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WELFARE AND REHABILITATION OF BONDED LABOURERS

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Ministry of Labour & Employment

Welfare and Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourers

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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 has been in operation since May, 1978. The Central Government has revamped the Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourers with effect from 17th May, 2016. The salient features of the 'Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer, 2016' are as under:

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. The financial assistance for rehabilitation is 100% funded by the Central Government.

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.

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.

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.

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

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