

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2480
ANSWERED ON:22.07.2009
REPATRIATION OF DEAD BODIES
Kodikunnil Shri Suresh;Reddy Shri K. Jayasurya Prakash

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large number of bodies of workers who died abroad particularly in the gulf countries have been waiting for months to be repatriated due to procedural formalities;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard to help the families of such deceased workers?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI SHASHI THAROOR)

(a) & (b) There is no inordinate delay in transportation of mortal remains of Indian nationals from abroad in general and the Gulf region in particular. The dead bodies are transported to the native places in India within a week or ten days, which is the normal time needed to complete requisite local formalities. However, sometimes there is delay in despatch of mortal remains, particularly in Saudi Arabia, where the delay varies from 4-6 weeks in case of natural deaths and upto 16 weeks, or even more, if the death has occurred due to unnatural reasons, like road traffic accident or industrial mishap or murder. The main reasons for the delay are the time taken in completion of necessary formalities for which the Saudi sponsors are responsible under law, non-completion of investigations, non-receipt of police and medical reports and non-receipt of required documents from India. The details are being collected from our Missions abroad and will be placed on the Table of the House.

(c) Upon receipt of information about the death of Indian nationals, Missions/Posts initiate prompt action to facilitate transportation of dead bodies to India. The Missions/Posts liaise with employers and local authorities to expedite the process which includes requisite documentation and clearances of local authorities, preparation of the dead bodies for transportation, obtaining consent of the family of the deceased for acceptance of the body. In cases where the employers are non-cooperative or the deceased person was an illegal immigrant, financial assistance is also arranged by some of our Missions/Posts with contributions from the community associations, welfare fund, etc. Matters relating to compensation/terminal dues are actively pursued with employers/insurance companies. In cases which are pending with the courts and/or appealed by the accused in the higher courts, the Missions/Posts keep the family members of the deceased informed of the status of the case and liaise with the lawyers for expeditious settlement of the cases.