

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:25
ANSWERED ON:24.02.2010
ISSUE OF PASSPORTS
Punia Shri P.L.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the average number of passport applications received per day in all the passport offices in the country including under the Tatkal Scheme. Passport office-wise;
- (b) whether cases of delay for obtaining passports continue to be received;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, scheme-wise;
- (d) whether cases of irregularities have come to the notice of the Government in issuing passports including from the Lucknow Passport Office;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether any mechanism exists at the Ministry level to monitor such complaints and take appropriate action;
- (g) if so, the details thereof; and
- (h) the precise steps taken by the Government in the recent past to improve the functioning of Passport Offices in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA)

(a) A Passport Office-wise statement is enclosed.

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) While Passport Offices have adhered to time-targets in respect of issue of passports under Tatkal Scheme, there are delays under the normal stream. The main reasons for delays include: i) delay in receipt of police verification reports, ii) incomplete/wrong filling in of passport applications, particularly those submitted at the District Passport Cells/Speed Post Centres; iii) shortage of officers and staff in some Passport Offices.

(d) to (e) Passports were issued with wrong identities to some persons from a few Passport Offices. On preliminary investigations, it has been found that such passports were issued either based on fake documents and recommendatory police verification or under Tatkal Scheme on verification certificates /three documents. Some procedural lapses were also noticed during inspections. Action has been taken against the erring officials.

(f) Yes Sir.

(g) A multi-layer system exists to look into complaints relating to corruption, irregularities and delay. Appropriate action is taken in each such case by the Vigilance Section and Grievance Cell in the Consular Passport Visa Division of the Ministry of External Affairs. Complaints can also be registered directly with Chief Passport Officer by email, fax and letter, besides registration of complaints at the website of Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions

(h) The Ministry takes proactive steps to continuously improve the passport issuance system. Some of the steps taken are: i) regular inspections of the Passport Offices by senior officers and the vigilance; ii) review of procedures; iii) special drive to liquidate arrears; iv) temporary additional deployment of personnel on need basis to Passport Offices; and v) Ministry is in the process of implementation of the Passport Seva Project which will vastly improve the passport services.