

THE BONDED LABOUR SYSTEM (ABOLITION) ACT, 1976

- An Act to provide for the abolition of bonded labour system with a view to preventing the economic and physical exploitation of the weaker section of the people. This Act is extended to whole India. Section 2 defines many terms mainly 'advance', 'agreement', 'bonded debt (an advance obtained, or presumed to have been obtained by a bonded labourer)', 'bonded labourer (a labourer who incurs, or has, or is presumed to have, incurred or bonded debt under bonded labour system)', and bonded labour system is defined in details as follows:
- System of forced labour under which a debtor enters, into an agreement with the creditor:

a) in consideration of an advance obtained by him or by any of his lineal ascendants or descendants (whether or not such advance is evidenced by any document) and even interest on the amount taken, or

b) in pursuance of any customary or social obligation, or

c) in pursuance of an obligation devolving on him by succession or

d) by reason of his birth in any particular caste or community.

Debtor would

1) Render labour or service to the creditor or for the benefit of the creditor, for a specific period or for an unspecified period, either without wages or for nominal wages or less than rates fixed minimum by Government.

2) Forfeit the right of movement freely in India, forfeit the right to sell at market value any of his property or labour.

- Section 4 abolished this practice totally from India and all bonded labourers are free. No person shall make advance under the bonded labour system, or compel any person to render any bonded labour or other form of forced labour. Section 6 extinguished the liability to repay bonded debt. Property of bonded labourers to be freed from mortgage, etc. (Sec 7), and they will not be evicted from home shed. Vigilance Committee for every district in all states should be constituted having members from different sections of the society headed by District Magistrate. Anybody who compel or sustain bonded labourer may be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and also with fine which may extend to Rs. 2000.