

**Migration Review Tribunal  
AUSTRALIA**

**MRT RESEARCH RESPONSE**

**Research Response Number:** AFG35297  
**Country:** Afghanistan  
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**Questions**

- 1. Can you confirm the Al-Arif General Hospital in Quetta exists?**
- 2. Does the Pakistani Health Ministry have a standard form for death certificates and if so what information is required on it?**

**RESPONSE**

- 1. Can you confirm the Al-Arif General Hospital in Quetta exists?**

The website of the Al-Arif General Hospital, Quetta, Pakistan is:  
<http://www.ghaonline.com/agh.htm>. The website provides a list of doctors and the hospital's motto "we cure and care". In addition, the following link describes the facilities available at the hospital, which include an emergency department, specialists/consultants, operation theatres, diagnostic facilities, care units and a pharmacy ('Facilities and Services' (undated), Al Arif General Hospital website <http://www.ghaonline.com/facilities.php> - Accessed 6 August 2009 – Attachment 1).

A social networking website provides the following information about Al-Arif General Hospital:

Al-Arif General Hospital is working under Foundation [Al-Sadaat Foundation] act since 2006 which is providing to people the great health care facilities and Free treatments as in O.P.D, Lab Tests, X-Rays, Ultra Sound and etc. The Doctors are paying their duties to care for people's health and guide them the superior way out of pain.

Hospital Services

Al-Arif General Hospital is established to provide the highest quality medical care to the people of Pakistan and Afghan poor Communities. Al-Arif General Hospital provides the finest health services in town to provide good quality medical care in all disciplines of medicine and surgery to all patients in a caring and compassionate manner by an outstanding team of healthcare professionals in an atmosphere conducive to our values and practice of good medicine.

Facilities

Al-Arif General hospital offers much more in terms of providing quality health care to its clients. All medical and surgical specialist are being provided under one roof. Inpatient facilities for over a hundred patients are provided in extremely pleasant and hygienic

surroundings and spacious OPD department is designed to provide maximum comfort to the waiting patients.

The surgical suite includes five fully equipped theatres where all types of surgical procedures is carried out. These include to mention a few general; Laparoscopic, Orthopedic; Cardiac, Plastic; and gynecological surgery. There is a purpose built obstetric, Neonatal unit and Dialysis suite ('Haji Syed Mohd Ali' 2008, Wiser Earth website, 15 May <http://www.wiserearth.org/user/agmaonline> – Accessed 4 August 2009 – Attachment 2).

## **2. Does the Pakistani Health Ministry have a standard form for death certificates and if so what information is required on it?**

No specific information could be found among the sources consulted regarding a standard form for death certificates issued by the Pakistani Health Ministry.

However, a death certificate form was sourced from the Government of Pakistan website and includes the following information: Report Date; Death Date; Sex; Dead Person's Name; Father's Name, Cast, Religion & Address; Age; Death Place; Death Cause; and Informer; although the website claims that the issuing authority for this form is the Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) (Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) (undated), 'Death Certificate', Government of Pakistan website <http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/forms/frmdetail.jsp?formId=83> – Accessed 10 August 2009 – Attachment 3).

A report on fraud in Pakistan issued by the Australian High Commission in 1994 indicates that "[i]f a person was under medical care prior to his/her death the name of the medical attendant appears on the death decree":

Authority to issue death decrees rests with the same authority as birth certificates. There is no time limit as to when a death may be reported. However, a late registration of death beyond several months should be considered suspect. In cases of more than 5 year delay in registration an explanatory affidavit is required. Often times family members report the death of a spouse, who in fact is alive and well in order to claim eligibility for a second preference visa or in order to be legally free to enter into a valid marriage with a U.S. citizen or LPR. If a person was under medical care prior to his/her death the name of the medical attendant appears on the death decree. That medical officer can be interviewed to corroborate the story (PMO Australian High Commission 1994, 'Fraud Profile Pakistan', 28 August – Attachment 4).

In addition, the UK embassy in Pakistan provides the following information regarding the registration of the death of a foreigner in Pakistan, indicating that many foreign death certificates do not include the cause of death:

You will need to register the death with the foreign civil authorities and obtain a full foreign death certificate before you can apply for consular death registration. The consular death certificate will not include a cause of death as many foreign death certificates do not include this detail. You can apply for a consular death certificate from British High Commission, Islamabad (UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office 2009, 'How to register a death', UK in Pakistan website <http://ukinpakistan.fco.gov.uk/en/help-for-british-nationals/living-in-pakistan/register-a-death> – Accessed 5 August 2009 – Attachment 5).

Information provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in 2008 outlines the procedures for issuing a death certificate for Afghans living in Pakistan, claiming that “[d]eath certificates are issued by the Hospitals, Clinics or Capital Development Authorities (CDA)”:

[O]n 5 March 2008, DIAC [Department of Immigration and Citizenship] Islamabad wrote to the Afghan Embassy in Islamabad and asked for formal clarification and confirmation on how Afghan citizens obtain Birth, Death and marriage certificates in Pakistan.

