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**STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**(1994-95)**

**TENTH LOK SABHA**

134

**MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
PASSPORT FACILITIES**

**THIRD REPORT**



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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

*July, 1994 / Asadha 1916 (Saka)*

# THIRD REPORT

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (1994-95)



(TENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
PASSPORT FACILITIES



*Presented to Lok Sabha on 27 JUL 1995*  
*Laid in Rajya Sabha on*

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI

*July, 1994/Asadha 1916 (Saka)*

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(1994-95)

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Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee

MEMBERS

*Lok Sabha*

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3. Shri Venkat Krishna Reddy Kasu
4. Shri V. Sreenivasa Prasad
5. Shri Anwari Basavaraj Patil
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26. Dr. Sudhir Ray
27. Smt. Geeta Mukherjee
28. Shri R. Naidu Ramasamy
29. Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait
30. Shri Chandra Shekhar

(iv)

*Rajya Sabha*

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32. Shri Somappa R. Bommai
33. Shri Tridib Chaudhuri
34. Shri Jagesh Desai
35. Shri Bishambhar Nath Pande
36. Shri G. Swaminathan
37. Shri G.G. Swell
38. Shri Mohammad Yunus
39. Shri V.N. Gadgil
40. Shri K. Mohammad Khan
41. Shri K. Rahman Khan
42. Shri Nilotpal Basu\*

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri G.L. Batra — *Additional Secretary*
2. Shri R.V. Warjri — *Director*
3. Shri Ashok Sarin — *Under Secretary*

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\*Ceased to be a member of the Committee consequent upon his nomination to the Committee on Urban and Rural Development w.e.f. 22.6.1994.

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairman of the Standing Committee on External Affairs having been authorised by the Committee do present on their behalf, this third Report on the Ministry of External Affairs — Passport Facilities.

2. The Committee undertook the examination of the subject 'Passport Facilities' having recognised it as an issue of immense importance. A sub-Committee headed by Shri Sikander Bhakt was further appointed to make an indepth study on the overall subject of issue of passports.

3. The Committee considered the replies given by the Ministry of External Affairs to a detailed questionnaire issued on the subject. Evidence of the representatives of both the Ministries of External Affairs and Home Affairs was obtained to understand the entire gamut of the functioning of the passport offices, the procedure for the issue of passports including the system of police verification etc. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of these Ministries for placing before the Committee the material and information and for giving evidence before the Committee.

4. The main object of the Committee is to recommend ways and means in the short term for expediting and facilitating the issue of passports and eliminating corrupt practices and harassment in various levels and in the long run for instituting a radical and holistic change in the system in order to facilitate the expeditious issue of passports over the counter.

5. The Committee are of the view that whereas an unduly long time can be taken by police authorities for verification, considerable time is taken in some passport offices themselves to process the applications before referring to the police authorities and to issue the passport after the verification report is received. This may be attributed to the present format of the application form, inadequate number of passport offices in the country, the delimitation of their geographical jurisdiction, the inadequacy of the office premises and the shortage of the staff.

6. The Committee have suggested certain immediate, short as well as long term measures to root out delay, harassment, corruption and fraud from the system. The Committee are conscious of the fact that the measures outlined in the Report will not change the situation overnight but they would definitely go along way in fulfilling the right of an entitled Indian citizen to a passport which should be available to him conveniently without any delay or harassment.

7. The Committee considered and adopted the report at their sitting held on 5th July, 1994.

8. For facility of reference and convenience, the observations and recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

NEW DELHI;  
14 July, 1994

23 Asadha, 1916 (S)

ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE,  
*Chairman,*  
*Standing Committee on External Affairs.*

## REPORT

### PASSPORT FACILITIES

#### *Background*

1. The Indian Emigration Act was promulgated in 1922. Since then emigration has been a central subject. Under the provisions of this Act, in accordance with the structure and composition of the then British India, the government of the day delegated to the then provincial governments the power to issue on its behalf, passports to Indians wishing to go abroad. These were largely indentured labour. Consequently, the then Governments of Bombay, Central provinces and Berar, Delhi and United Provinces, had regular passport offices functioning under their respective Home Departments.

2. After India's Independence and the adoption of a new Constitution, citizenship became uniform; and issuance of passports became a central subject. In the interim period, however, uptill 1954, State Governments continued to issue passports on behalf of the Ministry of External Affairs.

3. In 1967, a new legislation called the Indian Passport Act was promulgated. This made mandatory the possession of a valid passport, or travel document before departure from India. This Act did not, however, include any provisions for possession of passports by persons entering or exiting India. To that extent it became necessary to retain the Indian Passport Act, 1920 which was however, renamed as the Passport (Entering into India) Act, 1920.

4. As per Section 6(2) of the Passport Act 1967 the passport authority shall refuse to issue a passport on following grounds:

- (a) that the applicant is not a citizen of India;
- (b) That the applicant may or is likely to engage outside India in activities prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India;
- (c) That the departure of the applicant from India may, or is likely to be detrimental to the security of India;
- (d) That the presence of the applicant outside India may, or is likely to prejudice the friendly relations of India with any foreign country;
- (e) That the applicant has at any time during the period of the five years immediately preceding the date of his application been convicted by a court in India for any offence involving moral turpitude and sentenced in respect thereof to imprisonment for not less than two years;
- (f) That the proceedings in respect of an offence alleged to have been committed by the applicant are pending before a criminal court in India;



- (g) that a warrant or summons for the appearance, or a warrant for the arrest of the applicant has been issued by a court under any law for the time being in force or that an order prohibiting the departure from India of the applicant has been made by any such court;
- (h) That the applicant has been repatriated and has not reimbursed the expenditure incurred in connection with such repatriation; and
- (i) That in the opinion of the Central Government the issue of Passport or travel document to the applicant will not be in the public interest.

5. The Passport Act of 1967 was amended in 1993. Passport (amendment) Act 1993 came into effect on 1 July, 1993. Major features of the Act include provisions to enable the Government to fix the fee based on the cost of production and preparation of passports and to increase the penalties for violations of the Act. Consequent to the Act coming into force, passport fees were rationalised and revised with effect from 10 July, 1993 in a manner by which what was in effect a subsidy to passport holders was put to an end. It is Government's policy to provide passport services on a no-profit basis.

#### *Central Passport Organisation*

6. A Central Passport and Emigration Organisation (CPO) came into being in 1959 as a subordinate office of the Ministry of External Affairs. The role of the Central Passport Organisation is to grant passports and render passport related services to Indian Citizens all over India. The functions also include coordination and monitoring of the Passport Offices and hearing of appeals in a quasi judicial capacity. Central Passport Organisation is headed by the Chief Passport Officer who is also the Joint Secretary (CPV) in the Ministry of External Affairs. The Chief Passport Officer is responsible for the implementation of the Passport Act, 1967.

7. There are 23 passport offices throughout the country with the dual responsibility of providing the public with the requisite passport services keeping in view the importance of the passport from security and legal angles. These offices are headed by a Regional Passport Officer or by a passport officer. The PROs and Superintendents may also act as passport issuing authorities.

#### *Issue of Passports and Pending Applications*

8. According to the Ministry, the passports are issued on a first-come-first served basis. If the police report has not been received within a period of 4 weeks after it is requested and the application is otherwise in order, a passport is not held up for want of police report. Passports are issued for a period of 10 years after which it can be renewed and police verification is not needed at that point of time.

9. Limited validity passports are also issued where there is urgency for travel or when there is a specific direction from court in case of persons involved in court cases.

10. The number of applications received and passports issued during the year 1991, 1992 and 1993 were as under:

Year	No. of applications pending at the beginning of the year	No. of applications received during the year	Passports granted	Pending applications after (excluding rejected/closed cases at the end of the year)	Pending over one month
1991	248613	2403496	1615019	910383	597568
1992	910383	2472428	2268425	1142835	889309
1993	1142835	2186925	2709280	532738	354890

11. The information in respect of each Passport Office has been given in Appendix I, II & III of this Report.

12. Explaining the reasons for pendency of applications, the Ministry have stated that the year 1991 and the first half of 1992 saw the development of a major backlog owing to an unprecedented increase of 50 per cent in applications received in 1991 over the previous year; the 1992 input was also at approximately the same level. Several measures are stated to have been taken which have resulted in the reduction of the backlog. In this connection the Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs informed the Committee during evidence that they had suggested to the Home Ministry that a 'Passport Camp' could be instituted for eliminating the backlog once for all in totality. The proposal was however not accepted for reasons pertaining to verification process.

