

10.1 Contract labour generally refers to workers engaged by a contractor for user enterprises. It is a significant and growing form of employment. These workers are millions in number and are engaged primarily in agricultural operations, plantation, construction industry, ports & docks, oil fields, factories, railways, shipping, airlines, road transport etc.

10.2 The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 was enacted to protect and safeguard the interests of these workers. It applies to every establishment/contractor in which 20 or more workmen are employed. It also applies to establishment of the Government and local authorities.

10.3 The Central Government has jurisdiction over establishments like railways, banks, mines etc. and the State Governments have jurisdiction over units located in that State.

10.4 The Central Government and State Governments, in their capacity as “appropriate” Governments, are required to set up Central and State Advisory Contract Labour Boards to advise respective Governments on matters arising out of the administration of the Act as are referred to them. The Boards are authorized to constitute Committees as deemed appropriate.

10.5 The Central Advisory Contract Labour Board(CACLB) is a Statutory Body, tripartite in

constitution and quasi-judicial in nature. The non-official members hold office for a term of three years. Till date, 85 meetings of the Central Advisory Contract Labour Board have been held.

10.6 So far, 86 notifications have been issued u/s 10 of the Act abolishing employment of contract labour in specified establishments in consultation with the Central Advisory Contract Labour Board.

10.7 Every establishment and contractor, to whom the Act applies, has to register itself/obtain a license for execution of the contract work. The interests of contract workers are protected in terms of wages, hours of work, welfare, health and social security. The amenities to be provided to contract labour include canteen, rest rooms, first aid facilities and other basic necessities at the work place like drinking water etc. The responsibility to ensure payment of wages and other benefits is primarily that of the contractor, and, in case of default, that of the principal employer.

10.8 17 notifications have been issued u/s 31 of the Act granting exemption to establishments from the purview of the Act.

10.9 In the Central sphere, the Central Industrial Relations Machinery (CIRM) headed by Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) and his officers have been entrusted with the responsibility of enforcing the provisions of the Act and the rules made thereunder.

