

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3290
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2012
BIOMETRIC PASSPORTS
Kalmadi Shri Suresh;Shanavas Shri M. I.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has implemented e-passport scheme for issue of biometric passports;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the progress made under e-passport scheme so far; and
- (d) the number and names of developed /developing countries where e-passport are being issued?

Answer

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

(a) to (d) The pilot project for biometric passport was launched in August, 2008 and biometric passports were introduced for Diplomatic and Official passports. However, the project for implementation of biometric e-passports for the ordinary category has been delayed due to pendency of fresh security clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs in respect of a technically qualified bidder. Consultations are still going on with the Ministry of Home Affairs and concerned agencies to devise a passport which would be tamper proof. More than 60 countries are issuing e-passports with biometric features.