13. It is observed that although total pendency has come down during 1993, the position in some of the Passport Offices is far from satisfactory. From the statistics furnished by the Ministry, it is seen that there is decline in the total number of applications pending at the beginning of the year 1994 at some passport offices, but the position has not improved in Delhi, Patna, Lucknow and Chandigarh Passport Offices and in fact the pendency has increased in Bangalore Office. Also, most of the applications pending

at the end of the year 1993 in Chandigarh, Cochin, Guwahati, Jalandhar, Kozhikode, Lucknow, Madras and Trichy were over one month old, as could be seen from the following table:

Office	Total Pendency as on 31.12.1993	Pending over one month
Chandigarh	59912	49900
Cochin	8912	6225
Guwahati	3071	1977
Jalandhar	75547	67032
Lucknow	68231	66301
Madras	13376	12819
Patna	42979	36536
Trichy	36040	24471

14. It is further seen that the number of applications pending at the beginning of the year 1994 at the four Passport Offices was as under:

	Applications pending as on 1.1.1994	Applications received in the year 1993
Chandigarh	59912	73766
Jalandhar	75547	80042
Lucknow	68231	139215
Patna	42979	45485

15. The Ministry have informed that 14 of the 22 offices have shown an improvement in output and a reduction in the time taken to issue a fresh passport where the application is complete in all respect. Special attention is now being focussed on those offices which have lagged behind.

#### *Reasons for Pendency*

16. The Committee desired to know the reasons for huge pendency of applications and delays in issue of passports. The Ministry stated that a major pendency of over 12 lakhs built up in 1991 and upto mid 1992 was owing to a marked increase in the number of applications received for fresh passport as compared to 1990. Consequently, there was a shortfall in the availability of booklets and inadequate staff, both of which contributed to the pendency and delays. Other reasons for delays had been:

1. The need to wait for police report;
2. Staff morale and low productivity in some places;
3. Equipment/Power failure;
4. Inadequate premises; and

**5. Lack of response from applicants for completion of documentation/information.**

17. The Ministry have added that corrective steps have been initiated/taken on the points 1—4 and the supply of booklets increased by the Indian Security Press, Nasik.

18. The Committee have been informed by the Ministry that passports are being issued on a first-come-first served basis. If the police report is not received within a period of 4 weeks after it is requested and the application is otherwise in order, a passport is not held up for want of police report when applicant's turn comes up.

19. However, substantial number of pending applications beyond one month of their receipt indicate that the issue of passports is not taking place methodically in all offices even after police verification becomes overdue.

20. The Ministry has also provided detailed information in Appendix-IV showing the number of days taken to issue passport as of June '92, July '93 and February' 94. It is commendable that among the 23 passport offices the position has improved to an acceptable level in Cochin (from 217 to 44 days), Hyderabad (150 to 46 days), Jaipur (180 to 45 days), Delhi (90 to 25 days), Madras (180 to 29 days), Trichy (270 to 44 dyas), Trivandrum (120 to 25 days) and Calcutta (90 to 35 days). There has also been some relative improvement in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Bareilly, Bombay, Guwahati and Kozhikode. However, the position particularly in Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Lucknow and Patna is far away from satisfactory.

In reply to a query, regarding the approximate time taken to issue a passport in other countries, the Ministry have stated that it ranges from 7 days in Australia, 8—10 days in Japan, 15 days in Indonesia, 20 days in U.K., 7—30 days in Pakistan, and 45 days in Germany. Verification is done through a combination of means from among compulsory birth registration, police checks, identity cards, National Crime Banks, Negative lists, Personal appearance before the passport authority and submission of original documents.

*Shortage of Booklets*

21. At the instance of the Committee, the Ministry have furnished the following figures of total number of passport booklets indented from India Security Press (ISP), Nasik and number of booklets supplied by them during the year 1989-93:

Year	No. of Booklets Indented	No. of Booklets Supplied
1989	16,00,000	14,69,000
1990	22,00,000	15,89,900
1991	Information being collected	18,43,560
1992	36,00,000	28,39,660
1993	40,00,000	36,33,640

22. In this connection in reply to an Unstarred Question (No. 2680 dated 10th December, 1992), the Minister of State for External Affairs admitted that during July-September, 1992, there was a proposal to import passport booklets. The Ministry have informed the Committee that because of the growth of a backlog of over 12 lakhs applications as of May, 1992, Government also considered organising a passport camp on a crash basis to clear the backlog. Since the supply from Indian Security Press, Nasik would not be enough to meet the requirements for the camp within the stipulated time frame, import of passport booklets was proposed. However, no passport booklets were imported as it was decided that the requirement would be met indigenously even though it would mean extending the time frame for the clearance of the backlog. Renewed efforts were made to identify alternative sources of supply and it was eventually decided that all requirements should be met from Indian Security Press, Nasik which also agreed to increase production.

23. The Ministry have further stated that in order to ensure a steady and adequate supply of booklets indenting procedure by Passport Offices and India Missions/Posts abroad have been revised. This has enabled the Ministry to make a consolidated indent to Indian Security Press, Nasik sufficiently in advance and to monitor the availability of booklets closely, so as to avoid any shortfall in future. Explaining the position further in this regard the Foreign Secretary stated during the evidence that:

“For adequate supply of passport forms, the Nasik Press is going for new machinery. They are able to work with us so that mandatory supply of two lakh booklets have been increased to three lakhs in November, 1992 and as of April, 1993 they have committed supply of 3.3 lakhs per month.”

#### *Police Verification*

24. According to the Ministry of External Affairs, the factors involved in the grant of the passports includes identification of the individual, establishment of citizenship status and fulfilment of conditions under the Passport Act 1967. In India, there is as yet no standard method by which the identity or citizenship of an individual can be firmly established as there is no system of issuing identity or citizenship cards based on primary proof such as a birth certificate. Under Section 5 of the Passport Act, the passport authority is to process application after making such enquiry if any as considered necessary. Given the conditions for the issue of a passport and the system which presently exists within the country, police verification appears inescapable.

25. In this regard the Foreign Secretary further explained during evidence:

“We cannot issue a passport without the clearance of the Ministry of Home Affairs. This is because Ministry of Home Affairs makes a

check whether the person as mentioned in the application for the passport is actually a citizen of India and *Prima facie* a resident of the place mentioned in the application. So, the Ministry of Home Affairs is vitally involved with the Ministry of External Affairs in the actual issue of passport. In order to expedite matters, we set ourselves 30 days for getting the clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs before using our discretion to go ahead. If the Ministry of Home Affairs ex-post-facto says that a particular person should not have been issued a passport, we withdraw that passport."

26. According to the Ministry of External Affairs, adverse police verification reports are received with regard to citizenship status, proof of residence and pendency of criminal cases/court summons/warrants of arrest. The applicant is given an opportunity to comment on the police report and if the passport authority is satisfied that the report is incorrect, if necessary after clarification from the police authorities, the passport is issued.

27. The number of cases rejected out of the total number of applications received during the year 1991—93 due to adverse police report were as provisionally under:

Year	No. of applications received	No. of cases rejected	% of cases rejected to no. of applications received
1991	24,03,496	14594	0.6
1992	24,72,428	13454	0.5
1993	21,86,925	16502	0.7

28. It is observed that rejection because of police verification applies only to 0.6% of the applicants. According to the Ministry dispensing with police verification could possibly be considered once there is a nation wide system of identification/citizenship cards and a negative list of persons who should not be issued passports; appropriate changes in the Passport Act could also be considered.

29. In this connection the Special Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs stated during evidence that:

"about the question whether we should do away with Police Verification, my personal recommendation is—No, it should not be done away with."

30. In this regard the Foreign Secretary informed the Committee during evidence:

"The major delay in dealing with the issue of passport comes in the police verification ... we always try to urge the Home Ministry to expedite their effort."

31. Explaining the reasons for delay, the Ministry of Home Affairs have stated in a note that:

- (i) Currently records relating to criminals and history sheeters are maintained on a decentralised basis, going to the district level. Also separate lists are maintained by different agencies such as RAW, IB, CBI, DRI etc. The country is yet very far from the creation of a centralised comprehensive negative list which would be absolutely essential if police verification is to be dispensed with altogether. This however is not the main reason for delay in issuing passports as will be seen from the following paragraph.
- (ii) The backlog in respect of passport applications cannot be ascribed to delays in police verification alone since instructions already exist that RPOs/POs could issue a passport in the event of police verification report not being received within a period of three weeks. If inspite of this flexibility the backlog still continue then the reason lies more with the question of procedures, infrastructures and some other systemic problems which may vary from one Passport Office to another.

32. On being asked about the minimum time required by the police to send the verification report to the Passport Office, the Ministry of Home Affairs stated that instructions have been issued for sending the police verification within three weeks. However, the minimum time required depends on the distance, place of residence of the applicant and the infrastructure made available for the purpose. The State Governments find it difficult to circumvent the infrastructure in the absence of additional resources with them.

33. As regards the procedure followed for the police verification, the Ministry of Home Affairs have stated that as per procedure a set of personal particulars form (P.P. Form) appended to the Passport Application in respect of each applicant is sent separately to the Superintendent of Police CID Branch and the District Superintendent of Police. The CID is required to verify antecedents of the applicant from security angle. In particular it has to check whether the applicant has indulged in activities which are prejudicial to the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India; the security of India; friendly relations of India with any foreign country; or the interests of the general public. The District Police has to make verification from the criminal angle. In particular it has to report on the authenticity of declarations in the application as to citizenship; domicile and description of applicant; whether the applicant is facing any criminal charges or convicted of any crime during the preceding five years; whether a warrant/summons for appearance or a warrant of arrest has been issued by any court; whether any court has made an order prohibiting departure of the applicant from India etc. Depending on the information received, the Passport Office takes further action to issue or deny a passport.

