

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:725

ANSWERED ON:10.12.2013

ISSUANCE OF MNIC

Rathwa Shri Ramsinhbhai Patalbhai; Sugavanam Shri E.G.

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to prepare a National Population Register (NPR) and Biometric Identity Card and to issue a nationwide Multi-purpose National Identity Cards (MNIC) based on the NPR;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a process of social vetting by Gram Sabhas and Ward Committees will be used for MNIC and that no other document of proof will be required for the process;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that the process of issuing MNIC is foolproof and the card is not misused as a proof of Indian Citizenship along with the time by which such cards are likely to be issued?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH)

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. The Government has decided to create a National Population Register (NPR) by collecting information on specific characteristics of all usual residents in the country. The NPR would include citizens as well as non-citizens. It would have photographs, 10 finger prints and 2 IRIS prints of all usual residents who are of age 5 years and above. Financial proposals for the issuance of Resident Identity (smart) Cards (RICs) to all usual residents who are of age 18 years has already been approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC). The Cabinet considered the matter on 31.01.2013 and referred it to Group of Ministers (GoM). Two meetings on 13.03.13 and 26.04.2013 of the GoM have since been held without any decision.

(c) to (d): The process of 'Social Vetting' by Gram Sabhas and Ward Committees for usual resident status as declared in the National Population Register (NPR) has been evolved after the consensus of all the State/ UT Governments. Further, the list of 'usual residents' would be published in local areas and placed in Gram Sabha/ Ward Committee for invitation of objections and claims. The claims and objections would be looked into by revenue officials like Patwari or Talati who act as the Local Registrars, Tehsildars, who are designated as Sub-district Registrars and the Collectors/ DMs who are designated as District Registrars. However, this does not preclude the raising of claims/ objections by law enforcement agencies or by the Registrars suo moto. In sensitive areas, State/ UT Governments could take up additional measures for verification and will be free to involve the local Police Stations or the Village Chowkidars in the process of verification.

(e): The National Population Register (NPR) is a Register of Usual Residents. It would contain citizens as well as non-citizens. The objective of creating a NPR is to net all usual residents of the country at a given point of time. The proposed resident identity (smart) cards shall not be a proof of citizenship and would carry a disclaimer that the card does not confer any right to citizenship to the card holder. The citizenship of each individual would be separately determined at the time of preparation of National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC), which would be subset of NPR.