Privatization of passport issuing process

1576. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry has outsourced the passport issuing system to a private vendor who would also control the related software including the personal data of passport holders;

(b) whether any other countries have privatized the passport issue system;

(c) if so, whether there are any developed countries in that list; and

(d) whether all security aspects have been examined while privatizing the passport issue apparatus in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SHASHI THAROOR) : (a) No. The Ministry has embarked on a Mission-Mode Project titled "Passport Seva Project" with the approval of the Union Cabinet. The basic design involves outsourcing of front-end activities, not involving sovereign functions of the Government, to a service provider. M/s Tata Consultancy Services Limited (TCS) has been selected as the Service Provider for the Project. Strategic assets, including system and application software, and the personal data of passport holders will be under the control of the Government.

(b) and (c) As per the Information available, the United Kingdom has outsourced its passport issuance system to a large extent.

(d) Yes.

Property rigths to slum dwellers

1577. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to direct State Governments to give property rights to slum dwellers; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. No such direction has been given to State Governments to give property rights to slum dwellers. However, the Government has announced a new scheme called Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) for the slum dwellers and the urban poor. This scheme aims at providing support to States that are willing to provide property rights to slum dwellers. The Government's effort would be to create Slum free India through the implementation of RAY.

Livelihood to Urban Poor

1578. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA : Will the MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) details of schemes proposed to be undertaken to provide means of livelihood to the urban poor;