

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:429  
ANSWERED ON:10.11.2010  
TRANSPORTATION OF MORTALS  
Sugumar Shri K. ;Venugopal Shri K. C.

**Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN 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 to help the families of such deceased workers?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) & (b) : No, Sir. Embassies of Sudan, Syria, Qatar, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates have reported no such delays. However, Embassy of India in Saudi Arabia has reported as on 3.11.2010, cases of dead bodies which are under process for transportation. The details are in Annexure.

(c): Under the Saudi Labour Laws, the Sponsor/Employer is responsible to complete all procedural requirements including obtaining different clearances from the Ministry of Labour (for settlement of dues), Police Certificate, Passport Office(Exit permission), clearance from office of Governor etc. and also to complete formalities at the hospitals such as embalming, death certificate, arrangements of air tickets; permission of the next of kin,(local burial or transportation of body to India); registration of death at the Embassy or the Consulate and the no objection certificate either for the local burial or transportation of the dead body to India.

Completion of these procedures take 3-4 weeks in case of natural death and if the status of worker is legal. In case of unnatural death, the above mentioned formalities are completed only after police investigation is complete which itself takes long time depending upon the nature of death etc. In case, worker is illegal or has been declared runaway by the Employer/Sponsor, all formalities are to be completed by the Embassy which is time consuming.

The Mission/Post provides all possible help for early dispatch of mortal remains in all feasible manners. The matter is taken up with the local foreign office or the concerned authorities and continuously followed up with them to impress upon the Sponsor/Company in case they do not co-operate. Mission takes prompt action to register the death cases and issue of no objection certificate and, the offices remain open seven days a week with regard to death cases.

The Mission / Post not only completes all formalities in case of illegal/runaway worker but also bears the full cost of transportation of mortal remains, embalming of the body, transport/cargo charges and other costs.

The Government has set up the Indian Community Welfare Fund(ICWF) in 42 Indian Missions (including Gulf Countries) to provide relief to Indian citizens in cases of emergency. This Fund is utilised by the Indian Missions for assisting cases of transportation of corpses of Indian workers who die overseas, to their family/ native place.

Government of India has signed bilateral MOUs on labour welfare with 7 countries, namely, Malaysia, Jordan, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, UAE & Kuwait. The measures for labour welfare including transportation of bodies of Indian workers who die overseas are reviewed in the annual meetings of Joint Working Groups of both countries under these MOUs and arrangements are put in place to improve the efficiency of the process so as to provide relief to the families of deceased workers.