

(b) India participates regularly in the meetings of East Asia Summit, ADMM Plus and Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum, which discuss ways to strengthen regional maritime cooperation.

SIU in RPOs

2840. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government is considering to make cadre review on the basis of SIU carried out a long back ago in all Regional Passport Offices (RPO) across the country, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has fixed any time-frame for the said purpose, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the SIU study was carried out in all regional passport offices about ten years back and Government is considering to conduct a fresh SIU in all regional passport offices because of emergence of Passport Seva Kendras?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED) : (a) to (c) A study by the Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) of the Ministry of Finance was conducted in 2005 on the norms for staffing requirement in the Regional Passport Offices in India. On the basis of manpower assessment of Passport Offices, the study had recommended the sanctioned strength of 2349 posts for the Central Passport Organization. Thereafter the Ministry commissioned the National Institute of Smart Government (NISG), Hyderabad in 2006 to suggest comprehensive reforms in the passport issuance system. On the basis of this study, the Ministry obtained Cabinet approval in 2007 for the launch of Passport Seva Project as a "Mission Mode Project" to be implemented in Public Private Partnership mode under the National e-Governance Plan. The Cabinet approved outsourcing of front-end activities; setting up of 77 Passport Seva Kendras; increase in the number of Government employees at various levels to keep pace with the growth of passport demand; introduction of productivity linked incentive scheme for Government employees.

To implement the Passport Seva Project, the Government subsequently

approved expansion of the Central Passport Organization cadre in 2008 which involved augmentation of posts from 2349 to 2697. Thereafter, Ministry undertook a review exercise in 2010 to restructure the cadre which led to creation of 320 new Gazetted posts of Passport Granting Officers after abolition of 213 posts of Assistants and rationalization of some other posts. In view of the 2010 exercise, there is no further proposal for fresh SIU study aiming at cadre review at present.

Single window clearance for passport sewa kendras

2841. SHRI S. THANGAVELU : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it was envisaged that at all Passport Sewa Kendras (PSKs) across the country there would be having single window clearance immediately after the Passport Sewa Kendras become operational;

(b) whether the same has not yet become operational as envisaged, if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether in the absence of single window clearance at PSKs the passport applicants have to approach many places which is causing great inconvenience to them; and

(d) if so, whether Government has asked the concerned to initiate action to create single window clearance at all PSKs across the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED) : (a) to (d) Yes. Under the Passport Seva Project, it is envisaged that passport application submission will be done in one single visit (akin to single window clearance) at all 77 Passport Seva Kendras which are fully operational since June, 2012. However, the applicants may be required to make more than one visit to PSK/Passport Office in case of insufficient or unsatisfactory or doubtful documentation or where the Head of PSK may need guidance or instructions of the concerned Passport Officer. Detailed instructions for the online filing of Passport application and requisite supporting documents are available on the Passport Portal (www.passportindia.gov.in) for the guidance of applicants. The information can also be accessed through National Call Centre operating round the clock, e-mail based Helpdesk and m-Passport app. available on smartphones.