which requires state parties to set a minimum age under which no one shall be admitted to employment or work in any occupation, except for light work and artistic performances.

☒ Convention No. 182: India also became the ILO's 181st Member state to ratify Convention No. 182. This calls for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including slavery, forced labour and trafficking; the use of children in armed conflict; the use of a child for

prostitution, pornography and in illicit activities (such as drug trafficking); and hazardous work.

☒ These all are in line with the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016, which completely prohibits employment or work of children below 14 years in any occupation or process and also prohibits the employment of adolescents (14 to 18 years) in hazardous occupations and processes.

☒ Additionally, the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Central Rules, as recently amended, for the first time provide for a broad and a specific framework for the prevention, prohibition, rescue and rehabilitation of child and adolescent workers.

☒ With ratification of the two core ILO Conventions, India has ratified six out of eight core ILO Conventions. Four other conventions relate to abolition of forced labour, equal remuneration and no discrimination between men and women in employment and occupation.

☒ Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer.

