

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:327
ANSWERED ON:18.08.2004
SETTING UP OF HELPLINE FOR EXPATRIATES
Bhadana Shri Avtar Singh

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) The steps taken at present by Indian Embassies abroad to help the expatriates in distress;
- (b) Whether Indian Embassy in Saudi Arabia is setting up a 24-hour helpline for its expatriates in distress;
- (c) If so, the details in this regard; and
- (d) The names of the other countries where Indian Missions propose to start helpline services and organize open houses?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

- (a) Indian Missions/Posts abroad have standing instructions to take up the complaints/problems of expatriate Indians in distress with the local authorities, and with their employers.
- (b) Yes, Sir.
- (c) In Saudi Arabia, the Embassy of India in Riyadh has set up a telephone based 24-hour helpline from 19 July, 2004 for Indian expatriates to contact our Mission for advice and assistance in redressing their grievances.
- (d) The Embassy of India in Riyadh and the Consulate General of India in Jeddah have started organizing an `open house` every second Thursday of the month starting from 8 July, 2004. The Government proposes to start helpline services and organize `open houses` in Indian Missions in other countries in the Gulf.