

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 1032

ANSWERED ON- 05/12/2025

E-PASSPORT AND CONSULAR SERVICES IN TAMIL NADU

1032. THIRU D M KATHIR ANAND

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

(a) whether the Government has initiated e-passport and consular services for large number of people travelling to foreign countries especially the USA, UK, EU countries, Arab, UAE and other Middle East countries and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the total number of persons from Tamil Nadu who travelled to foreign countries including the said countries during the last five years;

(c) the effective steps taken by the Government to mitigate the problems faced by the Indians travelling and working in foreign countries; and

(d) whether the Government has taken any steps to establish adequate facilitation centres for providing services for HAJ pilgrims from vellore Lok Sabha Constituency of Tamil Nadu and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) The Government has initiated e-Passport services, at all Regional Passport Offices (RPOs) in May 2025 and at all Indian Missions/Posts abroad in October 2025. Currently, e-passport is issued to all citizens including people travelling to foreign countries such as USA, UK, EU countries, Arab, UAE and Middle East countries. Moreover, the Government has also started 'SEWA - Indian Consular Services System' which is aimed at creating an online platform, enabling Indian

nationals to apply online for various consular services at Indian Missions/Posts abroad.

(b) State-wise data of Indians travelling to foreign countries is not available.

(c) The Government has taken several steps to mitigate the problems faced by the Indians travelling and working in foreign countries through Indian Missions/Posts abroad on top priority. Grievances are responded through various channels like calls, walk-ins, e-mails, social media, 24x7 Helplines and Open Houses. As required, these issues are taken up with the employers and the host government as the case may be, for requisite action. Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras (PBSKs) have been set up at Dubai, Sharjah, Riyadh, Jeddah and Kuala Lumpur to provide assistance to Indian workers abroad. Shelter homes for distressed Indian nationals have also been set up at some Missions/Posts. Mission officials visit immigration offices and labour camps to address the complaints of Indian workers. Financial assistance to distressed Indians, if necessary, is provided through the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF). During emergency or crisis

situations, our Missions/Posts abroad pro-actively help distressed/stranded Indian nationals in terms of providing food, shelter, medicine and helping their return to India.

(d) The Government has implemented various measures to facilitate services for Haj pilgrims from India, including those from Tamil Nadu. Key components of these initiatives include administrative branch offices, located in Makkah and Madinah, which serve as centralized hubs designed to address the grievances of pilgrims. These offices act as a one-stop centre, providing essential support and resolving issues efficiently. Moreover, the Indian Haj Pilgrims' Office (IHPO), in its fiduciary capacity and under the guidance of the Ministry of Minority Affairs, functions as the nodal agency for providing services to Indian Haj pilgrims arriving through the Haj Committee of India. The IHPO procures and coordinates various Haj-related services within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In India, the State Haj Committees and the Haj Committee of India facilitate and support pilgrims during the pre-departure phase. This comprehensive framework ensures efficient

service delivery and support for Indian pilgrims throughout the Haj season.
