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More Than 1 Million People in Russia Live as Slaves, Study Finds

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For the second year, India was found to have by far the greatest number of slaves, at 14.3 million people.

An Australian-based human rights group has estimated 1.05 million people in Russia live as slaves.

The Walk Free Foundation, an Australian-based human rights group, estimated in its inaugural slavery index last year that 29.8 million people worldwide were born into servitude, trafficked for sex work, trapped in debt bondage or exploited for forced labor.

Releasing its second annual index, Walk Free increased its estimate of the number of slaves to 35.8 million, saying this was due to better data collection and slavery being uncovered in areas where it had not been found previously.

For the second year, the index of 167 countries found India had by far the greatest number of slaves. Up to 14.3 million people in its population of 1.25 billion were victims of slavery, ranging from prostitution to bonded labor.

The index showed that 10 countries alone account for 71 percent of the world's slaves.

After India, China has the most slaves with 3.2 million, then Pakistan (2.1 million), Uzbekistan (1.2 million), Russia (1.05 million), Nigeria (834,200), Democratic Republic of Congo (762,900), Indonesia (714,100), Bangladesh (680,900) and Thailand (475,300.)

Mauritania was again the country where slavery was most prevalent by head of population while Qatar — like Russia a World Cup host country — rose up the rank from 96th place to be listed as the fourth worst country by percentage of the population.

"From children denied an education by being forced to work or marry early, to men unable to leave their work because of crushing debts they owe to recruitment agents, to women and girls exploited as unpaid, abused domestic workers, modern slavery has many faces," the report said.

The index defines slavery as the control or possession of people in such a way as to deprive them of their freedom with the intention of exploiting them for profit or sex, usually through violence, coercion or deception.

The definition includes indentured servitude, forced marriage and the abduction of children to serve in wars.

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