

RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 2nd December, 2004/11 Agrahayana, 1926 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

INTRODUCTION OF MINISTER

THE PRIME MINISTER (DR. MANMOHAN SINGH): Mr. Chairman, Sir, with your permission, I wish to introduce to you and, through you, to the august House, Shri Shibu Soren, Minister of Coal, who has recently been inducted in the Council of Ministers.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Pendency of passport applications

*21. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of passport applications are pending in the country, especially in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, whether it is proposed to set up one more passport office at Madurai considering the heavy workload at Trichy Office, to clear the backlog;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) There are pending applications of varying numbers in the 30 Passport Offices in the country. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, as on 31.10.2004, the number of pending applications in Passport Offices in Chennai and Trichy are 12,535 and 7,635 respectively.

(b) and (c) No Sir.