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Title: Regarding need to open a Regional Passport Office at

Kolhapur, Maharashtra.

SHRI S.D. MANDLIK (KOLHAPUR): The Kolhapur district in Maharashtra State is a hub of industrial activity and Information Technology Parks. In addition to five industrial estates in the district one more new Five Star Industrial Estate has come up at Kagal near Kolhapur under Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation. These industrial estates supply various technical spare parts and manufactured goods to Western and Middle East countries. In addition to these various leather goods, finished textile goods, jaggery and sugar are exported from Kolhapur.

All these manufacturing units are located in the district of Sangli, Kolhapur, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, and for all these districts Kolhapur is a central place. The number of persons from all these exporting houses seeking passport has grown very large in recent years. Since the present passport office is located in Pune, all these persons have to go to Pune and stay there for a day or two, affecting large-scale wastage of time and money.

There are more than 100 applications per day for Passport and it is very inconvenient for all these persons to travel to Pune for passport requirement. It is most likely that present Air Port runway at Kolhapur will be extended in near future and the Air Port will receive international flights also.

Through your good offices Sir, I urge the Ministry of External Affairs to establish one Regional Passport Office at Kolhapur thus facilitating foreign going travellers easy access for obtaining passports on time.