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Title: Regarding delay in issue of Tatkal Passports in the country.

SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID (THENI): Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of this august House about the problems being faced by the passport applications, particularly of the Muslim Haj pilgrims in getting passports under the *Tatkal* scheme. This scheme has been introduced to provide the aspirants of passports at the earliest. But the aspirants are not getting passports even after one month. So, it cannot be called a *Tatkal* scheme...(*Interruptions*) A passport aspirant has to get a signature from an officer of the rank of Under Secretary or above of Central Government and of the rank of a Director or above in the State Government. It is somewhat difficult to get such signature by a common aspirant, particularly the aged Muslims. Normally the people who undertake Haj Pilgrimage do so after they attain the age of 50 or 60 years. The old people normally will have beards. Now, with such beards if they approach an IAS or an IPS officer, the officers are scared to sign. So, my request and also suggestion to the hon. Minister of External Affairs is to allow local Members of Parliament to sign the verification certificate for the issuance of *Tatkal* passport. The MPs are also responsible and equally answerable. I would like to request the Ministry of External Affairs to monitor the *Tatkal* scheme so that it is implemented with a true spirit. Since there is a delay in issuing the passport under the *Tatkal* scheme, it should either be scrapped, or the passport should be issued within five days.

(u3/1815/rbn/ind)

The pilgrims who are performing the Haj should be taken care of, more particularly the aged ones who are above 60. Earlier, they were issuing white passports for pilgrims who are performing the Haj. That may be continued. That was valid only for the Haj. That should be continued because there is no need for them to run from pillar to post to get the signatures.

My request is that this should be considered by the Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shrimati Botcha Jhansi Lakshmi and Dr. Prabha Kishor Taviad are allowed to associate with the issue raised by Shri Aaron Rashid.