

>

Title: Need to open Passport Seva Kendra Project office at Salem District, Tamil Nadu.

SHRI S. SEMMALAI (SALEM): Thank you for giving me this opportunity to bring an important public issue to the attention of the hon. Minister of External Affairs.

The Government of India had made provisions to open 77 Passport Seva Kendra Project Offices throughout the country by sanctioning Rs.770 crore. This is a mission mode programme under the National e-Governance Plan, to ensure delivery of passport services to people in a timely, transparent, more accessible and reliable manner, in a comfortable environment through a streamlined process as envisaged by the Passport Seva Project of the Union Ministry of External Affairs. In Tamil Nadu so far four such centres are functioning. This project is presently in the pilot stage. As per this project, the passport applications are going to be directly registered online jointly by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Tata Consultancy Services.

Apart from Chennai, there are three Regional Passport Offices in Tamil Nadu, set up at Coimbatore, Madurai and Trichy. Salem is one among the six districts attached with the Coimbatore Passport Office. The neighbouring districts namely, Namakkal, Dharmapuri and Erode are at a radial distance of less than 60 kms. Salem District has a high potential to utilise this on-line registration of applications for passport. The distance from Salem District to Coimbatore PSK is about 200 kms. and every applicant, who applies for passport, has to travel more than 400 kms. to and fro.

For the benefit of the citizens of Salem and neighbouring districts, the hon. Minister for External Affairs may be kind enough to order for the opening of the Passport Seva Kendra at Salem.