

Unnatural death of Indians in foreign countries

965. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that Indians were killed in a suicide bomb blast in Afghanistan;

(b) whether the number of unnatural death of Indians in foreign countries are increasing; and

(c) whether Government has taken any steps to safeguard Indians and their families who died unnaturally in foreign countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH]: (a) No Indian national was killed in the suicide bomb attack in Jalalabad, Afghanistan on July 1, 2018. However, twelve Afghan Sikh and one Afghan Hindu national were killed in this attack.

(b) and (c) From time to time there are reports of deaths of Indian nationals abroad, including due to accidents, violence, suicides and other causes. As soon as such a report is received, Indian Missions/Posts abroad take up the matter with local authorities for investigation/inquiry in cases of unnatural deaths. The Indian Missions/Posts also liaise with employers or sponsors of the deceased and local authorities for expeditious repatriation of the mortal remains, as necessary. This include requisite documentation and clearances of local authorities, preparation of the mortal remains for transportation, obtaining consent of the family of the deceased for acceptance of the body.

Matters relating to compensation and terminal dues as applicable, are actively pursued with employers and insurance companies concerned. In cases which are pending with the courts, the Indian 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. In cases, where the employers are non-cooperative, initial financial assistance is also arranged by the Indian Missions/Posts from the ICWF (Indian Community Welfare Fund).

Decline in number of Passport Seva Kendras

966. ROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Passport Seva Kendras operating in the country since 2014, year-wise;

(b) the number of persons served by these Kendras since then, year-wise; and

(c) the reasons for a decline in the number of Passport Seva Kendras being operated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH]: (a) At present, 93 Passport Seva Kendras and 215 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras are operating across the country as extended arms of the 36 Passport Offices, thus providing extended reach to passport applicants.

(b) The total number of persons served at these 93 PSK, year-wise, is as under:

Duration	Number of persons served
Jan-Dec 2014	8702706
Jan-Dec 2015	10326595
Jan-Dec 2016	9843824
Jan-Dec 2017	11734020
Jan-Jun 2018	6267510

(c) There has been no decline in the number of PSK and on the contrary, the Ministry in association with the Department of Posts has announced opening of 289 Passport Seva Kendras at the Head Post Offices (HPO)/ Post Offices (PO) in the country called 'Post Office Passport Seva Kendra' (POPSK). Out of the 289 POPSK announced, 215 POPSK are functional as on 21st July, 2018. More than 12,500 appointments are being released every day at these POPSK and a total of 11,44,637 applications have been received in these POPSK since they started functioning from January 2017 till June 2018.

Measures to check emigration frauds

967. DR. VIKAS MAHATME: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the measures taken by Government to check and stop emigration frauds;

(b) what is the number of frauds registered during the last three years; and

(c) whether travel agents are required to furnish details of emigrants. Their emergency contacts, their employer details etc. to the Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH]: (a) Recruitment of Indian nationals for overseas