

## Six Telugu workers freed from Saudi

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HYDERABAD: Six of the 29 Telangana migrant workers who were held captive by their company at Al-Hassa in Saudi Arabia have returned home to India. Secretary, external affairs, Amar Sinha said Saudi authorities had intervened and sent the workers back.

On March 20, IT and NRI affairs minister K T Rama Rao had written to Union external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj about the plight of the Telangana workers at Al-Hassa. They were employed with a company Al-Hajry. He pointed out that the company had been demanding 50,000 dollars from each worker to relieve them and send them back to India.

After the labour court heard the complaint of the workers against the company, the 'Amir Court' had directed the company to bear all expenses and send the employees to their native places within three days.

KTR informed the Sushma Swaraj that despite this, the workers had been held in captivity for 12 days without food, medicines or basic amenities. He tweeted an online TOI report about his letter to Sushma Swaraj on March 20. She reacted promptly following which the external affairs ministry pursued the issue. The Indian Embassy in Riyadh immediately sent food supplies and other essential supplies to the workers.

"The Saudi authorities are taking action to send all the workers back," Sinha informed Sushma Swaraj, K T Rama Rao and TOI

on twitter. "Saudi authorities sorting out the issue. There was no captivity," he said, explaining that it was a contractual dispute between the workers and the company.