

(c) if so, the details thereof including list of parties entrusted and payment made since their involvement, till date, State-wise; and

(d) the details of funds allocated, amount released, utilized and achievement made on the installation of equipments for entertainment in the ISBTs in the NER and present status?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR): (a) to (d) Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region have not released any funds for installation of equipment for surveillance and monitoring for safety and security of Inter-State Bus Terminus (ISBT) constructed in NER, including Assam or for installation of equipment for entertainment in ISBTs in NER.

**Joint Parliamentary Delegation to Sri Lanka**

3758. SHRI T. M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Joint Parliamentary delegation that visited Sri Lanka recently has urged the Sri Lankan Government for devolution of powers to Sri Lankan Tamils;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the delegation has also urged the Sri Lankan Government to involve Tamils in all political issues; and

(d) if so, the reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) to (d) A 12-member Joint Parliamentary delegation, led by the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, visited Sri Lanka from 16-21 April 2012. During the visit the delegation called on the President of Sri Lanka and met a number of Ministers, the Leader of Opposition, Members of Parliament, key leaders of major political parties, including the Tamil National Alliance, Sri Lankan Muslim Congress, Ceylon Workers Congress and upcountry political parties and representatives of civil society and community leaders.

The delegation, during its discussions with the President of Sri Lanka and other senior Ministers of the Government, emphasised the need for Sri Lanka to reach a genuine political reconciliation, based on a meaningful devolution of powers, which takes into account the legitimate needs of the Tamil people for equality,

dignity, justice and self-respect. The delegation urged the Government of Sri Lanka and other stakeholders, including the Tamil National Alliance, to resume dialogue and move towards an early political settlement and suggested in this regard urgent consultations to create conditions for the launching of the Parliamentary Select Committee process.

### **Outsourcing of passport activities**

3759. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the present status of outsourcing passport processing activities;
- (b) whether a number of vacancies in different passport offices remain unfilled;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, office-wise and category-wise;
- (d) whether Government would consider filling up of these vacancies; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) As part of the Passport Seva Project launched on public-private-partnership basis with approval of the Union Cabinet, 72 Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) have been set up to date out of the 77 PSKs planned for the country. Nearly 23.8 lakh passport services related applications have been processed in the new system. The remaining PSKs will be set up by end May 2012.

(b) to (e) As on date, the sanctioned cadre strength of Central Passport Organization (Passport Offices) in all groups is 2697. The details of category-wise vacancies are as under :

No. of vacancies in the various grades in the Central Passport Organization

Sl. No.	Designation	No. of vacancies
1	Deputy Passport Officer	44
2	Assistant Passport Officer	27
3	Passport Granting Officer	64
4	Superintendent	12
5	Assistant	82