

families are unable to bring them back for the last rites;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to discuss the matter with the concerned authorities and facilitate early dispatch of bodies to their homes for the last rites?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) No. There are currently only 02 dead bodies registered from Andhra Pradesh and 5 from Telangana with the Embassy of India at Riyadh for which No Objection Certificates (NOCs) have already been issued. In addition, 04 death cases have also been reported from Andhra Pradesh and 03 from Telangana for which formal documents are still awaited that will enable the Embassy to issue the NOCs.

(c) While dealing with death cases of Indian nationals in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Indian Mission/Consulate in Saudi Arabia provide assistance on a proactive basis from informing the next of kin to facilitating the disposal of mortal remains either by local burial or transportation to India, in coordination with the sponsors. Death documents are attested and other assistance provided even beyond office hours and on holidays. The Indian Mission also pays the transportation charges for the mortal remains wherever applicable. Our Missions also keep bringing the delayed cases to the notice of the Saudi authorities on regular basis for early dispatch of the mortal remains. The death cases are also regularly taken up by senior officers of the Mission during meetings in the Foreign Office and other related offices. The issues pertaining to death cases are also taken up during the bilateral Consular meetings from time to time.

Passport to militancy affected families

1616. SHRI NAZIR AHMED LAWAY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken by Government to provide passports to the family members of the militancy affected families;

(b) whether Government has issued directions to the State Police department for dealing with such cases sensitively;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the details of Government policy in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) The Government has not prescribed

any specific policy to deal with the cases of passports to the members of the militancy affected families and no specific directions have been issued by the Government to the State Police department for conducting the police verification of applicants of such families. The extant passport policy, including that of police verification, is equally applicable for all applicants including members of the militancy affected families.

(d) The Government has from time to time, revised its policy with regard to issue of passports, including the police verification, which is an integral part of the passport issue system, to make the process of issue of passport simpler and more citizen friendly. Such Policy is equally applicable to all the applicants including members of the militancy affected families.

Utilisation of MADAD Portal by students

1617. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Indian students abroad have failed to utilise the registration module under the MADAD Portal since its launch;

(b) if so, the details of number of students registered on the portal and also the percentage of them who haven't registered, country-wise;

(c) whether Government has conducted awareness campaigns in foreign countries regarding the same; and

(d) if so, the details of amounts spent on conducting these programmes during the last year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) Students Module of the MADAD Portal was launched on 15 July, 2016 and since then 9393 students have registered on the Students Module on the MADAD Portal. Details are given in the Statement (*See below*). The number of students registering on the portal is increasing every day.

(c) and (d) Ministry through its Missions/Posts abroad have been regularly interacting with Indian students studying abroad to register their details on the Students Module voluntarily and also encouraging the Indian students organizations and Indian community associations for the same through social media platforms.