

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:206

ANSWERED ON:22.11.2006

ISSUANCE OF ELECTRONIC PASSPORTS

Gadakh Shri Tukaram Gangadhar;Sugavanam Shri E.G.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to improve the functioning of passport offices;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has examined the feasibility of issuing electronic passports; (
- (c) if so, the current status of the said matter;
- (d) whether these electronic passports are likely to prevent the circulation of fake passports;
- (e) if so, whether there is also a proposal to implement the same all over the country and in Indian missions/ Posts abroad;
- (f) whether on-line registration for passports has gained momentum;
- (g) If so, the number of applications registered since its inception, month-wise; and
- (h) the time by which E-passports are likely to be introduced.

Answer

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

a. Yes.

b. Yes.

c. The Government is in the process of finalizing the technical specifications of the e-passport.

d. Yes. The Government believes that the introduction of e-passports will make the passport system more secure.

e. Yes. The e-passport system would be implemented all over the country and in Indian Missions/Posts abroad.

f. Yes.

g. The facility of on-line registration has been introduced at selected Passport Offices viz. Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chandigarh, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Malappuram, and Mumbai. It is proposed to extend this facility to other passport offices also. The month-wise data of online registration for the passport offices, where this facility already exists, is given at Annexure 'A'.

h. A pilot project to implement e-passport system is expected to be completed by the end of 2007. Thereafter, the e-passport facility will be extended to the entire passport issuance network.