

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) There were 3,59,566 Passport applications received in Regional Passport Office (RPO), Lucknow in 2011, out of which 3,51,097 passports were issued. All these applications were processed under the old system functioning under National Informatics Centre (NIC). As a consequence of full rollout of Passport Seva Project (PSP), under a standard policy followed all over India, the applications submitted under NIC system were closed on 31.12.2012, with applicants given an option to apply under the new system on gratis basis. Hence, no application submitted in 2011 is pending as on now at RPO, Lucknow.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

(d) The Government has already put in place several citizen-friendly proposals to improve the delivery-process of passport issuance. In order to further simplify the Passport procedure, a Mission Mode Project (MMP) was identified under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) of the Government of India which *inter-alia* includes many other high impact e-Governance initiatives and projects. The MMP on Passports, named PSP, aims “to deliver all Passport-related services to the citizens in a timely, transparent, more accessible, reliable manner and in a comfortable environment through streamlined processes and committed, trained and motivated workforce”. The PSP incorporates the global best practices in the Passport issuance system, one of the important aim of it was to establish 77 PSKs all over India for delivering all front-end citizen services. The Project has been completely executed and all 77 PSKs were made operational in June, 2012.

Project for Nalanda University

3917. SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is working on a revised detailed project report for Nalanda University; and

(b) the steps the Ministry or the Board of Governors of Nalanda University is taking in order to fulfil contribution, pledges made to the project by foreign Government and institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) No. The Final Project Report, prepared by Educational

Consultants India Ltd. (EdCIL), was approved by the University's Governing Board at its fourth meeting in Patna in July, 2012.

(b) Foreign Governments and institutions have pledged their contributions for specific projects and activities, to be utilised as and when these are implemented. The University remains in communication with them.

Policy for granting political asylum

3918. SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the former President of Maldives has taken refuge in the Indian Embassy at Male;

(b) if so, the position of Government of India in granting asylum to the former president of Maldives; and

(c) the policy of Government for granting political asylum in such cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) Following an arrest warrant issued against him by the Hulhumale Magistrate Court, the former President of Maldives, Mr. Mohamed Nasheed, came to the High Commission of India, Male on 13 February, 2013 and sought India's assistance. Mr. Nasheed did not seek 'political asylum'. He left the Indian High Commission in Male on his own volition on 23 February, 2013.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Chinese investment in Africa

3919. SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that China is making major investments in Africa;

(b) if so, whether Government of India has made any plans to counter the growing influence of China over African nations who have been traditional allies of India; and

(c) the reasons Government of India did not agree to fund the upgradation of a hospital in Mozambique which was recommended by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare?