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சுகாதார அமைச்சு
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

මගේ අංකය)
எனது இல) DQ/06/2020
My No.)
මගේ අංකය)
உமது இல)
Your No. :)
දිනය)
திகதி) 2022.01. 28
Date)

All Deputy Director Generals
Director, Quarantine
Chief Epidemiologist
Provincial Directors of Health Services
Regional Directors of Health Services
Regional Epidemiologists
Medical Officers of Health
Medical Officer, Airport Health Offices

**Measures to be followed regarding human remains repatriated
from overseas during the pandemic of Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

My letter No. DQ/06/2020 dated 2021.10.12 on the above title is hereby cancelled.

Following measures shall be adhered regarding the human remains of Sri Lankans transported from overseas to Sri Lanka during the pandemic of COVID-19.

1. Only human remains of Sri Lankans will be repatriated from overseas into the country via Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA).
2. **Human remains of diagnosed COVID-19 should not be repatriated to Sri Lanka** (Human ash of diagnosed COVID-19 can be repatriated to Sri Lanka)
3. Requests for approvals for repatriation of human remains should be submitted by the relevant airline / Sri Lankan Airlines Cargo to the Airport Health Office with the following documents; Death certificate, Embalming certificate, Transit certificate, Proof of identification of deceased (cancelled passport), Coroners certificate / Police / Forensic report (if death was not due to natural reasons), Infectious disease free certificate, Corona free certificate (if available) and Letter from the Sri Lankan Embassy indicating no objection for repatriation. Repatriation should be done only after the final approval is given by the Medical Officer of the Airport Health Office at BIA.

4. The coffin should be disinfected with sodium hypochlorite (TCL) powder and bottom of the coffin should contain a layer of sodium hypochlorite (TCL) powder.
5. All orifices of the human remains should be closed with gauze plugs impregnated with sodium hypochlorite (TCL).
6. The human remains shall be sealed in a non-permeable body bag.
7. The coffin shall be sealed.
8. Following actions need to be taken by the Airport Health Officer of Quarantine Unit for human remains repatriated from overseas

i. Sri Lankan citizen with a cause of death given and no suspicion raised

Health clearance is given to release the body to next-of-kin/ closest relative, if no suspicion is raised. Relatives should arrange a consignee/undertaker to take the human remains to a funeral parlor/ house.

ii. Sri Lankan citizen with cause of death given, but with any suspicion raised

Request an inquest. Relatives should arrange a consignee/undertaker to dispatch the human remains to District General Hospital (DGH) Negombo from the airport if a post mortem is ordered after the inquest.

iii. Sri Lankan citizen- if cause of death not given

Request an inquest. Relatives should arrange a consignee/undertaker to dispatch the human remains to DGH Negombo from the airport if a post mortem is ordered after the inquest.

iv. Death of a Sri Lankan citizen suspicious of an illness of Public Health Importance

As per the guidelines given by the Ministry of Health

9. Consignee/undertaker should wear a face mask and adhere to general COVID-19 preventive measures during the transportation/handling human remains. There is no requirement to wear full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
10. Human remains can be released directly from airport, by Airport Health Officer of Quarantine Unit to next-of-kin/ closest relative without an inquest as mentioned in Section 8 (i).
11. Human remains where the inquest is ordered and taken to DGH Negombo, shall be handed over to next-of-kin / closest relative after the inquest or after the post mortem examination is conducted.
12. Consignee / undertaker can transfer the human remains to another coffin (if required) after releasing from airport/ DGH Negombo by the undertakers at the funeral parlor. Human remain should not be changed into another coffin at the DGH Negombo.
13. After taking to a funeral parlour human remain can be prepared by the undertaker for the funeral. The coffin can be opened to view the human remains at the funeral parlour /house. A normal funeral can be held. Human remains shall be cremated / buried at a public cemetery
14. The funeral should be held within 48 hours after releasing from the Airport (human remains where no inquest is ordered) / DGH Negombo (human remains where inquest is ordered). The 48 hours is calculated from the time of release from Airport / DGH Negombo.
15. If a post mortem examination is performed, it should be conducted by the Judicial Medical Officer (JMO) of DGH Negombo (If required, JMO of DGH Negombo shall obtain services of JMO of National Institute of Infectious Diseases). The decision on the method of disposal

for human remains where post mortem was conducted will be decided by the Magistrate/ Inquirer into Sudden Death with the consultation of JMO.

16. Airport Health Officer shall inform the area Regional Epidemiologist /area Medical Officer of Health where the cremation/ burial is carried out.
17. In case of cremation, the relatives are permitted to obtain ashes on their requests.


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Copies:

- Secretary, Ministry of Health
- Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Relations-To inform Sri Lankan overseas missions
- Secretary, Ministry of Justice - F.N.A.
- Attorney General
- Inspector General of Police - F.N.A.
- City Coroner, Negombo- F.N.A.
- Director/ DGH Negombo/ NIID- F.N.A