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ANNEXURE-I

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON BONDED LABOUR HELD IN THE CHAMBERS OF
CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT ON 17/6/1999 AT 3.00 P.M. WITH
COLLECTORS OF SIX DISTRICTS.**

The Following Officers attended the Meeting:

Sarvasri

- 01. V. Anand Rao, I.A.S.,
- 02. N. Gopaldaswami
- 03. K.R. Venugopal, I.A.S. (Retd.)
- 04. K. Swaminathan, I.A.S.

05. S. Ray, I.A.S.

Chief Secretary to Govt.
Secretary General, N.H.R.C.
Special Rapporteur, N.H.R.C.
Special Chief Secretary to Govt.
(L.E. T. & F. Dept)
Principal Secretary to Govt.
Social Welfare Department

06. V.P.B. Nair, I.P.S.

07. G. Sudhir, I.A.S.

08. Mrs. Chaya Ratan, I.A.S.

09. G. Bhavani Prasad

10. G. Narendranath, I.A.S.

11. A.K. Tigidi, I.A.S.

12. R.S. Goela, I.A.S.

13. Asuthosh Mishra, I.A.S.

14. R.M. Gonela, I.A.S.

15. Aditya Nath Das, I.A.S.

16. Rajiv Ranjan Mishra, I.A.S.

17. Smt. Nilam Sawhney, I.A.S.

18. Mrs. Rani Kumudini, I.A.S.

19. G. Anantha Ramu, I.A.S.

Principal Secretary to Govt
Home Department

Secretary to Government,
Revenue Department

Secretary to Government
Education Department

Secretary to Government
Law Department

Joint Secretary to Govt.

Social Welfare Department

Commissioner of Social Welfare

Commissioner of Labour

Managing Director,
A.P.S.C.C.F.C. Limited.

Collector, Nizamabad.

Collector, Warangal

Collector, Medak

Collector, Nalgonda.

Collector, Ranga Reddy

Collector, Mahabubnagar

1. Sri Gopala Swami, Secretary General, National Human Rights Commission in his inaugural remarks has state that it is the responsibility of the State Government to implement the Bonded Labour Abolition Act and the N.H.R.C. is there to facilitate the work and of the State Government in any manner.
2. Sri K.R. Venugopal, Special Rapporteur, NHRC stated that he had toured two districts in Andhra Pradesh last year, had meetings with Sub-divisional Officers and Collectors and visited some villages as well. This year, he had toured Mahabubnagar and Nalgonda districts. He stated Andhra Pradesh has the distinction at one time of bringing back to centre stage the problem of bonded labour and it is assistance to the notice of the country. Unlike some other States, Government of Andhra Pradesh did not take the stand that there is no bonded labour in the State but has recognised the problem. However, the desired progress could be achieved if effective action is taken not only at the executive level but also at the political level. Once these two converse tangible action to eliminate bonded labour woved. He actually emerge, stated that meetings have to be conducted at various levels at regular intervals. This is not being done at the moment. The survey on bonded labour has to be completed within a time frame as the honest: 'have to be reported to the Supreme Court. He desired that the details of released bonded labour household should be put on the computer so that information can be accessed easily. He also suggested that the released bonded labourers should be organised into co-operative societies. Certain amount of funding will be available, though not on a large scale, from N.H.R.C., not only for this purpose but also for activities connected with child bonded labour. He advised that maps should be prepared for each district showing bonded labour prone areas and a consolidated map for the State, as a whole, prepared regarding the survey of bonded labourers he suggested that the non-governmental organisations should be associated so that the credibility of the survey will not be questioned.
3. Sri S. Ray, Principal Secretary to Government, Social Welfare Department narrated the historical perspective of the bonded labour system with reference to forced labour convention of International labour Organisation and the directions of the Supreme Court etc. He also stated that the definition of bonded labour as defined in the Act and also as given by the Supreme Court has been given to

Collectors so that ambiguity about definition and identification is set at rest. He requested the Collectors to give a time frame by which the identification and rehabilitation of bonded labour could take place.

