

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4610  
ANSWERED ON:18.04.2001  
STREAMLINING THE FUNCTIONING OF PASSPORT OFFICES  
A.P. JITHENDER REDDY;SHYAMA SINGH

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether inordinate delay takes place in the issuance of passports as reported in the `Statesman` dated January 24, 2001;
- (b) if so, the facts in this regard;
- (c) the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to streamline the functioning of passport offices in the country?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI U.V.KRISHNAM RAJU)

(a) No, Sir.

(b) The facts of the case reported in the Statesman are as follows:-

(i) While applying for a fresh passport in 1991 the applicant had suppressed the information regarding his return from the US on an Emergency Certificate (EC). The EC was issued to him as he was deported from the US after being convicted on an illegal drug trafficking charge.

(ii) As per the Passport Act, 1967, a passport can be denied to an Indian national under the public interest clause and the applicant's offence justified denial of a passport.

(iii) The applicant applied for a fresh passport again in 1998 and fresh enquiries were made.

(iv) As the applicant had been without a passport for the last many years and a clear police report was received, a lenient view was taken and the passport was issued to him in September 2000.

(c) The main reasons for delay in issue of passports are due to receipt of negative or incomplete police verification reports, discrepancies in documents submitted by the applicants, lack of response by the applicants to the queries raised by the Passport Offices and suppression of vital information by the applicants.

(d) Streamlining the functioning of passport offices in the country is an ongoing and continuous process. It has been the Government's constant endeavor to expand and modernise the network of Passport Offices and Passport Application Collection Centres throughout the country keeping in mind the need to provide prompt and efficient service to the public. Improvements brought about to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of passport offices include the computerisation of 21 of the 28 Passport Offices, introduction of the tele-enquiry system, launch of the Central Passport Organisation Website and also at selected RPOs, setting up of grievances redressal mechanism in all passport offices, introduction of the machine-writing of passport booklet and scanning of index cards etc. The Government has recently introduced a facility for acceptance of passport applications at designated speed post centres to reduce the congestion at the passport offices.