

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:332

ANSWERED ON:26.07.2006

SIMPLIFYING PASSPORT ISSUANCE PROCEDURE

Chandrappan Shri C.K.;Khan Shri Mohammad Tahir;Nikhil Kumar Shri ;Rawat Shri Ashok Kumar;Reddy Shri Mekapati Rajamohan;Reddy Shri Suravaram Sudhakar;Shiwankar Shri Maha Deo Rao;Singh Shri Prabhunath;Yadav Shri Kailash Nath Singh

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has reviewed the existing cumbersome procedure for passport issuance;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to issue passports without police verification;
- (d) if so, whether this move has been opposed by security agencies;
- (e) if so, the details and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (f) the steps proposed to be taken to simplify the passport issuance procedure for timely delivery of passports.

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) & (b) The Government has been reviewing from time to time the passport issuance process to make it speedier and applicant friendly. A number of steps have been taken recently to simplify the process. These include:

(i) Process re-engineering has been introduced in certain Passport Offices. Under this process, some activities have been discontinued or clubbed in order to reduce the processing time. As a result, the process of granting of the files by the officers (i.e. the approval for issuance of passport) is done at the counter itself.

ii) The specified time period under Tatkaal scheme remains 1-10 days. However, the time period of 11-35 days has been reduced to 11-20 days. It has also been decided to issue full 10 year validity passports on production of verification certificate under Tatkaal Scheme.

iii) Similarly, the specified time period for reissue of passports has been brought down from 1-10 days to 1-3 days.

iv) Special drives were recently undertaken in Passport Offices in Ghaziabad, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Patna to clear pending applications, thereby substantially reducing the issuance time.

v) Pendency is monitored across all Passport Offices on a weekly basis.

vi) The State Governments have been requested to despatch the police verification reports in two weeks.

vii) Enhancement of output in issuance of passports by use of computerisation of passport offices for processing passport applications and introduction of machine printers for preparation of passports;

viii) The submission of applications has been decentralized for the convenience of the applicants and to expedite police verifications. Under this scheme, passport applications are also received at district level in the District Passport Cells (DPCs) located in the office of District Magistrate or Superintendent of Police (as decided by the respective State Government). In addition, they are also received at designated Speed Post Centres and Passport Application Collection Centres in various states.

(ix) A Central Public Grievance Monitoring Cell has been set up for quick redressal of grievances.

(c) No, Sir. No such decision has been taken

(d) Not applicable.

(e) Not applicable.

(f) A number of steps are proposed to be taken to further simplify and streamline the procedure for issue of passports, which are:

- i) Widening the network of Speed Post centres to collect/receive passport applications from the present 218 centres to more than 1000 centres by August 2006;
- ii) Introduction of on-line registration for passport applicants in New Delhi by August 2006;
- iii) Augmentation of staff to reduce and clear pendencies; and
- iv) Simplification of the procedure to establish identity/nationality of the passport applicant.