

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4085
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.03.2020**

EASIER TRAVELLING ABROAD

†4085. SHRI SUNIL KUMAR PINTU:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the initiatives being taken/proposed to be taken to make travelling abroad easier and safer; and
- (b) the steps taken/proposed to be taken so far to set up a passport office in Muzaffarpur, Bihar?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN]**

(a) 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.

In the year 2017, a decision was taken to open 'Post Office Passport Seva Kendras' (POPSK) in co-operation with the Department of Posts. 424 POPSKs are operational in the country as on 12th March, 2020.

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.

The mPassport Seva mobile app enables applicants 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 location of Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs), 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.

(b) A Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) is functional since 08.03.2017 at Muzaffarpur under the administrative jurisdiction of the Passport Office in Patna.
