

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:291

ANSWERED ON:23.02.2011

OUTSOURCING OF PASSPORT RELATED ACTIVITIES

Mahato Shri Narahari;Roy Shri Nripendra Nath

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the present status of outsourcing of passport processing activities;
- (b) whether a number of vacancies in different passport offices remain unfilled;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, office-wise and category-wise;
- (d) whether the Government would consider filling up of these vacancies; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

(a) The Government has embarked on the Passport Seva Project (PSP) to comprehensively transform the passport service delivery system. Under the Project, the Government has decided to outsource some of the front end and non-sensitive activities such as submission of passport applications, taking of digitalized photograph of applicants, collection of bio-metric features and maintenance of national call centre to a Service Provider. Seven pilot Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) were launched on 21st May 2010 at four centres in Karnataka under Regional Passport Office, Bangalore and three centres under Regional Passport Office, Chandigarh on 17th August 2010. The Third Party Audit Agency (3PAA) - STQC (Standardization, Testing and Quality Certification Directorate) has completed the certification process in January 2011. The remaining 70 PSKs are expected to be made operational during the year 2011.

(b) to (e) The implementation of the Passport Seva Project required restructuring of the cadre for redeployment and transfer of existing and additional staff. The Government has taken steps to fill up the vacancies arising due to restructuring by placing indent through Staff Selection Commission and promotion through Departmental Promotion Committee.