

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4571
ANSWERED ON:21.12.2011
REFUSAL OF INFORMATION BY RPOS
Abdulrahman Shri

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether cases of refusal to provide information under Right to Information Act by Regional Passport Offices (RPOs) or refusal to accept RTI applications by RPOs have come to the notice of the Government;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the action taken against such officials and the corrective measures taken by the Government to streamline the working of the RPOs across the country?

Answer

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

(a) to (b) No case of refusal to accept Right to Information applications by RPOs have come to the notice of the Ministry. However, RPOs have refused information in certain cases as per the provisions contained in Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005.

(c) The RTI Act, 2005 provides the scope of appeal to the First Appellate Authority (Chief Passport Officer) in respect of the RPOs and further to the Central Information Commission, in case the applicant is aggrieved by the reply of the Central Public Information Officers. RPO officials are also given training on RTI matters by the Ministry. For all passport offices in the East Zone (Kolkata, Patna, Guwahati, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar, Raipur and Visakhapatnam), a training workshop was held on 12.9.2011 in Kolkata. Another training workshop for West Zone (Passport Offices in Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Panaji, Nagpur, Ahmedabad and Surat) was held in Mumbai on 23.9.2011 in Mumbai. All Passport Offices are also sent advisory on RTI matters from time to time. Apart from this, during the recent Passport Officers' Conference held on 29-30 November 2011, all the 37 Passport Officers, were briefed on RTI matters and advised to attend to RTI applications within the stipulated time frame.