34. In regard to the steps taken to expedite the police verification, the Ministry of Home Affairs have stated that they have issued circular to all State Governments /UTs on streamlining the procedure relating to police verification. They have also been asked apart from submitting the report within three weeks, for a thorough review of the field verification procedure. Instructions have also been issued to the government to prepare a negative list (list containing names of such persons who have criminal records and are history sheeters) and forward this to the Regional Passport Offices concerned.

35. However, the Committee has been informed that completion of the negative lists may take time as this has to be done Manually.

36. During evidence, the Committee expressed the view that while forwarding cases to the police for verification, a copy simultaneously should be given to the applicant so that he may contact the police authorities for verification in order to expedite the enquiry. Reacting to this, the Special Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs Stated:

“This is a good suggestion and we can draw up guidelines about it. Some rules will have to be amended and the State Governments will have to be consulted.”

In reply to a query, the Ministry of Home Affairs informed the Committee that all police stations of the country were in the process of being brought within a national computer network which will also facilitate police verification of passport applications.

37. Since the police verification is an important stage in the issue of the passports, the Committee desired to know whether it would not be better if the whole subject of issue of passport is entrusted to the Ministry of Home Affairs to expedite the issue of passports. Reacting to this suggestion, the Ministry of External Affairs have stated that this matter is covered under the Allocation of Business Rules and the decision in this regard can be taken by the Government only. The Ministry of Home Affairs have opined that it has to be a Government decision and the pros and cons will have to be examined thoroughly.

#### *Staff Strength in Passport Offices*

38. One of the reasons advanced by the Ministry for delay in issue of passports is the shortage of staff in the Passport Offices. The Foreign Secretary stated in this connection during evidence that:

“Posts which were created last was in 1980. Between 1980 and 1992, there has been 160% increase in the workload.”



39. At the instance of the Committee the Ministry have furnished the following statement indicating the sanctioned strength and the working strength (as on 31st December, 1993) in the various Passport Offices:

	Pass- port Officer	Asstt. Pass- port Officer	PRO	Supdts.	Total	Asstt. UDCs	LDCs	Steno	Total
Sanctioned strength	16	25	48	61	150	172	341	958	31 1652
Working strength	9	6	15	105	135	163	337	649	8 1292

40. It has been contended by the Ministry that 400 additional posts were created in May, 1992 in various Passport Offices to deal with the increase in workload. But, from the above figures, it is evident that many vacancies are yet to be filled up. Whereas there are 105 Superintendents against the Sanctioned Strength of 61, many posts in the senior categories of PRO, APO and PO are temporarily occupied by Superintendent level Officers for the sake of facilitating the work.

41. The recruitment/promotion to the various grades in the Central Passport Organisation is regulated in terms of the Central Passport and Emigration Organisation (Initial Constitution and Maintenance) Rules, 1959, and the Central Passport and Emigration Organisation (Recruitment and Promotion to Class III Posts) Maintenance Rules, 1968.

42. The following table indicates that almost all the deputation quota posts of RPO/PO and APO have been filled up whereas seven promotee quota posts are not filled reflecting a need to revamp the cadre management of the Staff working in Passport Offices.

Post	Deputationists	Promotees
RPO/PO	7	1
APO	5	1

43. When asked to explain the promotional prospects of the staff working in Passport Offices, the Ministry have stated that promotions up to the level of Superintendent have been made on a regular subject to the availability of vacancies. The structure of the cadre has, however, resulted in some stagnation. Promotions to the posts of Public Relations Officer, Assistant Passport Officer and Passport Officer have also been affected by the following factors:

- (a) Sufficient number of eligible officers in the feeder grades are not available for promotion to the posts of Assistant Passport Officer and Passport Officers;

- (b) As regards promotion to the posts of Public Relations Officer, the UPSC has not agreed to fill up more than 20 posts of Public Relations Officer on the grounds that the feeder grade *viz.* Superintendent does not have three times the number of posts which it considers an essential requirement for promotions on selection basis. Proposals for an appropriate increase in the number of posts were, however, only partially sanctioned as a result of which the problem has persisted.
- (c) Also the UPSC has said that DPCs for promotion to the posts of Public Relations Officer, Assistant Passport Officer, Passport Officer would be held subject to the revision of existing Recruitment Rules which were considered to be out-dated. However, on the Ministry's persistent request, the UPSC held four DPCs to the posts of Public Relations Officer, Assistant Passport Officer, Passport Officer during 1989—93 as a one time measure on the condition that future DPCs would be held only after Recruitment Rules for these grades were revised. Draft revised Recruitment Rules have been submitted to the UPSC for approval together with a request for fresh DPCs.

44. In reply to a related query, the Ministry of External Affairs have admitted that the pay scales in the Central Passport Organisation which is a subordinate office of that Ministry are lower than in the Central Secretariat for comparable work.

*Steps taken to Streamline the Procedure*

45. To a query about measures being taken to streamline/simplify the procedures for issuing of passport, the Ministry have stated a number of steps taken in this regard and some of which are as under:

- (i) Facility of applying by post: Forms can be obtained through select Post Offices throughout the country, sent by registered post to the Passport Office which would in turn send the passport back through the post. It is not necessary for the applicant to go to the Passport Office in person or to use any intermediary.
- (ii) Miscellaneous Services can be provided by any Passport Office. Sensitive services do however require clearance from the original office. Earlier even routine services were normally to be provided by the issuing Passport Office. This is now no longer necessary.
- (iii) A weekly Press Release regarding cases processed is issued by each Passport Office. This helps applicants to get an idea of when their applications are likely to be processed. If the date of applications has already been covered it alerts the applicant to the possibility of a lacuna or problem.

- (iv) Fees for services have been consolidated so that minor discrepancies do not delay processing.
- (v) Steps for request for police verification have been streamlined.
- (vi) Clear-cut guidelines issued for processing of cases of students living in hostels or away from parents. This had been a problem area.
- (vii) Immigration authorities have been told that the erstwhile endorsement prohibiting travel to South Africa is to be deemed to have been removed so applicants do not need to visit a Passport Office for this purpose.
- (viii) Clear-cut guidelines regarding situations in which passports may be issued out of turn have been established and powers delegated to the Passport Offices. Otherwise, all passports are to be issued on a first-cum-first served basis.
- (ix) A cut-off period of four weeks has been allowed for the receipt of police verification in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs.
- (x) Improved premises at various Passport Offices are being identified with the objective of providing more counters and reducing the waiting time for the public.
- (xi) A public awareness campaign is being developed. Advertisements in this regard would be inserted in major newspapers in various languages.
- (xii) A 'Jumbo' passport with more pages than the ordinary passport is being introduced for the convenience of frequent travellers.
- (xiii) In the long term a complete indepth examination and review of all aspects of passport issue including verification procedures, the structure of the Central Passport Organisation including the location of Passport Offices have begun with the twin objectives of providing the public with efficient service and tackling fraud and corruption.

46. Explaining further the steps taken to improve conditions at the Passport Premises, the CPO stated that they are trying to get premises for different offices so that the overcrowding can be reduced. They have asked officers to send proposals for suitable properties in this regard. All new offices would also have separate counters for miscellaneous services, renewal of passports immigration related queries, etc.

### *Delay in Computerisation of Passport Offices*

47. According to the Ministry, the Passport Offices of Delhi, Bombay and Bangalore have already been computerised. Work at Cochin and Kozhikode is due to start shortly. Proposals for Hyderabad and Madras are under process. It is expected that all RPOs will be computerised by the end of 1995-96. The National Informatics Centre has been handling these jobs on a turn key basis on the basis of detailed estimates given by them.

48. *Vide* Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1851 dated 9th August, 1993, the Minister of State for Planning had replied that on 1st May, 1992 it was decided at a meeting chaired by the then Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs that computerisation of Passport Offices in India will be done by National Informatics Centre (NIC) on turn-key basis and that by the end of March 1993 computerisation of seven Passport Offices *viz.* Bombay, Lucknow, Cochin, Kozhikode, Madras, Hyderabad and Goa will be completed. This has not materialised.

49. In this connection the Ministry have explained that decisions regarding computerisation of passport offices were taken and reviewed over the past few years including one in May, 1992 that seven passport offices would be computerised by the end of 1992-93. It is a fact that computerisation of passport offices has been delayed ever since 1986 when proposals were first considered and various configurations developed. RPO Delhi was the first office to be taken up extensively for computerisation and based on the experience in the running of the system at Delhi, plans have been developed for other offices.

