

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2532
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.03.2021**

ISSUANCE OF PASSPORTS

2532. SHRI Y. DEVENDRAPPA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps to make the process of getting passports simple and transparent and if so, the details thereof;**
- (b) whether the Government is also making efforts to ensure that the process of issuing passports be made errorless so that no anti-social elements can misuse it and if so, the steps taken in this regard;**
- (c) whether rackets of touts have been exposed who had indulged in making passports on wrong addresses during the last three years; and**
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken against the offenders?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

[SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN]

(a) Yes. The Ministry has simplified the passport issuing process. It has been made an online procedure, including for applications and for getting appointments for submission of documents. The Passport portal (www.passportindia.gov.in) is accessible to anyone, anywhere and anytime. Citizens can also apply, pay and schedule appointments for passport services on mPassportSeva Mobile App, and do not require access to a computer and printer to apply for passport services. Ministry's mPassport Police App is being used by Police authorities for antecedents verification of the applicant in paperless digital flow. Further, DigiLocker has been successfully integrated with the PSP system enabling citizens to submit various documents required for passport services through DigiLocker in a paperless mode. The Ministry has also taken a number of steps to simplify passport policy and rules making it easier for the citizens to apply and get a passport.

The Ministry has expanded the outreach by opening of more Passport Kendras. At present, there are 555 Passport Kendras

functional in the country, including 36 Passport Offices, 93 Passport Seva Kendra and 426 Post Office Passport Seva Kendra.

(b) The process of issuance of passports has been made robust under the new system to prevent misuse by anti-social elements. Before granting any passport, in-person appearance is mandatory avoiding chances of impersonation. Background check is carried out from the entire Passport database for duplication and criminality status. Biometric and facial data of the applicant is captured on the spot as a part of passport issuance process. In addition, Police Verification is carried out to check the criminality and citizenship of the applicant.

(c) & (d) One of the biggest advantages of creating e-platform and now its integration with digiLocker is elimination of touts and racketeers. The Ministry is taking all necessary steps in co-ordination with the Police authorities to eliminate it further. According to Cyberabad Police, 72 Bangladeshis had obtained Indian Passports on the basis of Aadhaar Card over a period of last 5 years. All the passports have been suspended and show cause notices have been issued.
