GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 762

ANSWERED ON- 29/11/2024

GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF POPSKS

762. DR. KALANIDHI VEERASWAMY

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

(a) the current guidelines or criteria followed for the establishment of Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSKs), including factors considered for their allocation to constituencies across the country;

(b) whether the Government is aware that there are no PSK/POPSK in North Chennai as General Post Office (GPO) comes under Harbour assembly and Central Chennai Parliamentary constituency and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is also aware that Post Master General (PMG) Chennai has stated that Periyar Nagar Post office has adequate infrastructure to function as a POPSK;

(d) whether the Government is considering the possibility of allowing two POPSKs to be established within a single Parliamentary

Constituency to address increasing demand for passport services and if so, the details thereof;

(e) the expected timeline for reviewing and potentially revising the current policy or guidelines to allow for two POPSKs in a single constituency, if deemed necessary; and

(f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure efficient and accessible passport services to citizens across the country especially in the regions facing challenges?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a)   Ministry of External Affairs in association with Department of Posts (DoP) had decided in January 2017 to open Seva Kendras at the Head Post Offices (HPO)/ Post Offices (PO) in the country called Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) in each Lok Sabha Constituency (LSC) where there is no PSK or a POPSK. As on date, 93 PSKs and   442 POPSKs have been set up in the country and are operational to cater to the needs of passport seekers.

(b & c) Department of Posts has proposed space at Post Office, Periyar Nagar in North Chennai Lok Sabha Constituency of Tamil Nadu. The

suitability of the proposed space from technical side is being examined.

(d & e) Once all Lok Sabha Constituencies are covered, a detailed analysis of the requirements for PSK/ POPSK could be done to determine the necessity of more than one POPSK in any Lok Sabha Constituency.

(f) The Government has simplified the passport issuance process in several ways. To streamline, liberalise and ease the process of passport issuance, the Ministry has taken several steps to simplify passport policy, benefiting citizens of India in applying for and obtaining a passport. The passport portal (**www.passportindia.gov.in**) is user friendly, accessible to anyone, from anywhere and anytime in India. An applicant can apply for passport from anywhere in India. This citizen-friendly initiative has enabled applicants to choose the Passport Office (PO) and thus the desired PSKs/POPSKs under the Regional Passport Office (RPO) where they wish to submit their application, irrespective of whether the present residential address specified in the application form lies within the juridiction of the selected RPO or not. Citizens can also apply, pay and schedule appointments for passport services on mPassportSeva mobile app, and do not require access of computer and printer to apply for passport services. The mPassport

Seva mobile app enables users to apply, pay and schedule appointments for passport services. It also provides passport related information, including the location of PSKs/POPSKs, applicable fees, submission methods and tracking of passport application status on a smart phone. Ministry's mPassport Police App is being used by the Police authorities for verification of antecedents of the applicants in a paperless digital flow.

Further, DigiLocker has been successfully integrated with the Passport Seva Programme (PSP) system enabling citizens to submit various documents required for passport services through DigiLocker in a paperless mode. For speedy issue of Passport there is a 'Tatkal Scheme'. In order to make passport issuance process more inclusive, for the transgender community, the Government has issued guidelines to accept Certificate of Identity/Identity Card, issued under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 for the purpose of change of name and gender in passport following change of gender from male to female or vice versa.

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