

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4696
ANSWERED ON:22.12.2014
ELIMINATION OF BONDED LABOUR
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Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether forced and bonded labour system continues to persist despite its abolition in the country and if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor;
- (b) the number of cases reported under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 during each of the last three years and the current year along with the action taken by the Government against the guilty during the said period;
- (c) the number of bonded labourers identified, released and rehabilitated along with the funds provided to the States under the scheme during the last three years and the current year, State/ UT-wise; and
- (d) the corrective steps taken by the Government to completely abolish bonded labour in the country?

Answer

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

(a): Under Article 23 of the Constitution, beggar and other similar forms of forced labour are prohibited and any contravention of this provision is an offence punishable in accordance with law.

The Bonded Labour System has been abolished by law throughout the country with effect from 25th October, 1975 under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Ordinance which was replaced by the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. As and when existence of bonded labour is detected, such persons are identified for rehabilitation. The responsibility for identifying and rehabilitating the bonded labourers lies with the respective State Governments.

According to the information received from State Governments, the total number of bonded labour identified and released is 2,99,322 as on 31.03.2014. The State-wise details are given below:

Name of the State	Number of Bonded Labourers Identified	Released	Rehabilitated
Andhra Pradesh	38,141	31,687	
Arunachal Pradesh	3,526	2,992	
Bihar	15,395	14,577	
Chhattisgarh	1362	1362	
Gujarat	64	64	
Haryana	594	92	
Jharkhand	196	196	
Karnataka	64,600	58,348	
Kerala	823	710	
Madhya Pradesh	13,317	12,392	
Maharashtra	1,404	1,325	
Odisha	50,441	47,313	
Punjab	252	252	
Rajasthan	7713	6556	
Tamil Nadu	65,573	65,573	
Uttar Pradesh	355,72	355,72	
Uttaranchal	5	5	
West Bengal	344	344	
TOTAL	2,99,322	2,79,360	

19962 Bonded Labourers are not available for rehabilitation either they have died or left the place without leaving their addresses.

(b) & (c): Under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 identification, release and rehabilitation of freed bonded labour is the direct responsibility of the concerned States/Union Territories. 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 Governments. The scheme also provides for financial assistance to the State Governments for conducting surveys, awareness generation activities and evaluatory studies.

The number of bonded labourers identified, released and rehabilitated along with the funds provided to the States under the scheme during the last three years and the current year is as under:

Year	No. of bonded labour identified, released and rehabilitated	Amount (in lakhs)
2011-12	4828	472.99
2012-13	3189	318.90
2013-14	1978	197.80
2014-15	853	85.30

(upto 30.11.2014)

(d): The Government has taken a series of initiatives to identify, release and rehabilitate bonded labourers in the country. A Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour has been under implementation since 1978 for their rehabilitation. An integrated convergence-based approach is adopted in a number of States to prevent and reduce vulnerability to bondage by converging schemes like National Employment Guarantee Programme, Primary Healthcare, Food rations, etc. at the District/Block level. Vigilance Committees at District and Sub-divisional levels have been activated to identify and rehabilitate bonded labourers.