

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

(c) whether any probe has been conducted into such allegations, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) There are no specific complaints against Passport Officer, Malappuram. However, during the month of June, 2013, Central Bureau of Investigation carried out joint surprise checks in several Passport Offices and Passport Seva Kendras across the country. One such joint surprise check was undertaken on 17.06.2013 at Passport Office and residence of Passport Officer, Malappuram.

(b) There is no such report of the Officer to have been involved in the human trafficking of women to Gulf countries.

(c) Does not arise.

Slum upgradation index

524. SHRI N.K. SINGH:

DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE:

Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is proposing to evolve a slum upgradation index, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it would be applicable in all the States in the country; and

(c) if so, whether there is any comprehensive study of the existing slums in the country; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (DR. GIRIJA VYAS): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation has 'in principle' decided to create a Slum Index for the country. The objective of this index is to capture the improvement in identified infrastructure of the slums.

(c) A committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Pranab Sen was set up by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation to study the estimate of urban slum population for the country. As per committee, the estimate of slum population in the country for the year 2001 was 75.26 million and the projected slum population in the country for the year 2011 was 93.06 million. Details of the