

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1685
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.02.2019

SIMPLIFICATION OF PASSPORT PROCESS

1685. SHRIMATI V. SATHYA BAMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has simplified the process of obtaining passports or renewal of passports;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has also eased the process of obtaining passports and visas for the Indian Diaspora and Persons of Indian Origin; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) & (b) The Ministry has eased the passport issuing process and has made it an online procedure including getting appointments for submission of documents for passports. Effective technical infrastructure is in place to ensure that the Passport Seva system is available for access at all times from any location. The Passport Portal (www.passportindia.gov.in) is accessible to anyone, anywhere and anytime. With a view to address the challenge of digital divide, especially in the rural hinterland, the Ministry in association with CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd. (which is promoted by the Department of Electronics and IT), has facilitated online filing of passport applications, through the vast network of Common Service Centres (CSCs) across rural hinterland.

An applicant can now apply for a passport from anywhere in India. But Police verification would be conducted by the Police Station in whose jurisdiction the address mentioned in the form falls and the passport will also be dispatched at the same address.

mPassport Seva mobile app launched on 26.06.2018 enables to apply, pay and schedule appointments for passport services. This App is available in Android and iOS platforms. It also provides passport related information including PSK and POPSK location, applicable fees, mode of submission, and tracking of passport application status on smart phones. Citizens would not require access to a computer and printer to apply for passport services.

Securing online appointment for submission of passport applications at PSK/ POPSK has been simplified. The current provision is allowing applicants to choose any appointment date from the earliest five available dates (working days) for scheduling/rescheduling an appointment for passport related services. Earlier, the System used to offer only one available date to the applicant for seeking appointment for passport related services.

Before 2014, 77 Passport Sewa Kendras were operational in the country. After 2014, 16 new Passport Sewa Kendras were established by this Government. Thereafter, in the year 2017, a decision was taken in co-operation with the

Department of Posts to open 'Post Office Passport Sewa Kendras' under which as on 6 February,2019, 326 'Post Office Passport Sewa Kendras' have be established. Thus, as on 6 February, 2019, 419 'Passport Kendras' are operational in the country.

The passport rules have also been simplified to make it easier for the citizens to get passports. This is at Annexure-I.

(c) & (d) The Ministry proposes to link and integrate all the Embassies and Consulates abroad with the Passport Seva Project (PSP). As a first step in this process, our Embassies and Consulates in the United Kingdom and the United States of America have been integrated with the PSP system. This will facilitate holders of Indian passports to apply for a fresh passport or renew their existing passport from an Indian Embassy or Consulate abroad.

Rationalization and simplification of Visa regime is a continuous process. Foreigners of Indian origin can avail Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card scheme. As per the provisions of the scheme, OCI card holders get the benefit of a multiple entry life-long visa for visiting India for any purpose.

Further, foreigners of Indian origin may also obtain multiple entry visa for the period of five years at a time from our Mission/ Post.

In addition, the spouse and children of an Indian citizen/Person of Indian origin/OCI card holder may obtain multiple entry Visa for a period of five year at a time.

Foreigners of Indian origin can also avail e-Visa facility, which is available for the nationals of 166 countries.

SIMPLIFICATION OF PASSPORT RULES

In order to streamline, liberalize and ease the process of issue of passport, the Ministry of External Affairs has taken a number of steps in the realm of passport policy to ease the process of issue of passports. The details of these steps are given below:-

A. Documents in support of proof of Date of Birth

As per the extant statutory provisions of the Passport Rules, 1980, all the applicants born on or after 26/01/1989, in order to get a passport, had to, hitherto, mandatorily submit the Birth Certificate as the proof of Date of Birth (DOB). It has now been decided that all applicants of passports can submit any one of the following documents as the proof of DOB while submitting the passport application:

- (i) Birth Certificate (BC) issued by the Registrar of Births & Deaths or the Municipal Corporation or any other prescribed authority whosoever has been empowered under the Registration of Birth & Deaths Act, 1969 to register the birth of a child born in India;
- (ii) Transfer/School leaving/Matriculation Certificate issued by the school last attended/recognized educational board containing the DOB of the applicant;
- (iii) PAN Card issued by the Income Tax Department with the DOB of applicant;
- (iv) Aadhaar Card/E-Aadhaar having the DOB of applicant;
- (v) Copy of the extract of the service record of the applicant (only in respect of Government servants) or the Pay Pension Order (in respect of retired Government Servants), duly attested/certified by the officer/in-charge of the Administration of the concerned Ministry/Department of the applicant, having his DOB;
- (vi) Driving license issued by the Transport Department of concerned State Government, having the DOB of applicant;
- (vii) Election Photo Identity Card (EPIC) issued by the Election Commission of India having the DOB of applicant;
- (viii) Policy Bond issued by the Public Life Insurance Corporations/Companies having the DOB of the holder of the insurance policy.