The Afghan Embassy responded on 24 March 2008 with the following:

- \* Marriage certificates are issued by the Embassy of Afghanistan and Consulate Generals of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan stationed in Pakistan on the basis of two witnesses brought to them by the Bride and Bridegroom.
- \* Birth and Death certificates are issued by the Hospitals, Clinics or Capital Development Authorities (CDA) (this is for Afghans living in Pakistan). Then they (the certificates) go to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan or its Camp Offices for attestation and at last those certificates are attested by the Afghan Diplomatic Missions in Pakistan.
- \* Afghan citizens living in Pakistan but events (such as Birth, Death, Marriage) that took place in Afghanistan should obtain their certificate from Afghanistan and after the attestation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan the certificates are verified by Afghan Diplomatic Missions in Pakistan (DIAC Country Information Service 2008, *Country Information Report No. 08/42 - MRT Information Request: AFG32992- Afghan birth and death certificates protocol*, (sourced from DFAT advice of 17 April 2008), 22 April – Attachment 6).

The US Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs website explains that Pakistani death certificates can be issued by either “the Registrar of Births and Deaths of the municipality or union council [or by] [c]antonment boards in urban areas”:

Records of deaths are inconsistent, but, where the death is recorded, a certificate can be obtained from the Registrar of Births and Deaths of the municipality or union council. Cantonment boards in urban areas are also authorized to issue death certificates. As with birth certificates, caution should be used in accepting such documents as authentic. A commonly used substitute is an affidavit signed and witnessed by a “respectable and reliable person,” by a police officer not below the rank of Superintendent of Police or a district health officer (US Department of State (undated), ‘Pakistan Reciprocity Schedule’, US Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs website [http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/reciprocity/reciprocity\\_3644.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/reciprocity/reciprocity_3644.html) – Accessed 5 August 2009 – Attachment 7).

Pakistan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs website provides general information on the attestation of documents. In terms of the attestation of death certificates, the site advises that the document must be “[i]ssued by Secretary Union Council alongwith ID card Cancellation certificate issued from NADRA [National Database and Registration Authority] or the concerned registration office” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan 2009, ‘Attestation of Documents’, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan website [http://www.mofa.gov.pk/Pages/Attestation\\_Documents.htm](http://www.mofa.gov.pk/Pages/Attestation_Documents.htm) – Accessed 5 August 2009 – Attachment 8).

According to Pakistan's Ministry of Interior website, NADRA serves "as a centralized data repository at national level where data in form of particulars of citizens of Pakistan will be maintained and periodically updated". As of June 2001, NADRA has been undertaking the "[r]egistration and issuance of birth and death registration certificates at national level":

In March, 1998, it was decided to set up National Database Organization to undertake the function of handling the data being collected through National Data Forms during the Population Census 1998. The objective was of modernizing the country's Governance through the conceptual model of data warehousing. It will serve as a centralized data repository at national level where data in form of particulars of citizens of Pakistan will be maintained and periodically updated. The data will be used as an important input in future planning of social sector projects and related areas, documentation of the economy and for creation of a comprehensive citizen database.

National Database Organization Now National Database & Registration, Authority (NADRA).

#### Objective

To develop a sophisticated database management system at national level for use by authorized Government agencies thus computerizing major functions of Federal and Provincial Governments with effect from June, 2001 (Government of Pakistan 2007, 'National Database and Registration Authority', Government of Pakistan Ministry of Interior website, 13 March

[http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/divisions/ContentInfo.jsp?DivID=23&cPath=221\\_227\\_309&ContentID=781](http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/divisions/ContentInfo.jsp?DivID=23&cPath=221_227_309&ContentID=781) – Accessed 7 August 2009 – Attachment 9).

The NADRA website explains their registration system as follows:

The Civil Registration Management System (CRMS) has been developed by NADRA for the registration of four vital events i.e: Birth, Death, Marriage and Divorce. The scope of CRMS is to automate all the local governments in a country and provide computerized registration and certificate issuance of the vital events. The system provides up-to-date status reporting facilities for selected events, while providing business decision models for strategic decision making. NADRA has successfully developed and implemented CRMS for Pakistan at the grass-roots level, with online, web based connectivity for provisioning of monitoring facilities to designated Government officials (National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) (undated), 'Civil Registration Management System', National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) website

[http://www.nadra.gov.pk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=41:civil-registration-management-system&catid=4:solutions&Itemid=91](http://www.nadra.gov.pk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=41:civil-registration-management-system&catid=4:solutions&Itemid=91) – Accessed 7 August 2009 – Attachment 10).

However, no information could be found regarding the specific information or details required to be printed on the death certificates issued by NADRA.

