

NHRC, India takes suo motu cognizance of the reported Indian workers held in captivity by their employer without salary and proper food in an area near Bangkok, Thailand for the last six months

Workers from the Kendrapara district of Odisha in a reported video message alleged physical and mental torture, passport seizure and unpaid wages

The Commission has sought comments from the Ministry of External Affairs within a week on whether it could render any assistance to the families of the victims

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The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India has taken *suo motu* cognizance of a media report that at least six persons from Kendrapara district of Odisha have been held captive by their employer for the last six months in an area near Bangkok in Thailand. Reportedly, the incident came to light on 17th February 2026 when the victims recorded a video describing their plight. They are being confined inside the factory and being subjected to physical as well as mental torture by their employer.

The Commission has observed that the contents of the news report, if true, raise a serious issue of human rights violation of the victims. Therefore, it has sought the comments of the Ministry of External Affairs on whether they could render any assistance to the families of the victims. The response is expected within a week.

According to the media report, carried on 19th February 2026, the victims had gone to Thailand in the month of August last year through a labour contractor, who had promised them a good job with a handsome salary. However, they were forced to work for 12 hours a day in a plywood factory without any salary and proper food. Reportedly, their employer has also confiscated their passports. They have appealed to the government agencies in India to facilitate their return.

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