Autopsy practices and disposal of human remains of deaths occurring in Sri Lanka during the mandatory quarantine period or extended quarantine period or home quarantine period in the phase of COVID-19 pandemic

Following measures should be adopted with regard to deaths occurring during the mandatory quarantine period or extended quarantine period or home quarantine period.

a. Medical Officer confirming the death shall request an inquest if required, for deaths occurring during the mandatory quarantine period of first 14 days or extended quarantine period. All human remains where inquest is not requested or post mortem examination is not ordered by Inquisitor into Sudden Death /Magistrate, shall be cremated irrespective of the result of PCR test, since it is considered as "suspected of COVID-19". Method of disposal of human remains where post mortem was conducted, will be decided by the Magistrate/ Inquisitor into Sudden Death, in consultation with Judicial Medical Officer (JMO).

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b. If the death has occurred during the home quarantine period (i.e.: after mandatory quarantine period of first 14 days or extended quarantine period), Medical Officer confirming the death shall request an inquest if required. A PCR test should be ordered and if the PCR result is positive, human remains shall be cremated. If the PCR result is negative, routine disposal should be done by adhering to standard precautions. Method of disposal for human remains where post mortem was conducted, will be decided by the Magistrate/Inquirer into Sudden Death, in consultation with JMO.

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