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National Human Rights Commission
Sardar Patel Bhavan, New Delhi

Report on the visit of Member (Dr. KRSJ) to the State of Andhra Pradesh from
31.01.2002 to 03.02.2002

The Principal Secretary (Social Welfare), Government of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Jannat Hussain, IAS, the Commissioner (Social Welfare) Shri Samuel, IAS, and their team of officers and myself reviewed the bonded labour situation and the progress made in rehabilitation of the relieved bonded labourers. They had also presented their programme of action taken up to January 31, 2002. The Principal Secretary had apprised us of the review undertaken after my visit to Warrangal in December, 2001. He had informed that they had computerised the lists of released bonded labourers village and mandal-wise and also prepared maps showing the incidents of bonded labourers in 14 districts. The details have been mentioned in the report given to me. They have also given a chart as an annexure indicating that as on February 1, 2002, the total number of bonded labourers identified during the year 2001 till 31st January, 2002. A total number of 1471 released bonded labourers were yet to be rehabilitated from the overall figure of 30,818 bonded labourers. They have also given the chart relating to the amounts released during the year 2001-2002 for the implementation of the action plan for the released bonded labourers. A sum of Rs.709.60 lakh was released for ten districts where the incidents of bonded labourers are higher and action had been taken for the rehabilitation of the released bonded labourers and the balance of the bonded labourers yet to be rehabilitated was reiterated to be 1471.

I had requested the Principal Secretary and the Commissioner to keep on monitoring the process of their rehabilitation, simultaneously organise the identification

SG-PA&SP
7/3/2002

and release of bonded labour vigorously. The Commissioner had suggested that in the second week of March, 2002, he would arrange a video conference to address all the District Collectors so that I can directly come in contact with the District Collectors simultaneously and impress upon them the need to step up the on-going programme of implementation of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act. 16th and 17th February, 2002 have been fixed for reviewing the implementation in Karimnagar District and also it was decided to review the situation in respect of West Godavari District in the second week of March, 2002.

[Signature]
 (Justice Dr. K. Ramaswamy)
 Member.

Hon'ble Chairperson

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VISIT OF HON'BLE MEMBER
NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Dr.JUSTICE K. RAMASWAMY,(Retd.)

TO

ANDHRA PRADESH
FROM 31.01.2002 TO 03.02.2002

Commissioner of Social Welfare,
Andhra Pradesh,
Hyderabad.

NOTE ON REHABILITATION OF BONDED LABOUR

The Bonded Labour Abolition Act came into force on 25-10-1976.

The Supreme Court has issued the following directions in W.P.No.3922/85 dated 13-5-95 to all the State Governments.

- To identify and update the list of Bonded Labourers.
- To initiate Criminal Proceedings against employers of Bonded Labourers
- To extinguish the existing debt of bonded labourers and provide alternative livelihood,
- To collect details of bonded labourers and their employers through N.G.Os,
- To provide employment to bonded labourers as Agricultural labourers or to provide agricultural lands,
- To provide shelter, food, education, medical facilities etc., to the families of bonded labourers,

Government of Andhra Pradesh is committed to eradicate bonded labour in the State. Gram Panchayats have been involved with the work of identification of bonded labour and to take measures to eliminate bonded labour system in the society. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has already included identification of bonded labour in Janmabhoomi programme.

As per the Government of Andhra Pradesh Circular Memo.No.3695/H2/97-1 , SWD dt: 9-6-97, District level and Divisional level Vigilance and Monitoring Committees were reconstituted pursuant to the record of proceedings of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and directions of the National Human Rights Commission.

The State Level Screening Committee on Bonded Labour was constituted with Chief Secretary as Chairman, Commissioner of Social Welfare as member. The District Level Vigilance Committees, were formed in all the districts.

Since the inception of the Act, identification and rehabilitation has been done by the District Collectors. The latest report of Bonded Labour identified, district-wise up to 31-11-2001 is given in the Annexure-I. However in pursuance of the instructions of the Supreme Court and that of N.H.R.C, district Collectors were asked to conduct fresh survey and re-survey of all rehabilitated bonded labour to ascertain whether they have relapsed into bondage again or not.

During 12th and 13th round of 'JANMABHOOMI' programmes District Collectors were requested to give wide publicity on the evils of bonded labour and the punishment and penalties for the employers of bonded labourers and to conduct door to door survey of bonded labour with the nodal team in all the habitations. They were also requested to send the particulars of bonded labourers identified during 12th and 13th round of 'JANMABHOOMI'.

Government of Andhra Pradesh have introduced the identification bonded labourers in Janmabhoomi programme and performance of gram Panchayats are being assessed taking into consideration of the incidence of bonded labourers

The NGOs are also actively involved in the identification, release and rehabilitation of bonded labourers. The M.V.Foundation in Ranga Reddy District the Deccan Development Society in Medak District are the prominent NGOs working for the bonded labourers and their children. The M.V. foundation and Deccan Development Society are running coaching camps during summer for the children of bonded labourers and motivating to get them admitted in the regular schools.

