

TAMIL NADU

## State to commission survey on bonded labour



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**Dennis S. Jesudasan**

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### Initiative aimed at bringing about better understanding of issue

With the aim of reining in bonded labour, the Tamil Nadu government, which recently rolled out a State Action Plan to tackle the issue, has decided to commission a survey to determine the approximate number of people involved in the illegal practice in the State.

“We need to know the number of persons involved in this, and there is also a need to find out which are the districts where the practice is most prevalent. We have decided to commission a survey for the same, which would help us in understanding the issue better,” Secretary of State for the Labour and Employment department Mangat Ram Sharma told *The Hindu*.

In line with a judgment of the Madras High Court on a Public Interest Litigation plea filed by Roseann Rajan in December last year, the State government had in March this year nominated a State-level officer to handle the release, rehabilitation and prosecution in cases involving bonded labour, before rolling out the State Action Plan in September.

“The State Action Plan lays down the procedures to be followed and fixes responsibilities for various departments and officers who are involved in the release and rehabilitation of bonded labourers,” Mr. Sharma said.

The State government is also in the process of creating a database of persons rescued from bondage, which would help in preventing the rescued persons from falling prey to the illegal practice again.

It may be noted that Tamil Nadu accounted for over 65,000 of the more than 3,00,000 bonded labourers who were rescued across the country.

However, in a majority of the cases, the persons rescued from bondage in brick kilns, rice mills, wood cutting units, e.t.c. in Tamil Nadu hailed from other States like Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha.

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