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Title: Reported move to privatise the passport offices in the Country.

SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA (MAVELIKARA): Sir, I would like to raise an important matter on the floor of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: All matters are important.

SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA : As per the estimates, there are over 50 lakh applications for new passports received annually in 32 passport offices in the country. At present passports are processed and distributed after thorough police verification.

Now, the Ministry of External Affairs has decided to privatize the area and tenders are invited from private entrepreneurs for opening of facilitation centres. Once these services are handed over to the private parties, there is a chance for increase in the fees as well as the present outlets like post offices would be unavailable for the service.

The most important thing is the question of national security. The country is a victim of internal and external terrorist activities. Handing over these vital services to the private parties will not be in the in [\[MSOffice22\]](#)terest of our national security.

The Government, instead of allowing private sector in this area, should take steps to recruit more employees in the passport offices to expedite the processing and distribution of passports. Hence, I urge upon the Government to desist from the decision of privatisation.