THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) Government, in consultation with the Government of Myanmar, has decided to set up an Integrated Check Post at Moreh, Manipur along the India-Myanmar border.

(b) There are various bilateral institutional dialogue mechanisms between India and Myanmar which regularly discuss all matters of mutual interest in order to advance our bilateral relations, including in the fields of trade, culture and promotion of people to people contacts. These include Foreign Office Consultations, Joint Trade Committee and others. Eighteen additional items have been included in the existing list of 22 items for the border trade between India and Myanmar as was jointly agreed during the 3rd India-Myanmar Joint Trade Committee meeting held on 14-15 October, 2008. Regular exchange of high level political visits is also taking place between the two countries. External Affairs Minister paid an official visit to Myanmar in June 2011. During the visit he held discussions with the Myanmar leadership on the entire gamut of bilateral ties.

Introduction of e-passport system

1910. SHRI KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to introduce e-passport system from current year on the basis of successful completion of e-passport pilot project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government plans to issue e-passports to all applicants, who are applying for passports from next year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) to (d) In accordance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) guidelines to incorporate Biometrics data in the Machine Readable Travel Documents (MRTDs), Government of India has decided to upgrade its existing Passports to electronic category of E-passports. Based on the experience gained through the pilot phase of issuance of E-Passports in the diplomatic and official categories, steps are being taken to implement a full roll out of e-passports in the ordinary category. Government has introduced e-passports in the categories of diplomatic and official passports in June, 2008.