

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3726
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.03.2022**

VISA ON ARRIVAL

3726. MS. RAMYA HARIDAS:

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps to streamline the process of obtaining the passports and to reduce the time taken in the process and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has taken any measures to increase the number of countries which give visa-on-arrival or visa-free travel to Indian passport holders; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) The Ministry has simplified the passport issuing process. It has been made an online procedure, including application of passport and getting appointments for submission of documents. The Passport portal (www.passportindia.gov.in) is accessible to anyone, anywhere and anytime in India and abroad. 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 a 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 557 Passport Kendras functional in the country which include 36 Passport Offices, 93 Passport Seva Kendras and 428 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras.

(b) & (c) Government of India has been making efforts to increase the number of countries providing Visa-on-arrival and Visa-free travel to Indian passport holders so as to further easing of international travel for Indians. As on date, 16 countries provide Visa-free entry and 43 countries provide visa-on-arrival facility to Indian Passport holders.

While issuance of visa and visa related process is the sovereign and unilateral decision of the respective country, the matter regarding easier and liberalized visa policy for Indian nationals is taken up regularly in the bilateral meetings/forums with foreign countries.

** *

