

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:273

ANSWERED ON:27.02.2008

TOLL FREE HELP LINE FOR OVERSEAS INDIAN WORKERS

Rao Shri Sambasiva Rayapati;Reddy Shri K. Jayasurya Prakash;Tripathy Shri Braja Kishore

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has set up a toll free helpline for Overseas Indian Workers to respond to distress calls from them;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the extent to which the Government will be able to check exploitation of Overseas Indian Workers as a result thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b): Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has set up an Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) for rendering assistance to Indian workers abroad and those who are desirous of going abroad for employment. The objectives of the Centre are:

Information dissemination on matters relating to emigration

Registering, responding to and monitoring complaints received from emigrant workers

Grievance redressal and follow up with stakeholders

The OWRC functions with a toll free number 1800 11 3090 accessible from anywhere in India for rendering help to the emigrant workers. At present, the Helpline is functioning in seven languages, viz. Hindi, English, Tamil, Malayalam, Punjabi, Kannada and Telugu from 10.00 am to 10.00 pm, seven days a week. The helpline will help promote legal emigration.

(c): Several measures have been taken for the protection and welfare of Overseas Indian Workers including signing of bi-lateral MoUs with the countries of destinations, constitution of Joint Working Groups between India and the countries of destination, introducing e-governance in emigration and mandatory attestation of the work contracts to ensure that the terms and conditions of the work contract are fair and are adhered to by employers.