

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3551
ANSWERED ON:03.09.2012
BONDED LABOUR
Kumar Shri Shailendra

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether cases of forced labour by men, women and children have increased in the country;
- (b) if so, whether people are forced to bonded labourers due to debts;
- (c) if so, the names of trade/industries where such bonded labourers are engaged;
- (d) whether cases of sexual exploitation and physical tortures to such labourers have been reported;
- (e) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government for the welfare and protection of such labourers?

Answer

ANSWER MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE)

(a) to (c): The Constitution of India under Article 23(1) prohibits 'Beggar' and other similar forms of forced labour. The bonded labour system was abolished throughout the country w.e.f 25th October, 1975 under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Ordinance which was replaced by Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1978. As per the Act, no person is allowed to make an advance under or in pursuance of the bonded labour system and no one can compel any person to render any bonded labour or other form of forced labour. As and when existence of bonded labour is detected, such persons are identified for rehabilitation.

(d) & (e): As 'Public Order' is a state subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the State Government to take necessary action for protecting people in the State. The State Governments are empowered to take action for protection of people.

(f): In order to assist the State Governments in the task of rehabilitation of identified and released bonded labourers, a Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour is in operation since May, 1978. Under the Scheme, rehabilitation assistance @ Rs. 20,000/- per bonded labour is provided which is equally shared by the Central and State Government.

A Special Group has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Labour & Employment) to review and monitor the implementation of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. The Group is holding region-wise meetings from time to time to impress upon the State Governments to effectively implement the Act.

In collaboration with ILO, the Central Government and State Government of Tamil Nadu have launched a pilot project in the State for the purpose of reducing vulnerability to bondage through promotion of decent work. The project is being replicated in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Haryana.