

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:200  
ANSWERED ON:18.02.2009  
CONSTRUCTION OF PASSPORT OFFICE AT SURAT  
Maadam Shri Vikrambhai Arjanbhai;Rana Shri Kashi Ram

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

- (a) whether The Government proposes to construct a new Passport Office at Surat;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the name of the company which has been entrusted with the construction work;
- (c) the time by which the construction work is likely to be completed;
- (d) whether a large number of Passport applications are pending for more than six months in the Passport Offices located in the State of Gujarat;
- (e) if so, the details thereof, and
- (f) the steps taken to issue passports to the applicants expeditiously?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (c) Yes. In March 2008 the Ministry of External Affairs purchased a plot of land measuring 3000 sqm. from the Government of Gujarat for construction of Passport Office building at Surat. The construction work has been entrusted to National Buildings Construction Corporation Ltd. (a Government of India Enterprises) in January 2009. The estimated time for completion of the project would be approximately 18 months.

(d) & (e) No. The number of applications pending for more than six months as on 31.01.2009, in comparison to the number of passports issued in 2008 and in January 2009, in the Passport offices located in the State of Gujarat is as follows:

Sl. No.	Name of Passport office	Passports issued January-December 2008	Passports issued January 2009	No. of applications pending for more than six months as on 31.1.09	Remarks
1	Ahmedabad	2,80,415	20,537	396	All these applications fall under the categories
2	Surat	89,479	6,659	368	of either adverse police report or incomplete police report or insufficient documentation provided by the applicant on which applicants are either yet to respond or re-verification by the police has been initiated but not completed.

(f) The Government has taken several steps from time to time including:

- (i) special drives to eliminate pendencies;
- (ii) expediting police verification process by coordinating with the Police authorities;
- (iii) expanding the number of applicants who can get passports on the basis of post issuance police verification;

(iv) renewal of passports,without police verification, of those applicants who have clear police reports in respect of existing passports and nothing adverse against them in passport records;

(v) issuance of passports to senior citizens, Government servants and minors without police verification subject to completion of certain formalities, and;

(vi) holding of Passport Adalats/camps at regular intervals by Passport offices to dispose of old passport cases expeditiously.

In addition, the Government had entrusted the National Institute of Smart Government (NISG), Hyderabad, with the task of undertaking a time-bound study on the passport issuance system, including its IT aspects with the objective to deliver passport related services to the citizens in a timely, transparent, more accessible and reliable manner. The Government accepted the NISG report as a result of which 'Passport Seva Project' has been launched.

The proposal is to have 77 Passport Seva Kendras all over the country where the non-sovereign functions, involved in the passport issuance process, such as initial scrutiny of the application forms, acceptance of fee, scanning of the documents, taking photos, etc., will be performed by the selected Service provider. The sensitive activities, such as police verification, printing and dispatch of passports, will be performed by the Government staff. The project is expected to result in the issuance of passports within three days, and where prior police verification is required, within three days after completion of the verification process. The Project is expected to be implemented fully to cover the entire country by the beginning of 2010.