

'Bonded Labour Act misused'

- Staff Reporter

Stating that the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976 is misused against power loom workers in the district, members of Kongu Nadu Makkal Desiya Katchi along with power loom workers submitted a petition to Collector V. Dakshinamoorthy here on Friday.

Over 5,000 power loom units are functioning in Tiruchengode and Komarapalayam areas in which over a lakh of workers are involved. Recently, 14 workers alleged that they were treated as bonded labourers and lodged a compliant with the Pallipalayam police. Revenue officials rescued their family members and their belongings from the unit.

The petition said that wages to the workers were paid regularly and properly. Many workers had received advance from the unit owners for their needs. However, members of a few organisations met the workers and informed them that they need not pay the advance money to the owners.

Also, they instigated the workers that they would be given compensation under the Act, if they complain against the owners.

"This resulted in workers lodging false complaints against the power loom owner in Pallipalayam," the petition said. The petition said that these incidents affected the industry and also caused loss to the owners. Over 400 power loom owners and cadre of the party tried to enter the Collectorate. However, police personnel prevented them.

Condemning it, they blocked the road outside the Collectorate.

The police pacified them and allowed a few members to submit petition to the Collector. They said that the Collector promised to look into the issue.

Printable version | Feb 10, 2016 10:33:08 AM | <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Tiruchirapalli/bonded-labour-act-misused/article8170316.ece>

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