

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:493
ANSWERED ON:07.09.2011
ISSUANCE OF PASSPORTS
Jahan Kaisar ;Rajendran Shri C.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of passport applications pending in various regional passport offices due to non-receipt of police verification reports and other reasons, State-wise;
- (b) the steps taken by the Government for the quick disposal of the pending applications;
- (c) whether the Government has instructed the authorities to expedite police verification process; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (D) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION 493 "REGARDING ISSUANCE OF PASSPORTS" FOR ANSWER ON 07.09.2011

(a) Passports are issued as per the provisions of the Passports Act 1967 and the Passport Rules 1980 as amended from time to time. Prior to issuing a passport, the Passport Issuing Authority must establish the applicant's citizenship, identity and an absence of criminal record as mandated by the Passports Act. This requires verification of personal particulars of applicants and background check of criminal antecedents (if any) which are time consuming.

Given the above background, the Government is aware that in a number of cases passports are not issued within the time target of 30 days for fresh passports and 15 days for re-issue of passports, due to :

- (i) delays in receipt of police verification reports within the stipulated time of 21 days;
- (ii) receipt of incomplete police reports due to submission of incomplete information/documentation by the applicants; and
- (iii) a shortage of staff strength in the Central Passport Organization.

The number of passport applications pending in various regional passport offices due to non-receipt of police verification reports and other reasons, State-wise is attached at ANNEXURE I.

(b) The Government has taken several steps in the recent years to improve the passport services such as:

- (i) Special drive to eliminate pendencies;
- (ii) expediting police verification process by coordinating with Police authorities;
- (iii) holding of monthly Passport Adalats/ occasional camps by Passport Offices to dispose of old cases;
- (iv) regular inspections including vigilance inspection of Passport Offices by senior officers; and
- (v) review of procedures.

The Government has embarked on the Passport Seva Project (PSP) to comprehensively transform the passport service delivery system so as to provide passport related services in a timely, transparent, more accessible, reliable manner and in a comfortable environment. This is a Mission – Mode Project under the E-governance Plan of the Government of India. Under the Project, the Government has decided to outsource 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 etc. to a private partner. Fifteen Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) are already operational. The remaining 62 PSKs are being made operational in phased manner during the year 2011-12. The implementation of the PSP will greatly help in timely delivery of passport services to

citizens

The Government has drawn up an Action Plan to bring down pendency by holding special Passport Adalats every month, strengthening infrastructural facilities, temporary deployment of manpower, provision of additional printers, and expediting the police verification process, through the intervention of Chief Secretaries of a number of States where incidences of pending police verification reports are found particularly high.

(c) & (d) Yes. The State Governments have been requested at different levels i.e. Chief Secretaries and Directors General of Police for expeditious dispatch of Police verification reports. In December 2010, the Foreign Secretary also took up the matter with some of the Chief Secretaries of the States, where the pendencies in the concerned Passport Offices are higher because of non-receipt/delayed receipt of police verification reports. Also the various Passport Offices remain in regular touch with their concerned district police authorities to expedite police verification reports.