

POINT 6: SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR RURAL LABOUR

7.1 Rural labourers are mostly unorganised. Many of them remain unemployed in the lean agricultural season, particularly in the unirrigated land areas. Legitimate rights like minimum wages often remain elusive to them. In spite of all efforts, the practice of bonded labour is still prevalent in very few pockets of the country. Keeping all these in view, the TPP-86 monitors the following items under this point: -

- (i) Achieving full implementation of laws abolishing bonded labour;
- (ii) Facilitating the involvement of voluntary agencies in rehabilitation of bounded labourers, and
- (iii) Enforcement of minimum wages;

7.2 **Release and Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourers:-** The Government is operating a Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme for release and rehabilitation of identified bonded labourers since May 1978. Rehabilitation assistance is provided to the State Governments on receipt of complete proposals. As per the modified Scheme, rehabilitation assistance to the extent of Rs. 20,000/- per freed bonded labourer is provided. The expenditure on rehabilitation assistance is shared by the Central and State Government concerned on 50:50 basis. However, in the case of 7 North Eastern States rehabilitation grants are provided to the State Governments. Besides under the modified Centrally Sponsored Scheme 100% grants are fully provided to the State Government for conducting survey of bonded labour, evaluatory studies and awareness generation activities. Progress on rehabilitation of Bonded Labourers for the period April, 2003-March 2004, was rehabilitation of 2465 bonded labourers. Rs. 245.91 lakh funds were released to the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttaranchal and UttarPradesh for rehabilitation of 2465 Bonded Labourers. State-wise assistance released during the above period are given below:

Sl. No.	States	No. of Bonded Laboures Rehabilitated	Funds Released (Rs.in lakhs)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1	Andhra Pradesh	1699	169.90
2	Bihar	314	31.40
3	Orissa	39	3.31
4	Rajasthan	10	1.00
5	Uttaranchal	5	0.50
6	Uttar Pradesh	398	39.80
	Total	2465	245.91

In addition, during the reference year Rs.24.00 lakh has been provided to State Government of Maharashtra in 12 sensitive districts as Central assistance for conducting survey of bonded laboures evaluatory studies and awareness generation during 2003-04.

7.3 **Enforcement of Minimum Wages :-** In a labour surplus economy like India, fixation and enforcement of minimum wage can save labourers, particularly unorganised rural labourers, from exploitation. Minimum Wages Act, 1948 empowers both the Central and the State Governments to fix, review, revise and enforce minimum rates of wages in the scheduled employment falling under their respective jurisdictions. For effective implementation of the provision of the act, there are enforcement machinery at the state level as well at the Central level. In the Central sphere, the act is enforced through Central Industrial Relations Machinery working under the supervision of Chif Labour Commissioner (C) office. In the state sphere, the inspectors appointed by the State Governments enforce the provisions of the act. The detailsof the enforcement cases have been given in succeeding table.

Enforcement of Minimum Wages in the Central Sphere during 2002-2003

Sl. No.	Items	2002-2003
(1)	(2)	(3)
1	No of Inspection made	18444
2	No. of Irregularities detected	225777
3	No. of claim cases pending	5927
4	No. of claim cases filed during the year	2839
5	No. of claim cases decided	3019
6	No. of prosecution cases pending	49975
7	No. prosecution filed	7002
8	Prosecution cases decided	5102
9	Amount of compensation awarded	21371712
10	Total amount of fine imposed	2152700
11	Amount recovered	8368304

7.4 **Details regarding enforcement of Minimum Wages Act in different States/Union Territory Administrations are given in the following table:**

Details on Enforcement of Minimum Wages Act in different States/Union Territories During 2002 – 2003

Sl. No.	Name of the States/UTs	No. of inspec-tions made	No. of irregu-larities detec-ted	No. of irregularities rectified	No. of claims filed	No. of claims settled	No. of persons Prose-cuted	Amount of fine realised (in Rupees)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1	Andhra Pradesh	82578	1679	1160	21939	12978	973	464315
2	Arunachal Pr.	10	3	3	-	-	-	-
3	Assam	4562	983	800	13	8	61	12400
4	Bihar	242319	48801	39042	17243	1770	-	5305817
5	Chhatisgarh	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
6	Goa	763	923	199	22	11	102	118480

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7	Gujarat	109395	112373	59184	39	3	5389	2050225
8	Haryana	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
9	Himachal Pradesh	1059	901	631	2	Nil	374	86100
10	Jharkhand	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
11	J& K*	1078	683	564	2	1	120	7,500
12	Karnataka	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
13	Kerala *	7680	9742	-	25	73	191	188000
14	M. P.	1949	1218	632	74	94	403	298785
15	Maharashtra	64384	170447	72329	45	38	164	319850
16	Manipur	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
17	Meghalaya *	315	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
18	Mizoram	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
19	Nagaland	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
20	Orissa	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
21	Punjab *	6236	102	-	99	87	200	75900
22	Rajasthan	11076	760	315	223	354	217	37200
23	Sikkim	MHA has recently issued Presidential Notification extending Minimum Wages Act, 1948. Notification no. 1270(E) by the MHA on 31.10.2003						
24	Tamil Nadu	153301	10990	1246	2570	2808	2566	1731587
25	Tripura *	219	105	NIL	51	NIL	NIL	3000
26	Uttar Pradesh	378	NA	9	-	-	-	-
27	Uttranchal	4000	1198	499	257	196	278	44375
28	West Bengal	14591	3058	2744	2	4	183	80213
29	A & N Islands	150	150	-	23	49	41	6200
30	Chandigarh	254	181	-	97	57	91	34300
31	Dadra&Nagar Haveli *	33	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	2	NIL
32	Daman & Diu*	392	7	7	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
33	Delhi *	7534	4616	4030	628	593	488	475050
34	Lakshadweep	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
35	Pondicherry	5170	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

\* Data are partly  
NA - Not Available