In order to have special focus on the issue of Bonded Labourers, it was decided to call for district collectors meeting on 16-3-2001 of 9 districts viz., Ranga Reddy, Medak, Nizambad, Nalgonda, Mahabubnagar, Karimnagar, Khammam, Ananthapur, Warangal where the incidence of Bonded Labourers is on the higher side. The meeting was addressed by the Spl. Rapporteur, Sri K.R.Venugopal, Secretary Social Welfare and Commissioner, Social Welfare, M.D., SC Finance Corporation and the Registrar, Co-operative Societies. Collectors were sensitised to take up job of survey of identification of bonded labour seriously and to visit already released and rehabilitated bonded labourers and to assess their position and to take remedial steps. They were requested to involve reputed and genuine N.G.Os, Gram Panchayats and S.C & S.T Welfare Associations in the process of identification of bonded labourer. Collectors were asked to work out an integrated rehabilitation package involving, housing, education to children, and economic support scheme for the released bonded labourers. Prosecution was also asked to be carried out by the district Collectors.. The doubts raised by the district Collectors in the meeting were clarified and Collectors were asked to take up the job of bonded labour system in the right earnest.

In order to review the work carried out by the 9 district Collectors with regard to bonded labour system, another meeting of district Collectors was held on 28-3-2001 in which the district collectors were requested to put forth the efforts made and the results of those efforts. As a result of the intensive survey so far (i.e. upto 28-3-2001), 991 new bonded labourers were identified. District-wise new bonded labour identified is given below:

Mahabubnagar	681
Medak	106
Karimnagar	81
Khammam	65
Ananthapur	58
Total	991

From 29-3-2001 to 24-4-2001 the following Bonded labourers are identified as shown below district wise.

1. Nalgonda	--	1346
2. Medak	--	21
3. Khammam	--	102
4. Karimnagar	--	66
5. Cuddapah	--	1
Total	--	1536

It is submitted that upto 24-4-2001, 2527 bonded labourers have been identified and measures are being initiated for rehabilitation.

The survey work is in progress.

All rehabilitated bonded labour cases are also being re-visited and their present status is being ascertained.

The computerised lists of the bonded labourers village-wise and mandal-wise are received from Kurnool, Srikakulam, East Godavari, Ananthapur, Mahabubnagar, Nizamabad, Ranga Reddy, Prakasam, Nalgonda, Medak, Hyderabad and Khammam districts.

District maps showing the incidence of Bonded Labourers have been received from Srikakulam, East Godavari, Guntur, Ananthapur, Mahabubngar, Karimnagar, Nizambad, R.R, Medak, Khammam, Kurnool, Nalgonda, Hyderabad and Prakasam districts.

Co-operative Societies have been formed in the following districts:

District	No. of Co-operative Societies formed
1. Mahabubnagar	53
2. Medak	18
3. Ranga Reddy	10
4. Karimnagar	01
5. Hyderabad	01

The following districts have further submitted proposals for registration of co-operative societies:

1. Mahabubnagar	7
2. Nizamabad	12

The Hon'ble member of the N.H.R.C. , Justice Ramaswamy (Retd) had held meetings on 17-3-2000, 15-4-2000 and 16-6-2000 and 28-4-2001 and reviewed for effective implementation of the scheme. In the recent meeting held on 28-4-2001, the following decisions have taken.

- The need for early completion of the preparation of district maps.
- The released bonded labourers can be empowered by giving income generating and employment assured programmes for which necessary Government orders may be issued.
- For continuous and constant monitoring of the programme which will help in increase the awareness in the public and to keep the momentum continue in the district.
- The District Collectors should carry a copy of printed book showing the names of released and rehabilitated bonded labourers so that he can verify their condition during his visits to the villages.
- Self-help groups are to be formed with the released women bonded labourers.

- The report of district Collector, Warangal is not satisfactory.
- A workshop to be conducted at State level with the Collectors and Joint Collectors.
- Find out from all the District Collectors about the steps taken for rehabilitation of all the newly identified bonded labourers.

In pursuance of the above decisions in the said four meetings held by the Hon'ble member of the Commission, all the District Collectors have been addressed to take immediate action on the decisions of the Hon'ble Commission.

The Commissioner of Social Welfare had addressed District Collectors while communicating the decisions taken in the three meetings for constitution of District and Divisional Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committees in six districts, 2. Preparation of maps, 3. Formation co-operative societies, 4. Survey of bonded labourers, 5. Giving wide publicity to the scheme, 6. Release of 27 bonded labourers in Chittoor district.

