

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:577

ANSWERED ON:05.05.2010

ISSUE OF PASSPORTS

Rane Dr. Nilesh Narayan;Rao Shri Sambasiva Rayapati

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the existing process including the time taken by the Government to issue passports to the applicants;
- (b) the number of passports issued by the Passport Offices(POs) in the country during the last three years, year-wise and PO-wise;
- (c) the details of the difficulties and the constraints which result in delay in issue of passports;
- (d) the efforts made by the Government to address the issue; and
- (e) the success achieved as a result thereof?

Answer

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

(a) to (e) A statement is placed on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (E) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.577 "REGARDING ISSUE OF PASSPORTS" FOR ANSWER ON 05-05-2010

(a): A Machine Readable Passport (MRP) is issued by the Passport Office (PO) on the basis of an application submitted along with prescribed fee and documents after police verification (wherever police verification is compulsory). It is the Government endeavor to issue passport within a time target of 30 days for fresh passports and 15 days for re-issue of passports.

(b): A statement of number of passports issued by various POs during 2007, 2008 and 2009 is attached (Annexure – I).

(c): The rapidly growing demand for passports has put considerable strain on the manpower and infrastructure of the Passport Offices. The main reasons for delays in issuance of passports are

- (i) non-receipt of police verification reports on time;
- (ii) increase in staff strength of the Central Passport Organisation not keeping pace with the increase in demand for passport and
- (iii) submission of incomplete information and documentation by the applicants, particularly at the District Passport Cells (run by the police) and Speed Post Centres (run by Postal Staff).

(d): The Government had taken several steps in the recent years to improve the passport services. These steps included introduction of;

- (i) Tatkal Scheme to issue a passport within 1-7 days from the date of submission of application on the basis of submission of verification certificate or three identity documents and re-issue passports within three working days, subject to no adverse information being found in the system during the processing of the applications;
- (ii) expansion of the list of officials authorized to issue verification certificates;
- (iii) expansion of the category of applicants who can get passports on the basis of post issuance police verification or on post-verification basis and
- (iv) issue of passports without police verification or on post-verification basis to those applicants (issue of passports to government employees and minors).

Other periodic steps taken by the Passport offices to expedite issue of passports include:

- (i) special drives to eliminate pendencies;
- (ii) expediting police verification process by coordinating with Police authorities;
- (iii) holding of Passport Adalats/camps at regular intervals by Passport offices to dispose of old passport cases; regular inspections of the Passport Offices by senior officers and the vigilance; and
- (iv) review of procedures.

To further improve the passport related service in a timely, transparent, more accessible, reliable manner and in a comfortable environment, the Government has embarked on Passport Seva Project (PSP) to comprehensively transform Passport Service Delivery under the network of existing Passport Offices. Under the Project's existing scope, 77 (seventy seven) Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) are going to be established across the country. The Pilot Project would be launched at Regional Passport Office, Bangalore.

(e): Due to various steps taken by the Government, the number of passports issued by the various Passport Offices kept pace with the increased inflow of applications. The total number of passports issued has increased by 40% from 35.70 lakhs in 2005 to 50.28 lakhs in 2009.