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Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018: UN

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The recent study from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has shown that human trafficking is on the rise with sexual exploitation of victims as the main driver.

- The 2018 UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons is the **fourth of its kind** mandated by the **General Assembly** through the **2010 United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons**.
- It covers 142 countries and provides an overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at global, regional and national levels, based primarily on trafficking cases detected between 2014 and 2016.
- The main focus of the report was on the **impact of armed conflict on trafficking**. In conflict zones, where the rule of law is weak, and civilians have little protection from crime, armed groups and criminals take the opportunity to traffic them to offer as incentives to recruit new fighters.
- **Article 23 of the Constitution of India** prohibits trafficking in any form. It prohibits trafficking in human beings and beggar and other forms of forced labor making provisions for punishment of the contravention of such laws.

Key Findings

- **Victims:** Women and girls make up most trafficking victims worldwide. Almost three-quarters of them are trafficked for sexual exploitation, and 35% (women and girls) are trafficked for forced labor.
Children now account for 30% of those being trafficked, and far more girls are detected than boys.
- **Factors:** Trafficking for sexual exploitation is the most prevalent form in European countries, whilst in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, forced labour is the main factor.
- **Region:** Victims are trafficked from most South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, and to a limited extent also from Nepal and Sri Lanka.

- **Detection and Reporting:** Asia and the Americas are the regions which have seen the largest increase in the numbers of victims detected, which may be explained by improved methods of detecting, recording and reporting data on trafficking — or a real increase in the number of victims.
 - Although, there has been an **increase in the number of convictions** for trafficking in these regions, the study concluding that large areas of impunity still exist in many Asian and African countries, and **conviction rates for trafficking remain very low.**
 - While the average numbers of reported victims had fluctuated during the earlier years for which UNODC had collected data, the global trend has shown a **steady increase since 2010.**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

- UNODC is mandated to assist the Member States in their struggle against illicit drugs, crime and terrorism.
- It was established in **1997 through a merger** between the United Nations Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention.
- UNODC relies on **voluntary contributions**, mainly from Governments, for 90% of its budget.
- In 2013, the **General Assembly designated July 30** as the **World Day against Trafficking in Persons.**

Way Forward

- Addressing human trafficking is a key part of the **UN Sustainable Development Agenda**, requiring the Member States to monitor progress in tackling the problem, and report the number of victims by sex, age and form of exploitation.
- However, significant gaps in knowledge remain, with many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and some parts of East Asia still lacking sufficient capacity to record and share data on trafficking in persons.
- This report highlights the need to **step up technical assistance** and **strengthen cooperation**, to support all countries to protect victims and bring criminals to justice, and **achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.**