

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
**MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**  
**LOK SABHA**

**STARRED QUESTION NO- 191**

**ANSWERED ON 12.12.2025**

**REPATRIATION OF MORTAL REMAINS OF INDIAN NATIONALS**

**\*191. SHRI HIBI EDEN**

**DR. AMAR SINGH**

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-**

- (a) whether Government has taken note of the rising number of cases involving deaths of Indian citizens working or residing abroad including Saudi Arabia, if so, the details thereof;**
- (b) the procedure followed by Indian Missions for repatriation of mortal remains to India;**
- (c) whether the Government maintains data on the time taken for repatriation from different countries, if so, the details thereof;**
- (d) whether the Government proposes to establish a time-bound protocol to ensure faster repatriation through coordination between Indian Missions**

**abroad, distressed families and airlines, if so, the details thereof, if not the reasons therefor;**

**(e) the major challenges faced by families in India, including high transportation costs, delays in documentation and lack of clear communication along with the steps being taken by the Government in this regard; and**

**(f) whether embassies have adequate staff, coordination systems and emergency funds to support distressed families especially economically weaker families?**

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**(DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR)**

**(a to f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.**

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**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) to (F) OF THE LOK  
SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. \*191 FOR REPLY ON 12.12.2025  
REGARDING REPATRIATION OF MORTAL REMAINS OF INDIAN NATIONALS  
ASKED BY SHRI HIBI EDEN AND DR. AMAR SINGH.**

**(a to f) The Government attaches high priority to addressing and resolving issues affecting Indian nationals abroad, including cases of deaths, local cremation/burial and transportation of mortal remains to their hometowns in India. The total number of cases involving deaths of Indian citizens working or residing abroad has not witnessed any significant increase in recent times. The year-wise list of mortal remains of Indian nationals transported to India since 2016 is placed at Annexure-I.**

**The Ministry has a well-established mechanism/SOPs to coordinate with all Missions and Posts abroad to provide help to Indian nationals abroad in cases of deaths or transportation of mortal remains to their home towns in India. Transportation of mortal remains of Indians who die abroad, involves completion of certain formalities as per the local laws before local authorities allow such body/bodies to be transported to India. In case the death is unnatural, police investigations will have to be completed. There**

**exists a well established mechanism in all Indian Missions and Posts to handle such cases with utmost priority. As soon as the information about the death of an Indian national comes to the knowledge of the concerned Indian Mission/Post abroad, they take proactive action by seeking a report from the local Foreign Office and other concerned local authorities regarding the cause of the death of the Indian national. Our Missions and Posts abroad inform the next of kin of the deceased Indian national, and facilitate the transportation of mortal remains to India or the local burial of mortal remains in accordance with the wishes of the family of the deceased.**

**Transportation of mortal remains of Indians, in general involves the following steps:**

- i. The family has to nominate a person on their behalf to carry out all the formalities in foreign country, if they are unable to come to the foreign country to take over the mortal remains.**
- ii. The Authorized person/Employer/University Authority has to inform the Insurance Company (if any).**
- iii. The Authorized person/Employer/University Authority has to nominate a Transporter (in consultation with Insurance Company, if any).**

**iv. A copy of the FIR has to be obtained from the Police authorities, if applicable.**

**v. The Transporter has to complete the formalities of Embalming, Encoffining & Quarantine of the mortal remains as soon as possible.**

**vi. The Authorized person/Employer/University Authority/Transporter has to book an Air Ticket to India for transportation of the mortal remains.**

**vii. The authorized person needs to obtain the documents (FIR, if any, Medical Certificate/ Death Certificate, Original Passport, Embalming Certificate, Encoffining Certificate, Quarantine Certificate, Authority Letter by the family, List of belongings, Air Way Bill (copy or detailed information) and provide to Mission/Post for Cancellation of passport of the deceased and issue of "Death Certificate and NOC".**

**viii. The family also needs to authorize a person to collect the mortal remains at the Indian Airport on their behalf, if required.**

**For transportation of mortal remains, Indian Missions and Posts usually liaise with different authorities in the foreign country, viz., on the following aspects:**

**i. Medical report / death certificate issued from the hospital concerned;**

**ii. Police report (with English translation, if the report is in any other**

**language), in case of accidental or unnatural death;**

**iii. Consent letter from the next of kin of the deceased for local cremation / burial / transportation of mortal remains;**

**iv. Issuing of No Objection Certificate (NOC) by the Mission/Post for transportation or local cremation / burial as required;**

**v. Clearance and arrangements for embalming of mortal remains from the authorities concerned in the foreign country;**

**vi. Clearance from local immigration/ customs department.**

**Time taken for repatriation of mortal remains varies with several factors including the cause of death, the country from where the mortal remains have to be transported, the distance of the country from India, domestic laws of the host country, employment status of the deceased, presence of next of kin in the country, among others. The procedures will accordingly differ from country to country depending on the regulations in the specific country. Therefore, no fixed time can be framed for eventual transportation of the mortal remains in death cases. Generally, the transportation of mortal remains is quicker in cases of natural deaths in comparison to the cases of unnatural deaths.**

**In normal circumstances, the initial processing in the host countries varies between 3 to 14 days in cases of natural deaths. Generally, delays occur in cases of unnatural deaths where legal and police investigations have to be completed by the local authorities. Delays also occur in cases where the nationality or identity of the deceased needs to be established. In some cases, DNA profiling has also been undertaken to identify the deceased. In some cases, the family of deceased was untraceable or unwilling to provide consent for transportation of mortal remains or local burial / cremation leading to delays.**

**As soon as the authorised person provides relevant documents as per host country's requirement to Missions/Posts abroad, the death of the deceased person is registered and NOC for transportation of mortal remains to India is issued on priority basis, including on holidays. Additionally, 24x7 helpline in Missions and Posts abroad support death registration and transportation of mortal remains to India.**

**Missions and Posts accord high priority to the issues pertaining to transportation of mortal remains including completion of local documentation work. Issues related to delays in issuance of police report, medical certificate, death certificate etc. by authorities of the host country**

**are taken up during bilateral meetings including Consular Dialogues and High Level Visits. Moreover, the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) has also been set up in Indian Missions and Posts abroad for assisting overseas Indian nationals in distress situations on a means-tested basis which also includes transportation of mortal remains of Indian nationals at Government expenditure.**

**Every Indian Mission and Post abroad has a dedicated consular wing equipped with adequate staff to address to the grievances of distressed Indian nationals abroad. Missions and Posts monitor the cases for timely and smooth documentation for transportation of mortal remains including guidance to the family and coordination between different agencies. Missions and Posts have also been allotted Emergency helpline number so that the families can contact them 24x7 in distressed condition.**



**Annexure-I**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of mortal remains of Indian nationals transported to India</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>4167</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>4222</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>4205</b>
<b>2019</b>	<b>5291</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>5321</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>5834</b>
<b>2022</b>	<b>5946</b>
<b>2023</b>	<b>6532</b>
<b>2024</b>	<b>7096</b>
<b>2025 (till October)</b>	<b>5897</b>

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