

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1609
ANSWERED ON:29.07.2015
ICWF
Nagar Shri Rodmal

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has set up Indian Community Welfare Fund and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the annual amount fixed for this fund;
- (c) the quantum of amount spent from this fund along with the number of persons benefited therefrom; and
- (d) whether this fund may be utilised to bring back the dead body of any Non-Resident Indian or any Persons of Indian Origin or Worker to India and if so, the details thereof and the number of persons benefited therefrom so far?

Answer

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ

(a) Yes Madam. Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) was set up in 2009 in 18 Indian Missions to meet contingency expenditure incurred by them for various on-site welfare activities for Overseas Indian Citizens in distress. Thereafter, in 2010 and 2011, the ICWF was extended to remaining Indian Missions abroad. Overseas Indian Nationals in distress can apply for assistance under ICWF by approaching the concerned Indian Mission/Post.

(b) The main source of ICWF is the service charge levied by Indian Missions/Posts on Passport and Visa services, issue of OCI and PIO cards; attestation of documents and other miscellaneous consular services rendered by them. To enable Indian Missions/Posts to setup the ICWF, this Ministry provides initial budgetary support, on a case-to-case basis, to the tune of Rs. 5 lakh for three years or until the period the Fund becomes self-sustaining, whichever is earlier.

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-2-

(c) As per information made available to this Ministry by 151 Indian Missions/Posts in July, 2015, Rs. 68.86 crores has been spent from this fund so far. The total number of beneficiaries of ICWF, as per information received from Indian Missions/Posts is nearly 56741.

(d) Yes Madam. ICWF can be used to bring to India the dead body of a deceased Indian citizen from the foreign country. The family or friends of the deceased Indian national request such assistance from the concerned Indian Mission/Post to cover expenditure on incidentals; air lifting mortal remains to India or local cremation/burial of the deceased overseas Indian where sponsor is unable or unwilling to do so as per the contract and the family is unable to meet the cost.

As per information made available to this Ministry by 151 Indian Missions/Posts in July, 2015, assistance has been provided in 794 cases of deceased Indian citizens abroad.