India Ratified ILO's convention

What did India ratify?

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- About 4.3 million children wake up to a day of labour and not school. Another 9.8 million are officially out-of-school.
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- Child labour perpetuates illiteracy and poverty. It is the root cause of organised crimes such as human trafficking, terror and drug mafia.
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- The Government of India decided last week to ratify the **International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour and Convention 138 on Minimum Age of Employment.**
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- This decision will have a path-breaking impact on the lives of those who are forced to remain on the margins of society and subject to exploitative conditions.
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What are the bottlenecks?

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- The main bottleneck in the way of India ratifying Conventions 182 and 138 was addressing forced or compulsory recruitment of children and appropriately raising the age of employment in hazardous occupations from 14 to 18 years.
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- Consequent to the passing of the **Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2016** by the Indian Parliament prohibiting the employment of children up to 14 years of age, and children up to 18 years of age in hazardous occupations, it was imperative that we ratified Conventions 182 and 138.
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- Moreover, our failure to ratify the two conventions, which are two of the eight core labour conventions, despite being a founder-member of the ILO,

reflected poorly on us as a nation.
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What measures Govt. may take?

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- As a matter of urgency, the government will take immediate and effective measures to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour: child slavery (including the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, and forced recruitment for armed conflict), child prostitution and their use in pornography, use of children for illicit activities such as drug trafficking, and exposure to any hazardous work which is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.
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Way ahead:

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- An ideal law guides the way and doesn't dictate. Under the provisions of the ILO Conventions 182 and 138, India will not adhere to a fixed deadline by which the worst forms of child labour must be eliminated.
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- It will ultimately depend on the level of moral courage, public concern, social empathy, political will and the implementation of resources invested in the development and protection of children.
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