

# REHABILITATION OF BONDED LABOUR

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Ministry of Labour & Employment

## Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour

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As per the information received from the States/UTs, the number of bonded labourers identified and released so far is as under:

Name of the State	Number of Bonded Labourers Identified and Released
Andhra Pradesh	38,141
Arunachal Pradesh	3,526
Assam	12
Bihar	17,886
Chhattisgarh	3,548
Gujarat	64
Haryana	594
Jharkhand	314
Karnataka	66,281
Kerala	823
Madhya Pradesh	13,319
Maharashtra	1,404
Odisha	51,441
Puducherry	09
Punjab	252
Rajasthan	7,872
Tamil Nadu	65,573
Uttar Pradesh	42,279
Uttaranchal	5
West Bengal	344
TOTAL	3,13,687

Article 23 of the Constitution of India prohibits “begar” and other similar forms of forced labour and further provide that any contravention of the said prohibition shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law. The Central Government is fully committed towards eradication of the bonded labour system.

Accordingly, Bonded Labour System has been abolished by law throughout the country with effect from 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1975 under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Ordinance which was replaced by The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976.

Under The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, States/Union Territories are mandated to implement the provisions of the Act. The District and Sub-Divisional Magistrates and the Vigilance Committees constituted under the Act have been entrusted with certain duties/responsibilities for implementation of the Act.

Under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 identification, release and rehabilitation of freed bonded labour is the direct responsibility of the concerned State Government/Union Territory.

In order to assist the States/UTs in the task of rehabilitation of identified and released bonded labourers, a Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour has been in operation since May, 1978. The Government has revamped the Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourers with effect from 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2016. The salient features of the ‘Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer, 2016’ are as under:

1. Financial assistance is provided for rehabilitation of a rescued bonded labourer at the rate of rupees one lakh for adult male beneficiary, Rs. 2 lakh for special category beneficiaries such as children including orphans or those rescued from organized & forced begging rings or other forms of forced child labour, and women and Rs. 3 lakh in cases of bonded or forced labour involving extreme cases of deprivation or marginalization such as trans-genders, or women or children rescued from ostensible sexual exploitation such as brothels, massage parlours, placement agencies etc., or trafficking, or in cases of differently abled persons, or in situations where the District Magistrate deems fit.
2. The financial assistance for rehabilitation is 100% funded by the Central Government.
3. The Scheme also provides for financial assistance of Rs. 4.50 lakh per district to the States for conducting survey of bonded labourers, Rs. 1.00 Lakh for evaluatory studies and Rs. 10 Lakhs per State per annum for awareness generation. Central Government will give 50% of the amount required for conducting Survey, Awareness Generation and Evaluatory Studies in advance. A State may conduct survey once in every three years per sensitive district. A State may conduct five Evaluatory Studies per year.

4. The release of rehabilitation assistance has been linked with conviction of the accused. However, immediate assistance upto Rs. 20,000/- may be provided to the rescued bonded labour by the District Administration irrespective of the status of conviction proceedings.
5. The Scheme provides for creation of a Bonded Labour Rehabilitation Fund at District level by each State with a permanent corpus of at least Rs. 10 lakh at the disposal of the District Magistrate for extending immediate help to the released bonded labourers.
6. The benefits prescribed above shall be, in addition to, other cash or non-cash benefits which a beneficiary under this scheme is entitled to, by or under any other scheme or law applicable for the time being in force.

This Financial year i.e. 2018-19, a Budget Estimate of Rs. 10.00 Crores has been allocated by the Government under the Central Sector Scheme for the Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour, 2016.

This information was given by Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar Union Minister of State (I/C) for Labour and Employment in written reply to a question in Lok Sabha today.

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