

DISPOSITION OF REMAINS REPORT

U.S. Embassy Colombo, Sri Lanka

March 2012

PART I. Name of Country

The Republic of Maldives

PART II. U.S. Embassy Information

Embassy of the United States of America

#210, Galle Road,

Colombo – 3

Sri Lanka

Telephone : +94-11-249-8500

Fax : +94-111-249-8590

Emergency after-hours number: +94-11-249-8888

[Consular Information Sheet](#)

[Register with the U.S. Embassy](#)

PART III. Profile of Religions of the Host Country and Religious Services available to visitors.

Country Profile: See "[Background Note: Maldives](#)"

Host Country Religion: Sunni Islam.

Religious Activities for Visitors: Public observance of any religion other than Islam is prohibited. Religious gatherings such as Bible study groups are prohibited; however, a family unit may practice its religion, including Bible readings, within its residence. It is against the law to invite or encourage Maldivian citizens to attend these gatherings. Offenders may face jail sentences, expulsion, and/or fines.

Although Maldivian law prohibits importing "idols for religious worship," tourists traveling to the resort islands are generally allowed to bring in items and texts used for personal religious observances.

Part IV. Funeral Directors, Mortician and Related Services Available in the Host Country:

Imad's Agency (For Burial in the Maldives and shipment to Sri Lanka)

Chandhanee Magu,

Male', Republic of Maldives.

Telephone: + 960 332 3441

Fax: + 960 332 2964

Email: imadsagency@gmail.com

A.F. Raymond Limited (All services related to cremation, burial in Sri Lanka and shipment to the United States)

“Raymond House”

115 Rt. Hon. D.S. Senanayake Mawatha

Colombo 8

Sri Lanka

Telephone : +94-11-268-3226, +94-11-269-3737,
+94-11-269-3738, +94-11-461-7813,
+94-11-535-2076, +94-11-535-2078

Email : afraymond@eureka.lk

Fax : +94-11-268-5632, +94-11-461-4453

Telegrams : RAYMONDCO COLOMBO

DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Embassy Colombo, Sri Lanka assumes no responsibility or liability for the professional ability or reputation of, or the quality of services provided by, the following person(s) or firm(s). Names are listed alphabetically, and the order in which they appear has no other significance. Professional credentials and areas of expertise are provided directly by the funeral directors, morticians and other service providers.

Part V. Profile of services available in the host country regarding preparation and shipment of remains:

According to Maldivian law, only burials are permitted in the Maldives and remains cannot be embalmed. The burial will be at a cemetery designated by the Male Municipality and will be conducted according to Islamic customs. Any form of marking is not allowed on the grave site and family members who choose to visit will not be permitted to perform religious services, even very simple ones.

Remains must be transported to Sri Lanka for cremation or for repatriation to the United States, where the remains will be prepared for cremation or repatriation.

a. Maximum Period Before Burial: There are no provisions under Maldivian laws or regulations requiring burial to take place within a prescribed period. However, burial within 24 hours is considered to be the normal course of action, due in part to Islamic custom and the effects of climatic conditions on the remains.

b. Embalming: Embalming is prohibited in the Maldives.

c. Cremation: Cremation is prohibited in the Maldives. The remains must be transported to Sri Lanka for cremation.

d. Caskets and Containers: A very simple wooden casket is used for burials in the Maldives. Containers for transport of remains to Sri Lanka are available in the Maldives.

Once the remains arrive in Sri Lanka, the body will be disinfected and embalmed and the coffin placed in a heavy metal-lined hardwood casket, tightly packed with the disinfecting powder and saw dust, and hermetically sealed. This casket must then be placed in a metal-lined, hardwood shipping case, which must also be tightly packed with disinfecting powder and sawdust, and hermetically sealed. The precautionary measures are taken to prevent any impact on public health.

All facilities for shipment of a body in accordance with the above regulations are available in Colombo.

e. Exportation of Remains: The following documents are required to export remains from the Maldives to Sri Lanka:

- Passport
- Original death certificate – Issued by the Maldives Ministry of Health and Family
- Brought Dead Report – If deceased had passes away prior to arrival to the hospital
- Mortuary Certificate – Issued by the U.S. Embassy in Colombo
- Notarized letter from the Next of Kin – Authorizing the Maldivian funeral house to export the body
- Customs Declaration – Issued by Maldives Customs

Once the remains arrive in Sri Lanka, the remains will be prepared for repatriation to the United States and will require the following documents:

- Letter of Authority – Issued by the Colombo Municipal Council’s City Medical Officer of Health.
- Mortuary Certificate – Issued by the U.S. Embassy in Colombo
- Original death certificate – Issued by the Maldives Ministry of Health and Family
- Consular Report of Death Abroad of an American Citizen – Issued by the U.S. Embassy in Colombo

The body should be prepared for shipment in the manner described in (d) above, and the inner casket sealed in-the presence of a representative from the Public Health Department of the Colombo Municipality.

An urn containing ashes must be packed in a metal lined hermetically sealed casket, which must be enclosed in an outer case for shipping. Caskets and coffins made of metal are not used for burials in Sri Lanka. According to local custom, a casket is a more expensive, streamlined drop-side coffin. The prices of the casket and coffin range widely based on the materials and fittings used therein. It is therefore possible to order a coffin for as little as \$500 USD and reduce the cost of the other services proportionately (see (g) below for complete listing of fees).

These costs are based upon Sri Lankan Rupee estimates provided by local undertakers and shipping companies and are converted at the current rate of exchange (and such costs and currency rates are subject to change).

f. Exhumation and Shipment: Exhumations are prohibited under Maldivian law.

g. Costs: All prices quoted below are in U.S. Dollars and are estimates based on current (March 2012) exchange rates.

1. Preparation for shipment of remains to the United States

The total cost for preparation and air shipment of remains from Malé, Maldives to the U.S. is about \$8,000 USD. It costs \$2,700 USD to transport the remains to Colombo, Sri Lanka, and \$5,300 USD from Colombo the United States.

Those wishing to transport the remains of their loved ones to the United States should also contact a local funeral home in the United States to make arrangements to receive the remains.

2. Preparation for shipment of ashes to the United States

The cost for preparation, cremation and air shipment of ashes to the U.S. is about \$ 5,800 USD. It costs \$2,700 USD to transport the remains to Colombo, Sri Lanka, and \$3,100 USD to cremate the remains in Colombo and ship the ashes to the United States.

3. Burial of body in the Maldives

The cost of a burial in the Maldives will be minimal, and cost approximately \$500 USD or less. However, each day the body is retained in the mortuary will incur a fee of less than \$10 USD.

4. Export and Cremation in Sri Lanka

The cost for preparation, air shipment to Colombo and cremation in Sri Lanka is about US\$ 4,600. It costs US\$2,700 to transport the remains to Colombo, Sri Lanka, and US\$ 1,900 to cremate the remains in Colombo.

5. Export and Burial in Sri Lanka

The cost for preparation, air shipment to Colombo and burial in Sri Lanka will cost a minimum of \$4,500 USD. It costs \$2,700 USD to transport the remains to Colombo, Sri Lanka, a further \$1,800 USD for the preparation of the remains. Additional costs for the burial of the body will be dependent upon numerous factors, such as the type of casket, burial plot, etc.