

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:423

ANSWERED ON:22.07.2015

Shortage of Manpower in Passport Offices

Chavan Shri Harishchandra Deoram

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether a number of Regional Passport Offices (RPOs) in the country are facing huge shortage of manpower;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the number of vacancies reported from various RPOs, State-wise;
- (c) whether the work in many RPOs is being offloaded to private parties/agencies and if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the steps taken to fill the existing vacancies at the RPOs?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) & (b) A number of Regional Passport Offices in the country continue to face shortage of manpower due to the gap between the sanctioned and working cadre strength of the Central Passport Organization (CPO). To implement the Passport Seva Project, the Government had increased the sanctioned strength of the CPO cadre from 2349 to 2697 in 2008 to cater to increased demand for passport services. In addition, 21 posts (including 15 Technical and 6 supporting staff) were created by the Union Cabinet decision in 2007 to man the Project Management Unit (PMU) of the Passport Seva Project. However, the working strength has not reached to its optimal level due to several factors such as pending indent with the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) for the post of Assistant and Lower Division Clerks; large number of retirements and lack of eligible officials for promotion to higher posts. As against the sanctioned strength of 2697, as on date, the Organization has 1890 regular employees apart from 450 Data Entry Operators who have been recruited against the vacant posts at non-Gazetted Group 'B' and 'C' level. The details of number of vacancies reported to SSC for various RPOs, State-wise is annexed at Annexure "A" "B" and "C".

(c) Despite extensive computerization, opening of new Passport Offices and reforms in the Central Passport Organization (CPO) during 2000-2006, a need was felt for change in the then existing system due to rapidly growing volume of passport seekers. To address this need, a Mission-Mode Project titled "Passport Seva Project" was identified under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) of the Government of India. The basic design involves outsourcing of non-sensitive front-end activities to a service provider and retaining sovereign and sensitive functions with the Government. 77 Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) have been set up by the Service Provider [M/s Tata Consultancy Services Limited (TCS)] in Public Private Partnership mode.

(d) The Government has taken following steps to fill up the existing vacancies at the Passport Offices:

(i) The regular placement of indent for recruitment of Lower Division Clerks and Assistants and Stenographers with Staff Selection Commission (SSC) and pro-active follow up with them.

(ii) To fill up the existing vacancies at the Passport Offices through fast track promotion, wherever necessary with the relaxation of eligibility norms/down gradation of some posts and with the approval of Department of Personnel & Training and Union Public Service Commission. From September 2008 to June 2015, 3260 officials have been promoted in various grades.

(iii) As per the provisions of the Recruitment Rules, the Ministry has taken officers on deputation.

(iv) As a temporary measure, the Ministry has obtained approval for engagement of 450 Data Entry Operators in lieu of vacant non-Gazetted posts at Group 'B' and 'C' level.

(v) The Ministry has implemented Productivity Linked Incentive Scheme (PLIS) on 21st March, 2013 to financially incentivize individual performance measured against pre-set parameters. This has brought in increased efficiency and productivity per employee.

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