

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) and (b) There is no commonly delineated Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the border areas between India and China. From time to time, on account of differences in the perception of the LAC, situations have arisen on the ground that could have been avoided if we had a common perception of the LAC. Government regularly takes up any transgression along the LAC with the Chinese side through established mechanisms including border personnel meetings, flag meetings, meetings of Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs and diplomatic channels.

(c) The 3rd meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs was held at New Delhi on 23-24 July, 2013. The two delegations reviewed recent developments in the India-China border areas with the objective of enhancing peace and tranquility between the two countries. They discussed additional confidence building measures between the two sides.

PSKs in Meghalaya

521. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether presently passport applicants from the State of Meghalaya have to travel long distance to Guwahati Regional Passport Office (RPO) to submit applications and follow up;

(b) whether Government has been extending network of passport offices by setting up Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) at locations that are not served by full-fledged RPOs;

(c) whether there is a long standing demand by the passport applicants from Meghalaya for setting up PSKs at Shillong and Tura within the State of Meghalaya; and

(d) whether Government is considering this legitimate demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) Under the new system of passport issuance, passport applicants are required to be present in person at the Passport Seva Kendra (PSK) to give their photographs and biometrics for uploading in the system along with

their personal particulars, to avoid incidences of impersonation and duplicity. Verification of documents and granting of passports is also done in the presence of passport applicants. Accordingly, citizens from Meghalaya are required to travel to PSK, Guwahati for completion of requisite formalities for issue of passports.

(b) to (d) With a view to extend the passport issuance network, Government is working on setting up Passport Seva Laghu Kendras (PSLKs) at various locations in the country including Shillong.

US NSA Spying on Indian Embassy

522. SHRI M. P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the media report that the US National Security Agency (NSA) spied on Indian Embassy and considered it a "target" along with 37 other embassies and missions in Washington; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) and (b) Government is aware of media reports stating that the U.S. National Security Agency spied on 38 diplomatic missions of foreign countries, including the Indian Embassy in Washington DC, by implanting bugs and using specialized antennae. Government has expressed concerns over the reports of monitoring of the Indian Embassy by U.S. agencies. On Government's advice, the Indian Embassy in Washington DC raised these concerns with the U.S. Department of State.

Irregularities in passport office in Kerala

523. SHRI M. P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been complaints about the Malappuram passport officer (Kerala) regarding irregularities in issuing passports and his office was raided by CBI recently;

(b) whether the said officer is alleged to have involved in the human trafficking of women to Gulf countries, if so, the details thereof; and