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Title : Need to appoint adequate staff in the existing passport offices and stop the privatization in the Indian Embassies and consulates abroad.

SHRI A. SAMPATH (ATTINGAL): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, thank you for calling my name.

I would like to invite the attention of this august House regarding the sad state of the passport offices in our nation. The Government of India has decided to wind up the operation of 37 passport offices and instead decided to start 77 Sewa Kendras under the pretext of Public-Private Participation. They are privatising the whole passport issuing process.

With your permission, I would like to invite the attention of the Government towards one thing. From the Bengaluru office of the Sewa Kendra, two passports were issued for the same person. A person from Thiruvananthapuram District of Kerala has received two passports under different numbers from the Bengaluru Sewa Kendra.

Another important thing is that, with the same photograph two passports were issued – one in the name of a male and another in the name of a female. This is just like giving one passport free for another passport. â€¦ (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: What is your demand?

SHRI A. SAMPATH : This is a severe threat to the national security. The security of our nation will be in peril.

The number of applicants is increasing year after year. At the same time, the number of officers and employees in the passport offices have come down. I understand that more than 539 posts are to be filled up. ...(*Interruptions*)

If you permit me I will lay on the Table all the paper clippings. Yesterday and day-before-yesterday the newspapers have reported as to what is happening in the Passport Sewa Kendras.

My request is that do not privatise the passport issuing powers and do not hand over the powers to the private sector. It is concerned with the integrity, security, and sovereignty of our nation. This is a very important matter. ...(*Interruptions*)

I beg your protection. This has to be replied by the hon. Minister. Thank you.