

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2295

ANSWERED ON:03.08.2015

Elimination of Bonded Labour

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that bonded labour still exists in the country and if so, the details of the report with the Government and the measures being taken by the Government to root out the menace;
- (b) the programmes applicable for rescue and rehabilitation of bonded labour;
- (c) the number of bonded labourers rescued under the Bonded Labourers Rehabilitation Scheme being implemented by the Government so far along with the State-wise details thereof;
- (d) the amount of funds allocated and spent for rehabilitation of the bonded labourers rescued so far, district-wise in each of the States/UT; and
- (e) whether the States have sought additional amount of funds for the said purpose and if so, the decision taken by the Government thereon and the amount of funds allocated by the Government per labourer under the said scheme at present and whether the Government proposes to increase the said amount of funds and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (IC) FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
(SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA)

(a) & (b): Instances of prevalence of forced and bonded labour system are noticed now and then even after its abolition by law with effect from 25th October, 1975. The reasons are spelt out exhaustively at Section 2(g) of The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. The root of the problem lies in the social customs and economic compulsions and they are yet to change in the desired direction.

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Government of India has adopted a three-pronged strategy for abolition of bonded labour system: (i) The Constitution of India vide Art.23 prohibits forced labour; (ii) Central Government enacted the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976; The Act empowers Executive Magistrates to exercise powers of Judicial Magistrate of first or second class for trial of offences; Vigilance Committees at District and Sub-divisional levels have been prescribed to identify and rehabilitate bonded labourers and (iii) a Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour is under implementation since 1978 by which Central Government contributes Rs. 10000/- for each case of rehabilitation.

(c) & (d): Number of bonded labourers identified, released and rehabilitated and Central assistance released for rehabilitation of bonded labour up to 31.03.2015 is annexed.

(e): 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 borne by the Central and State Governments. In the case of North Eastern regions, 100% Central grants (without matching States share) are provided for rehabilitation of bonded labour if they express their inability to provide their share. However, only Arunachal Pradesh has availed the 100% Central assistance amounting to Rs. 568. 48 lakhs.

At present there is no proposal to increase the package of rehabilitation grant from Rs. 20,000 per bonded labour.

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