A response from the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada dated 1 February 1993 provides limited information on the issuance of death certificates in Pakistan:

According to a Pakistan-born professor teaching political science at the University of Massachusetts, death certificates are not usually a requirement in Pakistan. If proof of one person's death is required (for example, in a court case) a death certificate can only be obtained from a physician at the request of the family of the deceased (11 Feb. 1993).

No further information on this topic is currently available to the DIRB in Ottawa (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1993, *PAK13111 - Pakistan: Information on reasons why the state would withhold a death certificate*, 1 February, Refworld website <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=search&docid=3ae6aaf63b&skip=0&query=death%20certificate%20pakistan> – Accessed 6 August 2009 – Attachment 11).

In addition, a DFAT report from 1996 indicates that in the past, individuals have faced difficulties in obtaining death certificates in Pakistan:

The information relating to Question A was obtained from Mr Saleem Asmi, Vice Chairman of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP). People have recently been facing difficulties in obtaining death certificates in cases where their relatives were killed in city violence. Some hospitals were reported to be demanding RS 20 - 60 (USD1 - 2) as a bribe for each death certificate. Despite this, apparently death certificates can in principle be issued in the original on request (DIEA Country Information Service 1996, *Country Information Report No. 111/96 - Pakistan: Death Certificates - CIS Information Request PAK3231*, (sourced from DFAT advice of 25 January 1996), 1 February – Attachment 12).

## **List of Sources Consulted**

### Internet Sources:

#### **Government Information & Reports**

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada <http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan <http://www.mofa.gov.pk/>

Government of Pakistan <http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/>

National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) <http://www.nadra.gov.pk/>

US Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs <http://travel.state.gov/>

UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office, UK in Pakistan <http://ukinpakistan.fco.gov.uk/>

#### **United Nations**

Refworld <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld>

#### **Topic Specific Links**

Al Arif General Hospital <http://www.aghaonline.com/agh.htm>

Wiser Earth <http://www.wiserearth.org/>

#### **Search Engines**

Google <http://www.google.com.au/>

Copernic <http://www.copernic.com/>

### Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)

BACIS (DIAC Country Information database)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

ISYS (RRT Research & Information database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)

MRT-RRT Library Catalogue

## List of Attachments

1. 'Facilities and Services' (undated), Al Arif General Hospital website <http://www.ghaonline.com/facilites.php> - Accessed 6 August 2009.
2. 'Haji Syed Mohd Ali' 2008, Wiserearth website, 15 May <http://www.wiserearth.org/user/ghaonline> – Accessed 4 August 2009.
3. Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) (undated), 'Death Certificate', Government of Pakistan website <http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/forms/frmdetail.jsp?formId=83> – Accessed 10 August 2009.
4. PMO Australian High Commission 1994, 'Fraud Profile Pakistan', 28 August. (CISNET Pakistan CX8991)
5. UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office 2009, 'How to register a death', UK in Pakistan website <http://ukinpakistan.fco.gov.uk/en/help-for-british-nationals/living-in-pakistan/register-a-death> – Accessed 5 August 2009.
6. DIAC Country Information Service 2008, *Country Information Report No. 08/42 - MRT Information Request: AFG32992- Afghan birth and death certificates protocol*, (sourced from DFAT advice of 17 April 2008), 22 April. (CISNET Afghanistan CX198327)
7. US Department of State (undated), 'Pakistan Reciprocity Schedule', US Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs website [http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/reciprocity/reciprocity\\_3644.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/reciprocity/reciprocity_3644.html) – Accessed 5 August 2009.
8. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan 2009, 'Attestation of Documents', Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan website [http://www.mofa.gov.pk/Pages/Attestation\\_Documents.htm](http://www.mofa.gov.pk/Pages/Attestation_Documents.htm) – Accessed 5 August 2009.
9. Government of Pakistan 2007, 'National Database and Registration Authority', Government of Pakistan Ministry of Interior website, 13 March [http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/divisions/ContentInfo.jsp?DivID=23&cPath=221\\_227\\_309&ContentID=781](http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/divisions/ContentInfo.jsp?DivID=23&cPath=221_227_309&ContentID=781) – Accessed 7 August 2009.
10. National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) (undated), 'Civil Registration Management System', National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) website [http://www.nadra.gov.pk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=41:civil-registration-management-system&catid=4:solutions&Itemid=91](http://www.nadra.gov.pk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=41:civil-registration-management-system&catid=4:solutions&Itemid=91) – Accessed 7 August 2009.
11. Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1993, *PAK13111 - Pakistan: Information on reasons why the state would withhold a death certificate*, 1 February, Refworld website <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=search&docid=3ae6aaf63b&skip=0&query=death%20certificate%20pakistan> – Accessed 6 August 2009.

12. DIEA Country Information Service 1996, *Country Information Report No. 111/96 - Pakistan: Death Certificates - CIS Information Request PAK3231*, (sourced from DFAT advice of 25 January 1996), 1 February. (CISNET Pakistan CX15119)