The Commissionerate of Social Welfare had supplied material on bonded labour scheme to the District Collectors for wide publicity on identification, redemption and rehabilitation of bonded labourers. Government circulars on implementation of bonded labour scheme were communicated to all the district Collectors.

The District Collectors were addressed to form co-operative societies for bonded labourers as per the mandate of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and directions of the Human Rights Commission..

The Supreme Court has specifically given this item of work to the District and Divisional Level Committees which are not only expected to hold meetings but also to make field visits to identify the bonded labourers and take action.

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In pursuance of the above decisions Government of Andhra Pradesh have started 17 Bridge Courses schools under 'Mundadugu Programme' with a strength of 300 each. Another 18 Bridge Course School have been sanctioned in the (6) DPIP districts viz., Mahabubnagar, Adilabad, Anantapur, Chittoor, Vizianagaram, Srikakulam, with World Bank Assistance with a strength of 300 each.

The Chief Secretary held meeting with the Commissioner of Social Welfare and Managing Director, A.P.S.C.Finance Corporation on 7-7-2000 and 26-7-2001 and reviewed rehabilitation of bonded labour scheme and requested to submit action taken report on the decisions taken in the meeting of Collectors of Telangana districts held on 17-6-1999.

The Hon'ble member, National Human Rights Commission, Justice Ramaswamy (Retd) has visited the districts Mahabubnagar, Ranga Reddy, Medak Nalgonda and Nizamabad on 10-7-2000, 13-7-2000, 25-4-2001, 23-6-2001 and 12-11-2001 to review rehabilitation of bonded labourers. He has visited some Co-operative Societies of bonded labourers in the districts.

Progress of various activities under bonded Labour Abolition, survey and rehabilitation etc., was reviewed by Secretary (SW) on 9-2-2001 with Commissioner of Social Welfare and Managing Director, A.P.Schedueld Caste Cooperative Finance Corporation in the presence of Special Rapporteur, N.H.R.C., Sri K.R.Venugopal, IAS, (Retd). All the District Collectors have been addressed on 26-2-2001 to take personal interest and expedite the various activities with regard to bonded labour rehabilitation.

Special Rapporteur, N.H.R.C., Sri K.R.Venugual, I.A.S., (Retd) has personally visited many villages in some of the Bonded Labour prone districts i.e. Medak, Ranga Reddy, Nalgonda etc. He has personally interacted with released bonded labourers

and has also found new ones in some of the villages. He has interacted with the R.D.Os, District Collectors and other social workers in these districts.

The Govt., of Andhra Pradesh is committed for elimination of bonded labourer system. It has taken up the issue of identification, resurvey and rehabilitation of bonded labourers in an intensive manner.

The Chief Secretary to Government convened a State Level Screening Committee Meeting on 26-07-2001 and the following decisions were taken.

- Enforcement of Minimum Wages Act.
- Regular meetings of Divisional and District Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committee.
- Identification of occupations where incidences of Bonded Labour is very high.
- Ensuring credit without security at local level.
- Functioning of Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979 and Contract Labour Act, 1970.
- Amendment to the Act enhancing the penalty upto Rs.20,000/- and imprisonment upto 5 years by amending Sections 16 & 17 of the Act.
- Removal of Treasury Control on the expenditure on rehabilitation of Bonded labour as in the case of Monetary relief and Legal aid to victims of atrocities.
- Land purchase scheme for BC Bonded Labourers to be introduced.
- Agricultural service connections to the wells of Bonded labourers to be provided on priority.
- Admission of Bonded Labour children into Residential Schools in relaxation of existing admission rules.
- Launching of prosecutions against employers.
- Local bodies to be made responsible for identification of Bonded Labour.

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The following Districts have been launching prosecutions against the employers of Bonded Labour as per Sections 16 to 20 of the Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act 1976.

	District	No. of Prosecutions launched against employers.
1.	Cuddapah	Nil
2.	Mahabubnagar	1
3.	Srikakulam	Nil
4.	Guntur	Nil
5.	Vizianagaram	Nil
6.	Visakhapatnam	Nil
7.	East Godavary	1
8.	West Godavary	Nil
9.	Kurnool	Nil
10.	Ananthapur	51
11.	Karimnagar	2
12.	Nalgonda	Nil
13.	Medak	Nil
14.	Warangal	Nil
15.	Khammam	Nil
16.	Krishna	Nil
17.	Prakasham	Nil
18.	Nellore	Nil
19.	Adilabad	Nil
20.	Hyderabad	Nil

	Total	55

During 2001-2002 an amount of Rs.709.60 lakhs has been released for rehabilitation of 3548 freed Bonded Labourers to 10 districts is shown below. In which 2076 Bonded Labourers have been rehabilitated in six districts. The remaining 1472 Bonded Labourers are yet to be rehabilitated.