### *Revision of Passport Fees*

50. The passport fee has been increased w.e.f. July, 1993. The increase in the fee for the issue of fresh passport, duplicate passport and renewal of ordinary passport has been as under :

Service	Old fee	Revised fee	
		In India	Abroad
(i) Fresh Passport (with a maximum validity of 10 years)	Rs. 50	Rs. 300	Rs. 750
(ii) Duplicate passport in case of lose/damage	Rs. 50	Rs. 2500	Rs. 6250
(iii) Renewal of ordinary passport (with an initial validity of five years, for a maximum validity of 10 years)	Rs. 50	Rs. 200	Rs. 500

51. According to the Ministry, the fees were revised in order to meet the cost of production and preparation of passports and the provision of

passport services. As against the actual earnings of Rs. 94.00 crores in 1992-93 from passport and visa fees, as per the latest trends, the estimated earnings for 1993-94 are Rs. 150.00 crores and for 1994-95, Rs. 155.00 crores.

52. It was clarified that technically, the additional revenue earned is also not automatically available for use by the Central Passport Organisation as it goes to the Consolidated Fund of India. However, it is the policy of the Government to issue passports on a no profit basis; the additional revenue will, therefore, be used for covering the increased cost of production of better quality passport booklets and for provision of improved facilities in the Passport Offices for the public and the staff.

### *Public Complaints*

53. The Committee are informed that all Passport Offices have designated Officers who meet the public, look into their grievances and provide necessary relief wherever possible. There is also a designated officer in the CPV Division who meets the Public every day and looks into specific complaints. This is in addition to meetings held with members of the public from time to time by all officers of the CPV Division.

54. According to Ministry, Letters of Complaints received by the CPV Division are entered into a computer data base and followed up at various levels as a result of which several cases have been resolved. Complaints against staff are investigated and where it is established that action is called for, the official is proceeded against either departmentally or by the CBI.

55. From the statistics furnished by the Ministry regarding the complaints received and settled in 1993. It is seen that out of 1218 complaints received during the year only 549 were settled. Further, the number of complaints pending were quite large in some of the passport offices which is evidence from the following table :

Passport Office	No. of complaints received	No. of complaints settled	No. of complaints pending
Barcilly	200	30	170
Bombay	39	13	26
Calcutta	59	25	34
Chandigarh	158	0	158
Delhi	93	45	48
Jaipur	41	10	31
Jalandhar	104	37	67

56. On being asked whether any time limit for redressal of complaints has been fixed. The Ministry stated that every attempt is made to redress the grievance as quickly as possible. Instances of overdue cases where the application is otherwise complete are usually resolved at the earliest. There are, however, cases where further checks have to be made or where the applicant has to provide requisite documentation. Some of the complaints received also concern cases which have been rejected due to adverse police reports.

#### *Passport Advisory Committee*

57. According to the Ministry, a Passport Advisory Committee is to be set up for each Regional Passport Office/Passport Office. Each Committee would consist of a Member of Parliament, 3 eminent public persons, a representative of the Chief Secretary in respect of each State or area to be served and the Head of the Passport Office. The three public members are to be from the following categories:

- (i) Retired Supreme Court or High Court Judge;
- (ii) Eminent persons from the field of art, culture, science, literature, academia, technology or industry; and
- (iii) Head of a national institution engaged in the fields of systems and management.

58. Nominations have been requested from the State Governments and appropriate responses are awaited.

59. The Ministry have further informed that there would be a Committee comprising 2 Members of parliament, 5 eminent public persons, a representative of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Secretary/Additional Secretary in Ministry of External Affairs.

#### *Expansion of Passport Offices Network*

60. During 1991-92, the 22 Passport Offices in India received 24.72 lakh applications for issue of fresh passports. On the basis of input of applications, Passport Offices could be divided into three categories:

(a) Heavy Passport Offices with annual input of over 1.5 lakh applications. The following passport Offices fall in this category. (input of applications in 1992 given against each office):

Bompay	259374
Kozhikode	235223
Hyderabad	212635
Trichy	181215
Cochin	179871
Trivandrum	157316

(b) Medium-sized Passport Offices with input of applications numbering below 50,000 & 1 lakh :

1. Delhi	143812
2. Madras	141194
3. Ahmedabad	133283
4. Lucknow	130861
5. Jalandhar	112179
6. Jaipur	109886
7. Bangalore	104871
8. Chandigarh	100565
9. Bareilly	75484
10. Calcutta	60319
11. Patna	51614

(c) Pocket Passport Office with annual input of less than 50,000 applications during 1992 :

1. Bhopal	27713
2. Panaji	20137
3. Nagpur	13893
4. Bhubaneswar	12808
5. Gauhati	8176
6. Jammu	Opened on 31.3.1994

61. The Ministry also informed that the Staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance after a recent study of some of the Passport Offices has recommended that there should not be a separate Passport Office if annual intake of applications is less than 50,000. Based on this criteria, it has recommended that the existing Passport Offices at Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Nagpur, Gauhati and Panaji should not exist as independent offices and instead of a Liaison Office, similar to the one at Shimla, should be set up at these stations. On being asked about the action taken in this regard, the Ministry have stated the SIU team's report is yet to be finalised in consultation with the Ministry. At present, it is felt that any major changes in the existing structure on a procedural basis would not be advisable without a comprehensive review.

62. During 1993, 21.87 lakh applications were received by the 22 Passport Offices for issue of passports. If about 50,000 applications justify the existence of one passport office, as per the SIU team of Ministry of Finance, then there ought to be about 44 Passport Offices in the country.

63. In their first Report, the Committee had recommended that Staff Strength and geographical distribution of Passport Offices should be determined so as to rationalise the workload. With a view to make an

assessment for this purpose, a districtwise survey of demand for passports all over the country was required to be undertaken. This survey has been completed by the Ministry in respect of 16 Passport Offices as according to them, such a survey in respect of five of relatively smaller offices and Passport Office, Delhi was not called for.

64. The Ministry have stated that the date of the survey indicate that most of the existing passport offices are located in cities with the highest input of applications. An objective levelling of the field based on averages might not serve the public interest entirely as it could result in some state having no offices at all. After all what is being done at present is a distribution of personnel according to the workload within the framework of the State as a Unit. For example, Passport Office, Nagpur could conceivably start servicing some neighbouring districts in Andhra Pradesh in order to ease out Hyderabad's load. Since certain reports are however required from State and local authorities, the offices dealing with a number of agencies in 2 States could have an effect on efficiency. The regional approach based on work load is therefore adopted where the number of applications is truly low. The entire structure of the system however needs review and this is being done.

65. During evidence the Committee drew the attention of the witnesses to the fact that there is only one Passport Office at Guwahati for the entire North-Eastern region and desired to know whether it was possible to set up two sub-offices in the region. In reply the Foreign Secretary stated:

"It is our intention to seek Cabinet's approval to set up a network of collection Centres which would collect the Passport from various centres in the North-East, send them on to Guwahati or any other Centre for processing and then return to the Centre."

66. The Chairman of the Committee on External Affairs had sought suggestions from all Members of Parliament on improving the functioning of the Passport Offices. Many Members suggested that there is need for opening more Passport Offices in some particular areas such as Mangalore, Indore, Ratlam, Jabalpur, Gwalior, Brauch or Barode, Nadiad, Gangtok, Pune, Trichur, Varanasi.

67. In reply to a query whether there was any move under consideration to open new Passport Offices or extension counters of the Regional Passport Offices, in different parts of the country depending upon the demand made from these parts of the country, the Ministry stated that the Government is in the process of reviewing the network of passport facilities as part of the overall system redesign being undertaken.



68. The facts which have come to the notice of the Committee clearly indicate that there is considerable delay in the issue of passports by some offices which in turn generates corruption and harassment of all kinds and contributes to a negative public image of the CPO as a whole. It is evident from the pendency figures of applications beyond one month of receipt of applications (3.54 lakhs out of total pendency of 5.3 lakhs at the end of 1993) that passports are not being issued in 4 weeks as contemplated by both the Ministries of External Affairs and Home Affairs and that while the Ministry of External Affairs consider the delay in police verification as the critical element, the Ministry of Home Affairs has hinted at non-use of the discretion vested in them by the passport officers due to other reasons.

69. The Committee also observe and welcome the commendable effort made by the Ministry to bring down the pendency of 12 lakhs in May, 1992 and from 11.4 lakhs at the start of January, 1993 to 5.3 lakhs as on 31st December, 1993. The Committee also notice the improvement in the output of the passport offices during 1993 with the issue of over 27 lakh fresh passports representing an increase of about 21% over the output in 1992 leading to reduction in pendency of applications. Nevertheless, the achievement still pales into insignificance going by the quantum of pendency of 5.3 lakh applications as on 31st December 1993.

70. While commending the remarkable improvement in 8 offices and the relative improvement in 6 offices the Committee express its strong dissatisfaction with the performance of the other offices, particularly in the case of Chandigarh, Lucknow, Patna and Jalandhar. The Committee recognise that while inordinate delay in these four offices may be specific to them, there are systemic and procedural reasons for the overall pattern and to some extent lack of staff and infrastructure also contribute to the delay.

71. The Committee, therefore, feel that the only way to bring about a universal improvement is through a radical transformation of the system, besides upgradation of the infrastructure and provision of adequate staff, only by streamlining the process itself can corruption and irregularities, as well as fraud and harassment, be checked.

