

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1088

ANSWERED ON:01.03.2006

OPENING OF PASSPORT OFFICES

Barad Shri Jashubhai Dhanabhai;Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan;Singh Smt. Pratibha

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

- (a) the number of passport offices opened in the country during each of the last three years, State-wise;
- (b) the norms laid down for opening of new regional passport offices in the country;
- (c) the details of the action plan formulated for the modernization and expansion of the existing passport offices in the country;
- (d) whether the Government has received any requests from the State Governments for opening of new passport offices in the States, particularly at Shimla in Himachal Pradesh;
- (e) if so, the details thereof along with the places identified so far, State-wise; and
- (f) the time by which these passport offices are likely to be set up?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

- (a) During the last three years, only one Passport Office was opened in Surat (Gujarat);
- (b) A variety of factors such as demand for passports including the number of passport applications from an area in the last three years, work load, functional requirements and administrative exigencies are taken into consideration for opening of new Passport Offices;
- (c) Details are provided in Annexure A;
- (d) Yes. Requests have been received from the Governments of Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Chhattisgarh for opening of Passport Offices;
- (e) & (f) Government have decided in principle to open new Passport Offices in Dehradun, Raipur, Shimla and Malappuram. Action is at hand to open new Passport Offices in near future depending upon the availability of manpower and logistical back up.

ANNEXURE 'A'

Steps taken to modernize passport issuing process :-

- i) There are 30 Passport Offices and 15 Passport Application Collection Centres (PACCs) (manned by CPO staff). Passport applications can also be submitted at 433 District Passport Cells (DPCs) and 218 Speed Post Centres.
- ii) The Specified time frame for issuance of fresh passports for Tatkaal Scheme has been brought down. Similarly, time frame in re-issue cases has also been brought down.
- iii) Instructions have been issued to all Passport Offices to issue fresh passports within 30 days subject to receipt of clear Police Verification Report.

iv) A new system has been introduced in certain Passport Offices where approval for issuance of passport is done at the counter itself.

v) Pendency Clearance Drives are undertaken frequently to clear any backlog and to issue passports expeditiously. Many Passport Offices have joined in this initiative.

vi) Problems of touts is kept under check with the help of local police authorities.

vii) On-Line Registration of the applications has been started in few Passport Offices and it will be, gradually, extended to other offices.

viii) SIU Study of all Passport Offices has been undertaken for creations of additional posts to render expeditious service to passport applicants.