4. Collector, Ranga Reddy District has stated that in her district bonded labour is prevalent in different spheres such as, (a) in agricultural labour -20,000 girl children are involved particularly in cotton cultivation (b) quarrying and (c) in brick kilns. She has also stated that in the factories there is child labour and Shramic vidyapeeth and Reddy Foundation are doing some effective work in this direction. As far as quarries are concerned, no non-governmental organisation is working for bonded labour. In Tandur area the bonded labour working in lemon grass cultivation have been rehabilitated successfully. The quarries are having 10 to 20 years leases and no work for elimination of bonded labour is done. She also stated that whenever she approaches labour Department they are saying that quarrying activity is under the control of Government of India. At this juncture the special Chief Secretary to Government, labour Department has suggested that the subject of quarrying of minor minerals can be given to the State Governments. Sri , K.R. Venugopal agreed to look into this and suggested that the bonded labour in the quarries can be taken care of by the district administration.
5. Collector, Nalgonda. has stated that in the agricultural sector the bonded labour are called "Jeetham" which is known to every body and It is accepted by everybody and It is difficult to take any steps to eliminate this practice. She stated that she conducted workshops in some Mandals regarding child labour. There was considerable discussions in the perception of the definition of bonded labour and Sri K.R. Venugopal has stated that the Jeetham has been clarified as bonded labour in the act itself and in various State Government Memorandums and there is no ambiguity in this regard. He has also stated that Supreme Court has appointed some Advocates and we can request them to visit Nalgonda and appraise about the legal aspects. He made a reference to "Palikapu" and who ever cannot change his master at his will is a bonded labour. He has also stated that we have to sensitise the Mandai Revenue Officers about legal issue of the definition. 70 The Collector, Nalgonda has suggested that women groups (DWCRA) should be entrusted with the identification and that they will do a better job.
6. The Collector, Medak has stated that he wants to sensitise the officials for 7 or 8 days so that the officials can tackle the problem very effectively and he also suggested for associating some Non-Governmental organisations. As far as the rehabilitation is concerned there are about 200 bonded labour who are yet to be rehabilitated and he has also stated that some brokers have exploited the situation and taken money by producing bogus bonded labourers some time back in his district.
7. Collector, Mahabubnagar has stated that a lot of work is to be done for sensitizing the people. He has also stated that survey should be done at the block level also and that he can do this some time after the elections. Work in cotton fields has become a hazardous activity to children working in the field and suggested that work in cotton field should be identified as a hazardous activity.
8. Special Chief Secretary to Government, Labour, Employment, Training and Factories Department has stated sericulture has been identified as a hazardous activity already. He suggested that perhaps cotton cultivation could also be considered on the same footing

9. Collector, Warangal has stated that he can do identification with the help of non-governmental organisations. But he wants to do it in an indirect way such as wage identification and subsequently identifying the bonded labour. He suggested that rehabilitation should be only on land based schemes and also stated that in his district a large number of people are migrants as they go back to their native place.
10. Collector, Nizamabad stated that he has identified 20,000 child labour in beedi manufacturing and put them in schools the schools are run by NCLP with the help of non-governmental organisations and he also conducted some workshops for other categories of children also.
11. Sri S. Ray, Principal Secretary (SW) has suggested (a) to organise workshops in some selected mandals (10 to 15) in each district which have high incidence of bonded labour for officials of the Revenue, Police, S.C. Corporation, S. W. Department and D.R.D.A. to sensitise them to these problems and this can be done immediately; (b) he has also suggested to send teams of officials along with non-governmental organizations for identification of bonded labour after the elections some time in October 1999. The identification can be done at two levels, one at the level of adults, second at the level of child bonded labourers. The bonded labour children should be sent to schools under back to school programme so that atleast in the next generation they will not become bonded labour. This is however to be done without losing sight of the main issue of elimination of adult bonded labour. Lastly he suggested that in areas endemic or prone for girl child bonded labour, setting up of schools for long term bridge course for adolescent girls. He also suggested that as far adults are concerned survey should be done in predominant bonded labour areas. Sri K.R. Venugopal has stated that we can take a little longer time i.e. after the elections for identification purpose but requested that the work has to be got done.
12. Principal Secretary to Government (SW) has reviewed the other items and suggested to the collectors to see that the constitution of the District Level Vigilance Committees and Division Level Vigilance Committees are completed by the month end. Information on formats-I to IV under rule-7 are to be furnished. The revised action plan for identification and rehabilitation of bonded labour has to be furnished by the same date. He has also stated that Supreme Court has given this very important item of work to the District/ Divisional Committees which are not only expected to hold meetings but also visit the field and identify the bonded labour and take action. This has to be ensured.
13. Finally he has suggested that another meeting will be held with the Six District Collectors after the elections to know the progress they have made on the lines of action suggested in this meeting. He has also requested the Collectors to furnish by the month and the success stories on bonded labour rehabilitation.
14. Sri K.R. Venugopal has stated that compared to other states he has received exceptionally good response from Andhra Pradesh in organising this meeting in a very systematic manner by preparing exhaustive notes for discussion and going into various aspects relating to this evil practice in detail. He has stated that they received very good practical feed back from the field level functionaries

and finally thanked all the participants and also complimented the Principal Secretary to Government (SW) for organising this meeting in a successful manner.

S. RAY, I.A.S.
Principal Secretary to Government.