72. The Committee feel that the problems of the staff and booklet shortages which led to the unprecedented rise in the arrears during 1991-92 were not insurmountable and could have been anticipated. The Committee are therefore constrained to take note of the lack of foresight and timely planning on the part of passport authorities. With regard to the general pattern of delay the Committee have not been able to understand why the discretionary power regarding police verification conceded by Ministry of Home Affairs is not being fully utilised by the passport issuing authorities.

73. From the statistics furnished by the Ministry of External Affairs the Committee note that only 0.6% of the applicants are finally found to be not eligible to receive the passport. But the Committee also recognise the validity of the opinion of the Foreign Secretary is that even 0.6% translates into a substantial number in absolute terms and that the security angle cannot be overlooked. The Committee therefore feel that while there is no escaping the need for careful scrutiny before passports are issued or renewed, it is essential that the system be re-oriented towards ensuring that bonafide applicants are neither needlessly harassed nor subjected to undue delay and inconvenience.

74. The Committee find that whereas an unduly long time can be taken by police authorities for verification, considerable time is taken in some passport offices themselves to process the applications before referring to the police authorities and to issue the passport after the verification report is received. This may be attributed to the present format of the application form, inadequate number of passport offices in the country, the delimitation of their geographical jurisdiction, the inadequacy of the office premises and the shortage of the staff.

75. The Committee conclude that while both short as well as long term measures are necessary to root out delay, harassment, corruption and fraud from the system, some immediate measures may also be taken to improve the service. The Committee are conscious of the fact that the measures outlined in the succeeding paragraphs will not change the situation overnight but they would definitely go a long way in fulfilling the right of an entitled Indian citizen to a passport which should be available to him conveniently without any delay or harassment.

*Immediate Measures:*

76. In order to expedite the police verification the Committee recommend the following steps:

- (i) The passport application form should include an affidavit or a notarised statement by the applicant regarding the citizenship as well as legal status relating to items e, f, g & h of Section 6(2) of the Passport Act, 1967.
- (ii) The passport office should transmit the passport application after checking it within three days of the receipt to the State/District police authorities and inform the applicant accordingly.
- (iii) The district police authorities should complete the verification, if necessary, by contacting the applicant and send the report to the passport officer within 3 weeks, as prescribed by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Ministry of Home Affairs should ask the State

**Governments/UT. Administrations to hold concerned police officials responsible for any delay.**

- (iv) The applicant on being informed of the transmission of his application to the police authorities may approach the police station in whose jurisdiction he resides and provide officer-in-charge with all relevant information about himself in anticipation of the receipt of his application for verification.**
- (v) The police station should then be in a position to send their report within 48 hours of the receipt of response from the higher authorities.**

**77. As regards the inadequacy of staff the Committee urge upon the Central Passport Organisation to fill up the vacant posts immediately particularly those at the operational and first supervisory levels. The Committee also suggest that pending formal selection of staff to meet sudden increase in the workload the RPO/PO should be vested with necessary administrative and financial powers to recruit qualified temporary staff in clerical and messengerial grades on daily wages through local employment exchanges. The Committee would also like that the vacant posts of RPOs, POs, APOs etc. falling in the promotion quota to be filled immediately and the Ministry of External Affairs should seek a special dispensation from the UPSC in this regard. The Committee are of the opinion that the Ministry may like to have a fresh look at the cadre of the CPO in order to provide for adequate promotional avenues from within the organisation. The Committee also feel that inadequate staff, insufficient promotional avenues and ineffective cadre management are bound to have an adverse effect on the morale of the staff resulting in low productivity and poor efficiency. The Committee therefore desire that the Ministry of External Affairs/CPO should pay particular attention to the cadre structure as well as the service conditions of the CPO personnel including their recruitment, confirmation, promotion and in service training. The Committee also recommend that a service organisation like the CPO should have in build incentives for encouraging high productivity other than the temporary measures like the output linked incentive schemes.**

**78. The Committee are of the view that computerisation shall contribute to the efficiency and productivity of the passport offices. They regret that computerisation which was first mooted since 1986 is yet to be fully implemented. The Committee urge the Ministry of External Affairs/CPO to provide necessary funds and ensure that all passport offices are computerised by the target year 1995-96.**

**79. The Committee emphasise the need for paying immediate attention to the complaints received from the public and recommend that they must be settled within a time limit of say 3 to 4 weeks and desire that every passport office should have a PRO who should be exclusively responsible for public contact and dealing with grievances and complaints.**

80. The Committee have noted the proposal for establishing Passport Advisory Committees for every Passport Office and would like these Committees to be set up immediately.

81. The Committee strongly urge the Ministry of External Affairs/CPO to take special and urgent measures to reduce the backlog in Chandigarh, Lucknow, Patna and Jalandhar Passport Offices. They suggest that unless such reporting has already been instituted the Passport Officer should submit a monthly arrear report to the CPO in a properly devised format which should *inter-alia* give a break up of the pending cases by time slabs with reference to the reason for the delay. The Committee also recommend that the first come first served principle should be applied and the weekly press releases which are published by the Passport Office should give the due date for each district.

82. The Committee also recommend that in addition to the selected Head and Sub Post Offices the forms should be available to an applicant in all Head and Sub Post Offices as well as in all branches of the State Bank of India and that both the post offices and the State Bank branches should be authorised to collect the passport fees. In view of the high cost of production of the application form the Committee are of the view that an appropriate charge may be levied at the time of the issue of the form. The Passport Office should also stamp the likely date of passport delivery on the receipt. The Committee recommend that once computerisation is introduced the data regarding applications received, passports issued and arrears may be maintained by each Passport Office districtwise and totalled for its entire jurisdiction on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis which should be subject to central scrutiny.

83. The Committee recommend that in order to enable the ordinary citizen to fill the application form and to reduce the frequency of personal visit by him to the Passport Office the CPO may, taking into account the past experience, reintroduce the system of licensed passport agents, who shall provide the requisite service against fees determined by government subject to the regulatory control of the Passport Office. Strict vigilance must be exercised to forestall abuse of the system by licensed agents and their contacts in the Passport Office.

84. The Committee also recommend that the premises of the Passport Offices should be renovated and maintained properly, till they move to more spacious premises where adequate facilities are available for the applicants and the staff.

85. The Committee feel that in some Passport Offices sometimes touts operate with the possible collusion of issuing/verification authorities. The Committee therefore recommend that every effort should be made to identify such linkages and nexus with unscrupulous elements who are all out to subvert the procedure and exploit the public. If necessary, this may be done with the help of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Committee also suggest that the CPO should consider the possibility of legal action in such cases.

86. Keeping in view the wide variation in the workload of different Regional Passport Offices, as well as variations within their respective areas of jurisdiction, the Committee recommend that passport demand maps be prepared indicating the average number of passport applications generated over the past three years, block-wise (in rural areas) and town-wise (in urban areas) and ward-wise in metropolitan areas to serve as the basis for determining the number of location of Passport Offices and local Extension Counters around the country. The Committee recommend that one Passport Office (PO) should be located as centrally as possible in contiguous blocks/wards/districts/States which, on an average, generate 50,000 applications per year. Each such PO should established, within its jurisdiction, Extension Counters (ECs) at a distance of no more than 50 km. from its own location. ECs may also be established in blocks/wards less than 50 km. distant from the PO where this is warranted by heavy demands or other relevant factors. ECs should be manned by Assistants borne on the strength of the PO concerned, supplemented by clerical staff drawn from local employment exchanges or taken on deputation from State Governments. They should be physically located in or near the local office of the district administration (Sub-Collector/RDO/BDO etc.) ECs should undertake all passport-related work such as distributing forms, receiving them duly completed, transmitting them to the State/district/local police authorities for verification, forwarding verification records to POs, and handing over passports to applicants when these are ready.

87. The Committee recommend that the number and location of the Passport Offices and Extension Counters may be reviewed annually on the basis of the average annual number of applications during the last 3 years and recast after every decennial census. This will require Computerization.

88. The Committee feel that while setting up new Passport Offices weightage must be given to the geography of the region particularly in the North East, irrespective of the quantum of demand for passports. In this connection the Committee take note of the Ministry of External Affairs's proposal to set up a net work of collection-cum-distribution centres in these areas to link them with the Passport Office at Guwahati. Immediately, however, the Guwahati Passport Office should set up extension counters in every State/UT capital and even in major application generating districts.

89. The Committee feel that constraints of funds should not be a limitation factor in opening new Passport Offices or in setting up new extension counters because considerable revenue is likely to be generated and become available to the Government after the recent increase in the passport fees.

90. The Committee strongly recommend that as per the Act negative lists containing names of persons with criminal records and of those who fall in

the restricted category should be prepared and maintained at all Passport Offices and should be constantly updated. The Committee feel that such negative lists available to all Passport Offices would facilitate a ready check by the Passport Office itself and encourage the Passport Officer to exercise the discretionary authority for issuing the passport if the police verification is delayed beyond 4 weeks.

