

Passports for Haj

2757. SHRI MOHAMMED ADEEB: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of applications for passports that were received throughout the country from 1st March to 1st June, 2010;
- (b) the number out of them that were for Haj-2010;
- (c) whether it is a fact that average time taken in issuing Haj passports was more than the average time taken in issuing other than Haj passports;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefore; and
- (e) the action taken/being taken to streamline the system?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): (a) 27,57,330 from 1st January to 30th June, 2010.

(b) This year, the Haj aspirants had applied for passport in the normal course before Haj allotment was made by the Haj Committee. It is, therefore, not possible to separate such applications.

(c) No.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The Haj committee had identified that certain Passport Offices need special measures to assist Haj applicants. Accordingly, at Passport Offices in Lucknow, Bareilly, Ghaziabad, Patna, Kolkata, Guwahati and Bhopal special Haj counters were opened to facilitate submission of applications. Ministry issued instructions to Passport Offices to issue normal passports to all Haj applicants in a time bound manner by 31st July, 2010 where police verification reports had been received; and issue short validity Haj passports in the remaining cases from 1st August to 13th August 2010.

Awarding Contracts to British Company

†2758. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian High Commission at London had recommended to the officials of the organizing committee for awarding the contracts of different works of Commonwealth Games to a British company A.M. Films;

(b) if so, the names of the persons recommended along with the number of contracts given to this company and the amount involved therein;

(c) whether the Central Vigilance Commission has reported corruption in the quality of work of this company as well; and

(d) the name of the recommending officer of the High Commission?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): (a) No.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Anti-India activities on Indo-Nepal Border

2759. SHRI N. BALAGANGA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the anti-India activities that are going on along the Indo-Nepal border;

(b) if so, the details of such cases reported during the last two years and the current year;

(c) the steps taken by Government in this regard to curb such activities along the border;

(d) whether Government has taken up this issue with Government of Nepal for joint operation against such activities; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): (a) to (e) There are reports that the India-Nepal Border has been misused by anti-India elements for creating false propaganda and for encouraging trans-border criminal activities. The Sashastra Seema Bal has been deployed along the India-Nepal border to prevent illegal activities. Security issues including anti-India activities and other related matters are discussed with Nepal at bilateral mechanisms, including the annual