Action Plan for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour during 2001-2002:

District	Amount released	No. of B.L to be rehabilitated	So far rehabilitated	Balance to be rehabilitated
1. Prakasam	23.80 lakhs	119	Nil	119
2. Cuddapah	0.20 "	1	Nil	1
3. Ananthapura	11.60 "	58	50	8
4. Karimnagar	32.80 "	164	Nil	164
5. Nalgonda	269.20 "	1346	1346	Nil
6. Mahabubnagar	136.20 "	681	619	62
7. Khammam	33.40 "	167	31	136
8. Warangal	129.00 "	645	20	625
9. Medak	70.40 "	352	11	341
10. R.R	3.00 "	15	Nil	15
Total	709.60 lakhs	3548	2077	1471

The gist of work done in Karimnagar district is given below:

Collector, Karimnagar informed that he has constituted team of officers and have asked them to conduct re-survey of bonded labourers. He informed some bonded labour cases were identified in Brick kiln, quarry and released. Most of these bonded labourers are migrants from Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Mahabubnagar Districts. He informed that he called meeting of the quarry owners and brick kiln owners in the district and explained to them about the bonded labour system. To his surprise, he found that most of these people were not aware of existence and provision of Abolition of Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, 1976. Special Rapporteur informed that so long as there is any forced labour, they will be counted as the bonded labourers. He was asked to re-verify all such cases. Since inception 717 cases were identified. Out of them 553 cases

have been rehabilitated upto 31-3-2001. Still 164 are to be rehabilitated. For rehabilitation of 164 Bonded Labourers also necessary budget was released to the District Collector, Karimnagar. Process of fresh identification of Bonded Labourers is going on and concerned officers have been sensitized about the issue of Bonded Labour. His report is still awaited.

EAST GODAVARY: Since inception 623 Bonded Labourers were identified and they were rehabilitated. The District Collector was instructed to conduct survey for fresh identification of Bonded Labour. He informed that there are no Bonded Labourers in his district and submitted nil report. It has to be reviewed and date has to be fixed.

WEST GODAVARY: Since inception 58 Bonded Labourers were identified and they were rehabilitated. The District Collector was instructed to conduct survey for fresh identification of Bonded Labour. He informed that there are no Bonded Labourers in his the district and submitted nil report. It has to be reviewed with the District Collector by fixing convenient date.

The District Collectors are constantly reminded to submit information on the following items.

- a) Preparation of District Maps delineating Bonded Labour prone areas.
- b) Formation of District Level and Divisional Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committees.
- c) Launching of Prosecutions against the employers of Bonded Labour.
- d) Formation of Cooperative Societies for the freed Bonded Labourers.
- e) For convening regular meetings of District Level and Divisional Level review meetings and to submit minutes of meetings.
- f) For speedy rehabilitation of identified Bonded Labourers.
- g) To conduct re-survey to identify Bonded labourers during all Janmabhoomi programmes.

ANNEXURE

BONDED LABOURERS IDENTIFIED AND REHABILITATED AS ON 01-02-2002

Sl. No	District	No. of B.L identified upto Feb'2001	No. of B.L identified during Mar'2001 to Apr'2001	Total (3+4)	No. of B.L rehabilitated upto 31-3-2001	No. of B.L rehabilitated upto 30-11-2001	Total rehabilitated upto 30-11-2001 (6+7)	Balance to be rehabilitated upto 30-11-2001
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Srikakulam	10	0	10	10	0	10	0
2	Vizianagaram	51	0	51	51	0	51	0
3	Visakhapatnam	117	0	117	117	0	117	0
4	East Godavari	623	0	623	623	0	623	0
5	West Godavari	58	0	58	58	0	58	0
6	Krishna	683	0	683	683	0	683	0
7	Guntur	160	0	160	160	0	160	0
8	Prakasam	119	0	119	0	0	0	119
9	Nellore	129	0	129	129	0	129	0
10	Chittoor	22	0	22	22	0	22	0
11	Cuddapah	60	1	61	60	0	60	1
12	Ananthapur	461	58	519	461	50	511	8
13	Kurmool	41	0	41	41	0	41	0
14	Mahabubnagar	3821	681	4502	3821	619	4440	62
15	Naigonda	140	1346	1486	140	1346	1486	0
16	Medak	14029	127	14156	13804	11	13815	341
17	Hyderabad	136	0	136	136	0	136	0
18	Rangareddy	4598	0	4598	4583	0	4583	15
19	Warangal	1766	0	1766	1121	20	1141	625
20	Karimnagar	570	147	717	553	0	553	164
21	Khammam	957	167	1124	957	31	987	136
22	Nizamabad	1082	0	1082	1082	0	1082	0
23	Adilabad	130	0	130	130	0	130	0
Total		29763	2527	32290	28742	2077	30818	1471