***Long Term Measures***

91. The Committee observe that a critical role is being performed in the issue of passports by the passport authorities in verifying the identity, status and the antecedents of the applicants. Since the verification comes under the purview of the Ministry of Home Affairs and requires the assistance of the State Governments and the security agencies it is felt that the Government should examine the feasibility and desirability of transferring the work relating to the issue of passports to the Ministry of Home Affairs. However, this will entail a policy decision by the Government a change in the Allocation of Business Rules as well as some amendments to the Passport Act and the staffing pattern of the consular sections of our missions/posts abroad. The Committee would like the Government to examine the proposal in all its dimensions.

92. The Committee envisage that it should be possible to issue passports on demand across the counter, once the negative list is fully operational and the multi-purpose identity cards have been introduced, provided, of course, the passport offices have the necessary quantum of staff and the adequate infrastructure to deal with applicants immediately. The total number of applicants is likely to swell, as our country moves towards the next century and as economic ventures multiply in India and abroad. The Committee express the hope that with such a prospect, the Government will apply their mind to devising measures to cope with the ever increasing demand if necessary, even consider using professional consultants in this regard.

NEW DELHI;  
14 July, 1994

23 Asadha, 1916 (S)

ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE,  
Chairman,  
Standing Committee on External Affairs.

**APPENDIX I**

*Number of fresh applications received by the Passport Offices during the years 1991, 1992 & 1993*

S.No.	Office	1991	1992	1993
1.	AHMEDABAD	131529	133283	111325
2.	BANGALORE	95660	104871	111035
3.	BAREILLY	73476	75484	59603
4.	BHOPAL	23417	2713	25833
5.	BHUBANESHWAR	10001	12808	10069
6.	BOMBAY	295450	259374	211059
7.	CALCUTTA	58070	60319	42470
8.	CHANDIGARH	115624	100565	73766
9.	COCHIN	272232	179871	137771
10.	DELHI	125500	143812	129632
11.	GOA	18487	20137	16065
12.	GUWAHATI	7327	8175	8840
13.	HYDERABAD	232161	212635	202069
14.	JAIPUR	123566	109886	67030
15.	JALANDHAR	128479	112179	80042
16.	KOZHIKODE	205867	235223	206917
17.	LUCKNOW	105167	130861	139215
18.	MADRAS	128130	141194	152674
19.	NAGPUR	8125	13893	12934
20.	PATNA	41423	51614	45485
21.	TRICHY	203805	181215	218491
22.	TRIVANDRUM		157316	124600
		2403496	2472428	2186925

## APPENDIX II

*The total Number of fresh applications pending and the number of applications pending for more than a month in each Passport Office at the end of each year*

S. Office No.	1991		1992		1993	
	Total Pendingcy	Pending over one month	Total Pendingcy	Pending over one month	Total Pendingcy	Pending over one month
1. AHMEDABAD	30136	11150	40437	25408	16897	14126
2. BANGALORE	22345	10644	18504	0	29790	11675
3. BAREILLY	19397	14659	11092	7580	1793	1781
4. BHOPAL	4414	2455	3188	985	3346	327
5. BHUBANESHWAR	706	130	2978	1580	1956	245
6. BOMBAY	67710	35856	47349	20729	49827	16216
7. CALCUTTA	12482	8482	23483	20011	14707	4601
8. CHANDIGARH	57320	47711	82499	74590	59912	49900
9. COCHIN	141065	116065	62679	50072	8912	6225
10. DELHI	16800	2826	34024	19564	33355	10464
11. GOA	3254	873	2074	583	2350	97
12. GUWAHATI	1984	1593	3663	3018	3071	1977
13. HYDERABAD	88978	61380	37459	20801	23254	9222
14. JAIPUR	60720	45314	50861	40379	8988	1583
15. JALANDHAR	62561	52841	116026	91246	75547	67032
16. KOZHIKODE	90782	80856	168942	147605	24609	18077
17. LUCKNOW	70515	54434	87406	78588	68231	66301
18. MADRAS	44900	12107	65417	40893	13376	12819
19. NAGPUR	992	44	827	80	1143	54
20. PATNA	25520	19448	42993	40171	42979	36536
21. TRICHY	87802	18700	157081	132772	36040	24471
22. TRIVANDRUM			83853	72654	12655	1161
	910383	597568	1142835	889309	532738	354890



**APPENDIX III**  
*Provisional number of passport cases processed in Passport Offices during the years 1991, 1992 & 1993*

Sl. No.	Office	Rej/clo* (a)	1991 granted (b)	Processed (a)+(b)	Rej/clo (a)	1992 granted (b)	Processed (a)+(b)	Rej/clo (a)	1993 granted (b)	Processed (a) + (b)
1.	Ahmedabad	2499	110233	112732	3627	125321	128948	1846	124080	125926
2.	Bangalore	3577	56657	60234	1573	123150	124723	885	104068	104953
3.	Bareilly	@	63697	63697	@	71685	71685	@	61906	61906
4.	Bhopal	1147	20997	22144	678	27426	28104	1652	26410	28062
5.	Bhubaneshwar	321	9345	9666	1678	9894	11572	196	11114	11310
6.	Bombay	6803	246051	252854	7839	280822	288661	8606	209480	218086
7.	Calcutta	4273	46927	51200	5271	47119	52390	4235	51720	55955
8.	Chandigarh	1368	79354	80722	399	76463	76862	3195	95554	98749
9.	Cochin	240	145562	145802	1434	260359	261793	9100	183535	192635
10.	Delhi	25483	107017	132500	30404	113409	143813	14799	128186	142985
11.	Goa	116	16258	16374	266	20821	21087	162	16015	16177
12.	Guwahati	0	4899	4899	1	6511	6512	4	9358	9362
13.	Hyderabad	6330	147614	153950	1230	264131	265361	4575	215090	219665
14.	Jaipur	1070	71912	72982	425	119876	120301	1905	106104	108009
15.	Jalandhar	99	110185	110284	79	73891	73970	40	110070	110110
16.	Kozhikode	8107	102687	110794	14989	168151	183140	12678	341000	353678
17.	Lucknow	6010	44915	50925	6165	111719	117884	6765	138457	145222
18.	Madras	4335	79932	84267	2569	118872	121441	2825	188416	191241
19.	Nagpur	36	7552	7588	179	13731	13910	166	12890	13056
20.	Patna	52	18896	18948	65	36400	36465	76	46661	46737
21.	Trichy	3630	124329	127959	1882	127168	129050	1746	334847	336593
22.	Trivandrum	—	—	—	1377	71506	72883	1062	194319	195381
		75502	1615019	1690521	82130	2268425	2350555	76518	2709280	2785798

@Figures awaited

\*Rej = Rejected

Clo = Closed

**APPENDIX IV**

*Statement showing Number of Days taken to Issue Passports in June 1992,  
July, 1993 and February, 1994.*

Passport Offices	June, 1992	July 1993	February, 1994
1. Ahmedabad	105	100	72
2. Bangalore	200	127	73
3. Bareilly	90	31	39
4. Bhopal	35	32	65
5. Bhubaneswar	60	85	62
6. Bombay	75	50	46
7. Calcutta	90	93	35
8. Chandigarh	240	304	278
9. Cochin	270	56	44
10. Delhi	90	50	25
11. Guwahati	60	34	28
12. Hyderabad	150	53	46
13. Jaipur	180	168	45
14. Jalandhar	240	300	194
15. Kozhikode	365	266	72
16. Lucknow	180	177	115
17. Madras	180	76	39
18. Nagpur	28	31	31
19. Goa	40	31	35
20. Patna	240	302	294
21. Trichy	270	134	44
22. Trivandrum	120	118	35

## APPENDIX V

### *Statement of Observations and Recommendations*

Sl. No.	Para No.	Ministry	Observations/Recommendations
1	2	3	4
1.	68.	External Affairs/ Home Affairs	The facts which have come to the notice of the Committee clearly indicate that there is considerable delay in the issue of passports by some offices which in turn generates corruption and harassment of all kinds and contributes to a negative public image of the CPO as a whole. It is evident from the pendency figures of applications beyond one month of receipt of applications (3.54 lakhs out of total pendency of 5.3 lakhs at the end of 1993) that passports are not being issued in 4 weeks as contemplated by both the Ministries of External Affairs and Home Affairs and that while the Ministry of External Affairs consider the delay in police verification as the critical element, the Ministry of Home Affairs has hinted at non-use of the discretion vested in them by the passport officers due to other reasons.
2.	69.	External Affairs	The Committee also observe and welcome the commendable effort made by the Ministry to bring down the pendency of 12 lakhs in May, 1992 and from 11.4 lakhs at the start of January, 1993 to 5.3 lakhs as on 31st December, 1993. The Committee also notice the improvement in the output of the passport offices during 1993 with the issue of over 27 lakh fresh passports representing an increase of about 21% over the output in 1992 leading to reduction in

