

Industrial Relations

7.60 There was a sharp decline in the number of strikes and lockouts during 2003 as compared to the previous year. Strikes declined from 295 in 2002 to 244 in 2003 and lockouts came down from 284 in 2002 to 245 in 2003 (Table 7.23) The reduction in strikes and lockouts was more prominent in the public sector. The states of West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Gujarat experienced the most instances of strikes and lockouts in 2003.

7.61 The total mandays lost on account of strikes and lockouts have declined by 4.80 million in 2003. The mandays lost due to strikes declined by 7.66 million to 2 million, where as those due to lockouts increased by 3.08 million to 20 million between 2002 and 2003.

7.62 Box 7.2 summarises some recent legal developments on the subject of labour law.

Year	Strikes		Lockouts		Total	
	Number	Mandays lost (in million)	Number	Mandays lost (In million)	Number	Mandays lost (in million)
1998	665	9.35	432	12.71	1,097	22.06
1999	540	10.62	387	16.16	927	26.79
2000	426	11.96	345	16.80	771	28.76
2001	372	5.56	302	18.20	674	23.77
2002	295	9.66	284	16.92	579	26.58
2003 (Provisional)	244	2.00	245	20.00	489	22.00

Source : Labour Bureau, Shimla.

Box 7.2 : Initiatives proposed to be taken by State Governments to modernize labour law

The State Governments of Gujarat and Karnataka have proposed to seek relaxation in some provisions of the Central Laws through State Enactments so as to facilitate setting up of Special Economic Zones in their respective states. The salient features of the proposed laws are given below :

- (i) The Gujarat Special Economic Zone Ordinance, 2003 containing:
 - (a) delegation of powers of the Labour Commissioner to the Development Commissioner of SEZ under certain specified labour laws;
 - (b) certain amendments in Factories Act, 1948, Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and the Trade Unions Act, 1926;
 - (c) consolidated return under certain specified labour laws; and
 - (d) application of Chapter V-D of the Industrial Disputes (Gujarat Amendment) Ordinance, 2003.
- (ii) The Karnataka Special Economic Zones Development Bill, 2003, proposes:
 - (a) constitution of a State High Level Committee/Single Window Clearance Committee and District Level Single Window Committee to grant approval, clearance, permissions and licences for the establishment and operation of units in the Special Economic Zones; and
 - (b) specified single return for reporting under certain labour laws.

The special intention is to provide certain facilities in creation of infrastructure and to make a flexible labour policy applicable to the units in such zones.

Source: Ministry of Labour