

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2232
ANSWERED ON:29.08.2007
PERFORMANCE OF PASSPORT, VISA AND CONSULAR SERVICES
Saradgi Shri Iqbal Ahmed

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General, in its report, has found deficiencies in the implementation of rules and procedures in issuance of passport, visa and consular services;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a), (b) & (c) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) in his report on Performance audit of Passport, Visa and Consular Services covering the period 2000-01 to 2004-05 has observed certain deficiencies and has made recommendations to improve the performance of Passport, Visa and Consular services. A summary of main observations is annexed herewith. Steps have been taken to rectify the deficiencies pointed out by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2208 REGARDING 'PERFORMANCE OF PASSPORT, VISA AND CONSULAR SERVICES' FOR ANSWER ON 29.08.2007

Summary of important observations

- # Proper records need to be maintained for receipt, destruction and balance of Returned undelivered (RUD) passports. These passports may be destroyed in the presence of a responsible officer who should certify the fact under his dated signatures.
- # The Ministry of External Affairs should institute efficient internal control system to ensure full compliance with rules in regard to impounding/revoking of the passports and determine accountability for non-compliance.
- # Provisions may be made in the system to prevent the issue of a duplicate passport in lieu of a lost passport without a specific reference to the related loss circular. A register of cases containing details regarding lost passports, loss circulars and dates of their despatch needs to be maintained.
- # The Ministry of External Affairs needs to modify the software system so as to show uniform and latest status of a passport wherever it appears in the system.
- # Proper records of cancelled passports should be maintained. As these passports cannot be issued, these should be destroyed in the presence of a responsible officer who may record a certificate under his dated signatures to this effect.
- # The Ministry of Home Affairs should persuade the state police authorities to create a separate cell to handle police verification of passport related matters within the prescribed time.
- # The Regional Passport Offices/Passport Offices (RPOs/POs) need to maintain a record of the revoked/impounded passports, its revocation/impounding circular number, date of its despatch and number of the entry made in the computer system. This record should be reviewed monthly by the concerned RPOs/POs.
- # The missing and damaged travel documents should be investigated thoroughly and also immediately reported to the concerned security agencies, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Passport Issuing Authorities and other authorities to avoid their misuse.
- # Stock registers should correctly record each receipt, issue and balance of blank travel documents. Physical verification of stock should be conducted as per codal provisions and the discrepancies promptly investigated to rule out any pilferage.