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			<p>pendency of applications. Nevertheless, the achievement still pales into insignificance going by the quantum of pendency of 5.3 lakh applications as on 31st December, 1993.</p>
3.	70.	External Affairs	<p>While commending the remarkable improvement in 8 offices and the relative improvement in 6 offices the Committee express its strong dissatisfaction with the performance of the other offices, particularly in the case of Chandigarh, Lucknow, Patna and Jalandhar. The Committee recognise that while inordinate delay in these four offices may be specific to them, there are systemic and procedural reasons for the overall pattern and to some extent lack of staff and infrastructure also contribute to the delay.</p>
4.	71.	-do-	<p>The Committee, therefore, feel that the only way to bring about a universal improvement is through a radical transformation of the system, besides upgradation of the infrastructure and provision of adequate staff, only by streamlining the process itself can corruption and irregularities, as well as fraud and harassment, be checked.</p>
5.	72.	-do-	<p>The Committee feel that the problems of the staff and booklet shortages which led to the unprecedented rise in the arrears during 1991-92 were not insurmountable and could have been anticipated. The Committee are therefore constrained to take note of the lack of foresight and timely planning on the part of passport</p>

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6.	73.	External Affairs/ Home Affairs	<p>authorities. With regard to the general pattern of delay the Committee have not been able to understand why the discretionary power regarding police verification conceded by Ministry of Home Affairs is not being fully utilised by the passport issuing authorities.</p> <p>From the statistics furnished by the Ministry of External Affairs the Committee note that only 0.6% of the applicants are finally found to be not eligible to receive the passport. But the Committee also recognise the validity of the opinion of the Foreign Secretary that even 0.6% translates into a substantial number in absolute terms and that the security angle cannot be overlooked. The Committee therefore feel that while there is no escaping the need for careful scrutiny before passports are issued or renewed, it is essential that the system bereoriented towards ensuring that bonafide applicants are neither needlessly harassed nor subjected to undue delay and inconvenience.</p>
7.	74.	-do-	<p>The Committee find that whereas an unduly long time can be taken by police authorities for verification, considerable time is taken in some passport offices themselves to process the applications before referring to the police authorities and to issue the passport after the verification report is received. This may be attributed to the present format of the application form, inadequate number of passport offices in the country, the delimitation of their geographical jurisdiction. the inadequacy of the office premises and the shortage of the staff.</p>

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8.	75.	External Affairs/ Home Affairs	<p>The Committee conclude that while both short as well as long term measures are necessary to root out delay, harrassment, corruption and fraud from the system, some immediate measures may also be taken to improve the service. The Committee are conscious of the fact that the measures outlined in the succeeding paragraphs will not change the situation overnight but they would definitely go a long way in fulfilling the right of an entitled Indian citizen to a passport which should be available to him conveniently without any delay or harassment.</p>
9.	76.	-do-	<p>In order to expedite the police verification the Committee recommend the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="549 942 974 1159">(i) The passport application form should include an affidavit or a notarised statement by the applicant regarding the citizenship as well as legal status relating to items e,f,g &amp; h of Section 6(2) of the Passport Act, 1967.</li><li data-bbox="538 1177 974 1394">(ii) The passport office should transmit the passport application after checking it within three days of the receipt to the State/ District police authorities and inform the applicant accordingly.</li><li data-bbox="527 1411 974 1588">(iii) The district police authorities should complete the verification, if necessary, by contacting the applicant and sent the report to the passport officer within 3 weeks, as prescribed by the</li></ul>

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Ministry of Home Affairs. The Ministry of Home Affairs should ask the State Government/UT Administrations to hold concerned police officials responsible for any delay.

- (iv) The applicant on being informed of the transmission of his application to the police authorities may approach the police station in whose jurisdiction he resides and provide officer-in-charge with all relevant information about himself in anticipation of the receipt of his application for verification.
- (v) The police station should then be in a position to send their report within 48 hours of the receipt of response from the higher authorities.

10. 77.

External  
Affairs

As regards the inadequacy of staff the Committee urge upon the Central Passport Organisation to fill up the vacant posts immediately particularly those at the operational and first supervisory levels. The Committee also suggest that pending formal selection of staff and also to meet sudden increase in the workload the RPO/PO should be vested with necessary administrative and financial powers to recruit qualified temporary staff in clerical and messengerial grades on daily wages through local employment exchanges. The Committee would also like that the vacant posts of RPOs, POs, APOs etc. falling in the promotion quota to be filled immediately and the Ministry of External Affairs should seek a

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special dispensation from the UPSC in this regard. The Committee are of the opinion that the Ministry may like to have a fresh look at the cadre of the CPO in order to provide for adequate promotional avenues from within the organisation. The Committee also feel that inadequate staff, insufficient promotional avenues and ineffective cadre management are bound to have an adverse effect on the morale of the staff resulting in low productivity and poor efficiency. The Committee therefore desire that the Ministry of External Affairs/CPO should pay particular attention to the cadre structure as well as the service conditions of the CPO personnel including their recruitment, confirmation, promotion and in service training. The Committee recommend that a service organisation like the CPO should have in built incentives for encouraging high productivity other than the temporary measures like the output linked incentive schemes.

11. 78.

External  
Affairs

The Committee are of the view that computerisation shall contribute to the efficiency and productivity of the passport offices. They regret that computerisation which was first mooted since 1986 is yet to be fully implemented. The Committee urge the Ministry of External Affairs/CPO to provide necessary funds and ensure that all passport offices are computerised by the target year 1995-96.

12. 79.

-do-

The Committee emphasis the need for paying immediate attention to the complaints received from the public



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			and recommend that they must be settled within a time limit of say 3 to 4 weeks and desire that every passport office should have a PRO who should be exclusively responsible for public contact and dealing with grievances and complaints.
13.	80.	External Affairs	The Committee have noted the proposal for establishing Passport Advisory Committees for every passport office and would like these Committees to be set up immediately.
14.	81.	-do-	The Committee strongly urge the Ministry of External Affairs/CPO to take special and urgent measures to reduce the backlog in Chandigarh, Lucknow, Patna and Jalandhar passport offices. They suggest that unless such reporting has already been instituted the Passport Officer should submit a montly arrear report to the CPO in a properly devised format which should <i>inter-alia</i> give a break-up of the pending cases by time slabs with reference to the reason for the delay. The Committee also recommend that the first come first served principle should be applied and the weekly press releases which are published by the passport office should give the due date for each district.
15.	82.	-do-	The Committee also recommend that in addition to the selected Head and Sub Post Offices the forms should be available to an applicant in all Head and Sub-Post Offices as well as in all branches of the State Bank of India and that both the post offices and the State Bank branches should be authorised to collect the

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passport fees. In view of the high cost of production of the application form the Committee are of the view that an appropriate charge may be levied at the time of the issue of the form. The passport office should also stamp the likely date of passport delivery on the receipt. The Committee recommend that once computerisation is introduced the data regarding applications received, passports issued and arrears may be maintained by each passport office district-wise and totalled for its entire jurisdiction on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis which should be subject to Central scrutiny.

16. 83.

External  
Affairs

The Committee recommend that in order to enable the ordinary citizen to fill the application form and to reduce the frequency of personal visit by him to the passport office the CPO may, taking into account the past experience, reintroduce the system of licensed passport agents, who shall provide the requisite service against fees determined by Government and subject to the regulatory control of the passport office. Strict vigilance must be exercised to forestall abuse of the system by licensed agents and their contacts in the Passport Office.

17. 84.

-do-

The Committee also recommend that the premises of the passport offices should be renovated and maintained properly, till they move to more spacious premises where adequate facilities are available for the applicants and the staff.

18. 85.

External  
Affairs/  
Home Affairs

The Committee feel that in some passport offices sometimes touts operate with the possible collusion of

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issuing/verification authorities. The Committee therefore recommend that every effort should be made to identify such linkages and nexus with unscrupulous elements who are all out to subvert the procedure and exploit the public. If necessary, this may be done with the help of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Committee also suggest that the CPO should consider the possibility of legal action in such cases.

19. 86. External Affairs

Keeping in view the wide variation in the workload of different Regional Passport Offices, as well as variations within their respective areas of jurisdiction, the Committee recommend that passport demand maps be prepared indicating the average number of passport applications generated over the past three years, block-wise (in rural areas) and town-wise (in urban areas) and ward-wise in metropolitan areas to serve as the basis for determining the number and location of Passport Offices and local Extension Counters around the country. The Committee recommend that one Passport Office (PO) should be located as Centrally as possible in contiguous blocks/wards/districts/States which, on an average, generate 50,000 applications per year. Each such PO should establish, within its jurisdiction, Extension Counters (ECs) at a distance of no more than 50 km. from its own location. ECs may also be established in blocks/wards less than 50 km distant from the PO where this is warranted by heavy

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demand or other relevant factors. ECs should be manned by Assistants borne on the strength of the PO concerned, supplemented by clerical staff drawn from local employment exchanges or taken on deputation from State Governments. They should be physically located in or near the local office of the district administration (Sub-Collector/RDO/BDO etc.) ECs should undertake all passport-related work such as distributing forms, receiving them duly completed, transmitting them to the State/district/local police authorities for verification, forwarding verification records to POs, and handing over passports to applicants when these are ready.

20. 87. External Affairs

The Committee recommend that the number and location of the Passport Offices and Extension Counters may be reviewed annually on the basis of the average annual number of applications during the last 3 years and recast after every decennial census. This will require computerization.