B. Other Changes:

- (i) The online passport application form now requires the applicant to provide the name of father or mother or legal guardian, i.e., only one parent and not both. This would enable single parents to apply for passports for their children and to also issue passports where the name of either the father or the mother is not required to be printed at the request of the applicant.
- (ii) The total number of Annexes prescribed in the Passport Rule, 1980, has been reduced to 9 from the past 15.

- (iii) All the annexes that are required to be given by the applicants would be in the form of a self declaration on a plain paper. Attestation/swearing by/ before any Notary/ Executive Magistrate/ First Class Judicial Magistrate would be henceforth not required.
- (iv) Married applicants would not be required to provide the erstwhile Annexure K or any marriage certificate.
- (v) The passport application form does not require the applicant to provide the name of her/his spouse in case of separated or divorced persons. Such applicants for passports would not be required to provide even the Divorce Decree.
- (vi) In case of children not born out of wedlock, the applicant for the passport of such children should submit only extant Annexure C while submitting the passport application.
- (vii) In case of issue of passport to in-country domestically adopted children, submission of the registered adoption deed would no longer be required. In the absence of any deed to this effect, the passport applicant may give a declaration on a plain paper confirming the adoption.
- (viii) Government servants, who are not able to obtain the Identity Certificate (extant Annexure-A)/ No-Objection Certificate (extant Annexure-G) from their concerned employer and intend to get the passport on urgent basis can now get the passport by submitting a self-declaration in extant Annexure-'H' that he/she has given prior Intimation Letter to his/her employer informing that he/she was applying for an ordinary passport to a Passport Issuing Authority.
- (ix) Sadhus/ Sanyasis can apply for a passport with the name of their spiritual Guru mentioned in the passport application in lieu of their biological parent(s) name(s) subject to their providing of at least one public document such as Election Photo Identity Card (EPIC) issued by the Election Commission of India, PAN card, Aadhaar Card, etc wherein the name of the Guru has been recorded against the column(s) for parent(s) name(s).
- (x) Orphaned children who do not have any proof of DOB such as Birth Certificate or the Matriculation Certificate or the declaratory Court order, may now submit a declaration given by the Head of the Orphanage/Child Care Home on their official letter head of the organization confirming the DOB of the applicant.
- (xi) An applicant for a passport has to submit any one of the documents as mentioned in (A) above as proof of Date of Birth (DOB) while submitting the passport application. The DOB mentioned in the document would be recorded in the passport. In case there is a discrepancy between the DOB previously recorded in the passport and the new proof of DOB submitted by the applicant, the Passport Issuing Authorities (PIA) have been authorized to consider the explanation of each applicant seeking change in the DOB (irrespective of the period that would have lapsed after the issue of the passport) to find the genuineness of the claim and if the PIA is satisfied with the claim and with the document(s) submitted by the applicant in support of the claim, the PIA shall accept all such requests made by the applicant to issue the passport with revised DOB.
- (xii) Passports can be now obtained under the 'Tatkaal' Scheme without providing the Verification Certificate from a Gazetted Officer, which was required earlier. The documents to be submitted for getting a passport under this Scheme have been notified vide G.S.R. 39(E) dated 18 January, 2018 and O.M. No. VI/401/1/4/2013 dated 23 March 2018 read with O.M. of even number dated 17 April 2018. Applicants may submit any 3 of the following

documents for obtaining passport:

- (a) Aadhaar card/e-Aadhaar containing the 12-digit Aadhaar number/28-digit Aadhaar Enrolment ID printed on the Aadhaar Enrolment Slip issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)
- (b) Electors Photo Identify Card (EPIC)
- (c) Service Photo Identity Card issued by State/Central Government, Public Sector Undertakings, local bodies or Public Limited Companies
- (d) Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe/Order Backward Class Certificate
- (e) Arms License
- (f) Pension Document such as Ex-servicemen's Pension Book/Pension Payment order, ex-servicemen's widow/dependent Certificate, Old Age pension Order
- (g) Self-Passport (unrevoked and undamaged)
- (h) Permanent Account Number (PAN) Card
- (i) Bank/Kisan/Post Office Passbook
- (j) Student Photo Identity Card issued by an Educational Institution;
- (k) Driving License (valid and within the jurisdiction of State of submission of applicant)
- (l) Birth Certificate issued under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act; and
- (m) Ration Card

(xiii) Now Passports can also be obtained under the Normal scheme on out-of-turn post-Police Verification basis without paying any additional fees on the submission of minimum three documents mentioned in para-xii.