21. 88. -do-

The Committee feel that while setting up new passport offices weightage must be given to the geography of the region particularly in the North East, irrespective of the quantum of demand for passports. In this connection the Committee take note of the Ministry of External Affairs's proposal to set up a net work of collection-cum-distribution centres in these areas to link them with the Passport Office at Guwahati. -Immediately, however, the Guwahati

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			<p>passport office should set up extension counters in every State/UT capital and even in major application generating districts.</p>
22.	89.	External Affairs	<p>The Committee feel that constraint of funds should not be a limitation factor in opening new passport offices or in setting up new extension counters because considerable revenue is likely to be generated and become available to the Government after the recent increase in the passport fees.</p>
23.	90.	External Affairs/ Home Affairs	<p>The Committee strongly recommend that as per the Act negative lists containing names of persons with criminal records and of those who fall in the restricted category should be prepared and maintained at all passport offices and should be constantly updated. The Committee feel that such negative lists available to all passport offices would facilitate a ready check by the passport office itself and encourage the passport officer to exercise the discretionary authority for issuing the passport if the police verification is delayed beyond 4 weeks.</p>
24.	91.	Cabinet Secretariat	<p>The Committee observe that a critical role is being performed in the issue of passports by the passport authorities in verifying the identity, status and the antecedents of the applicants. Since the verification comes under the purview of the Ministry of Home Affairs and requires the assistance of the State Governments and the security agencies it is felt that the Government should examine the</p>

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feasibility and desirability of transferring the work relating to the issue of passports to the Ministry of Home Affairs. However, this will entail a policy decision by the Government a change in the Allocation of Business Rules as well as some amendments to the passport Act and the staffing pattern of the consular sections of our missions/ posts abroad. The Committee would like the Government to examine the proposal in all its dimensions.

25. 92.

External Affairs/  
Home Affairs

The Committee envisage that it should be possible to issue passports on demand across the counter, once the negative list is fully operational and the multi-purpose identity cards have been introduced, provided, of course, the passport offices have the necessary quantum of staffs and the adequate infrastructure to deal with applicants immediately. The total number of applicants is likely to swell, as our country moves towards the next century and as economic ventures multiply in India and abroad. The Committee express the hope that with such a prospect, the Government will apply their mind to devising measures to cope with the ever increasing demand, and if necessary, even consider using professional consultants in this regard.

MINUTES OF THE SITTING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON  
PASSPORT FACILITIES (WHERE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE WERE ALSO PRESENT) HELD ON 17TH  
FEBRUARY, 1994

The Sub-Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1730 hrs.

PRESENT

Shri Sikander Bakht—*Convenor*

MEMBERS

*Lok Sabha*

2. Shri Bijoy Krishna Handique
3. Shri Inder Jit
4. Dr. Lal Bahadur Rawal
5. Shri Syed Shahabuddin
6. Mohd. Yunus Saleem
7. Shri Roshan Lal
8. Shri Rajnath Sonkar Shastri
9. Shri Sudhir Ray

*Rajya Sabha*

10. Shri Mohammad Yunus

SECRETARIAT

Shri R.V. Warjri—*Director*

Shri Ashok Sarin—*Under Secretary*

WITNESSES

*Ministry of External Affairs*

1. Shri K. Srinivasan, Foreign Secretary
2. Shri Deb Mukherjee, Additional Secretary (PU&PP)
3. Mrs. Leela K. Ponnappa, Joint Secretary (CPU&OI)
4. Shri Vijay Kumar, Joint Secretary (Coord.)

At the outset, the Convenor of the Sub-Committee welcomed the Members of the Committee and the representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs to the sitting of the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee then took up the examination of the subject 'Passport Facilities'. A verbatim record of the evidence was kept.

*The Sub-Committee then adjourned.*

**MINUTES OF THE SITTING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON PASSPORT FACILITIES (WHERE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WERE ALSO PRESENT) HELD ON 4TH MAY, 1994**

The Sub-Committee sat from 1530 hours to 1800 hours.

**PRESENT**

**Shri Sikander Bakht—*Convenor***

**MEMBERS**

***Lok Sabha***

2. Shri Bijoy Krishna Handique
3. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar
4. Shri Udaysingrao Gaikwad
5. Shri Satya Deo Singh
6. Dr. Lal Bahadur Rawal
7. Dr. A.K. Patel
8. Shri Syed Shahabuddin
9. Mohd. Yunus Saleem
10. Shri Roshan Lal
11. Dr. Sudhir Ray
12. Smt. Geeta Mukherjee
13. Prof. (Smt.) Savithiri Lakshmanan

***Rajya Sabha***

14. Shri Mohammad Yunus
15. Shri K. Mohammad Khan
16. Shri K. Rahman Khan

**WITNESSES**

***Ministry of Home Affairs***

1. Shri V.K. Jain, Special Secretary (ISP)
2. Shri V.S. Ailawadi, Joint Secretary (F)
3. Shri C. Phunsog, Joint Secretary (ISI)

***Ministry of External Affairs***

1. Shri K. Srinivasan, Foreign Secretary
2. Mrs. Chokila Iyer, Additional Secretary (PV)
3. Ms. Leela K. Ponnappa, Joint Secretary (CPV&OI)
4. Shri Vijay Kumar, Joint Secretary (Coord.)

The Convenor, Sub-Committee on Passport Facilities welcomed the members of the Committee and the representatives of Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of External Affairs.



The Sub-Committee then resumed the examination of the subject "Passport Facilities". The witnesses clarified certain points raised by the members on the subject.

The Convenor thanked the officers of the Ministries for giving evidence before the Committee.

A verbatim record of the evidence was kept.

*The Sub-Committee then adjourned.*

MINUTES OF THE SITTING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON  
PASSPORT FACILITIES HELD ON 23RD MAY, 1994

The Sub-Committee sat from 1500 hours to 1630 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Sikander Bakht—*Convenor*

MEMBERS

*Lok Sabha*

2. Shri Bijoy Krishna Handique
3. Shri V. Krishna Reddy Kasu
4. Dr. A.K. Patel
5. Shri Syed Shahabuddin
6. Mohd. Yunus Saleem

*Rajya Sabha*

7. Shri Jagesh Desai
8. Shri G.G. Swell
9. Shri K. Rahman Khan
10. Shri Mohd. Yunus

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri R.V. Warjri—*Director*
2. Shri Ashok Sarin—*Under Secretary*

WITNESSES

1. Shri K. Srinivasan—*Foreign Secretary*
2. Shri V.K. Grover—*Secretary (West)*
3. Shri P.M.S. Malik—*Special Secretary (ER)*
4. Shri Dilip Lahiri—*Joint Secretary (AMS)*
5. Shri Vijay Kumar—*Joint Secretary (Coord.)*

At the outset, the Convenor welcomed the Hon'ble Members and the representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs to the sitting of the Sub-Committee.

2. Foreign Secretary then briefed the members about the visit of the Prime Minister to USA and clarified some points raised by them.

3. Thereafter the Sub-Committee took up consideration of the draft report on 'Passport Facilities'. After some discussion, the Members made some suggestions for inclusion in the draft report and authorised the Convenor to finalise the draft Report in the light of suggestions made.

*The Sub-Committee then adjourned.*

MINUTES OF THE SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL  
AFFAIRS HELD ON 5TH JULY, 1994

The Committee sat from 1100 hours to 1245 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Sikander Bakht — *Convenor (In the Chair)*

MEMBERS

*Lok Sabha*

2. Shri Bijoy Krishna Handique
3. Dr. Girija Vyas
4. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar
5. Prof. (Smt.) Savithiri Lakshmanan
6. Shri Udaysingrao Gaikwad
7. Shri Rajnath Sonkar Shastri
8. Shri Satya Deo Singh
9. Shri Anand Ratna Maurya
10. Dr. Lal Bahadur Rawal
11. Shri Asht Bhujra Prasad Shukla
12. Shri Syed Shahabuddin
13. Shri Roshan Lal
14. Dr. Sudhir Ray
15. Smt. Geeta Mukherjee
16. Shri R. Naidu Ramasamy
17. Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait

*Rajya Sabha*

18. Shri Somappa R. Bommai
19. Shri Jagesh Desai
20. Shri Bishambhar Nath Pande
21. Shri G.G. Swell
22. Shri Mohammad Yunus
23. Shri V.N. Gadgil
24. Shri K. Rahman Khan

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri R.V. Warjri — *Director*
2. Shri Ashok Sarin — *Under Secretary*

In the absence of the Chairman, the Members authorised the Convenor, Sub-Committee on Passport Facilities to Chair the meeting. The Convenor welcomed the Members of the Committee to the sitting. He then thanked the members of Sub-Committee and other members for their active cooperation in the examination of the subject and finalisation of the draft Report.

2. The Committee then took up consideration of the draft report on "Passport Facilities". The Convenor invited the Hon'ble members to offer their comments on the report. Certain changes were suggested by some members which were accepted by the Committee. The Committee then approved the draft report with the suggested changes/modifications. Thereafter, the Committee authorised the Chairman to finalise the Report and present it to the Parliament.

*The Committee then adjourned.*