

Attacks on temples in Pakistan

3202. SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Hindus living in Pakistan are disturbed over the attacks on their temples;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has taken any steps in this regard; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (d) From time to time, there have been reports of violence against citizens of Pakistan belonging to minority groups, including Hindus and attack on their religious places. It is the responsibility of Government of Pakistan to discharge its obligations towards its citizens. Based on reports of persecution of minority groups and attacks on their places of worship in Pakistan, Government has on various occasions called upon the Government of Pakistan to fulfill its obligations to ensure the safety, security and welfare of the minority community in Pakistan.

Issuing of passports through post offices

3203. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is planning to issue passports through Post Offices;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the States in which this system has already been introduced, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether it is a fact that a centralized system for issuing of passports is being introduced and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) Yes. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Department of Posts (DOP) have decided to utilize the Head Post Offices (HPO) in the various States as Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) for delivering passport related services to the citizens of the country. The pilot projects for this joint venture between MEA and DOP was inaugurated on 25 January, 2017 at

the Post Offices at Mysuru in Karnataka and at Dahod in Gujarat. The Government has decided to scale up this programme by opening a total number of 86 POPSK in the country. The list is given in the Statement (*See* below).

The POPSK would be functioning like the other existing Passport Seva Kendra (PSK). The process of issuing passports will not change after the opening of the POPSK. Applicants, who apply for their passports online through the passport portal, can now schedule an appointment and then visit the designated POPSK to complete the formalities similar to those at the PSK necessary prior to the issue of the passport. The photographs, biometrics and the supporting documents would be electronically captured at the POPSK and the applicant will not have to revisit the POPSK prior to the issue of the Passport.

(c) Out of the 86 POPSK, 17 POPSK at Asansol, Bikaner Dahod, Jamshedpur, Kavaratti, Kota, Muzaffarpur, Mysuru, Palampur, Pathanamthitta, Purnea, Raiganj, Rourkela, Sambalpur, Salem, Udhampur and Vidisha have since been inaugurated till 25th March, 2017.

(d) The Passport Seva Project is a centralized system for issue of passports. The Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) are connected to the PSP centralized system for processing of applications submitted at POPSK. The-printing and dispatch of the Passports for applications, which are received at POPSK, will be carried out at the Regional Passport Office (RPO) under whose jurisdiction the POPSK would function.

Statement

The list of 86 POPSK to be opened in the country

Sl. No.	State	Locations
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Kurnool
2.	Andhra Pradesh	Kadappa
3.	Andhra Pradesh	Nellore
4.	Assam	Silchar
5.	Bihar	Purnia
6.	Bihar	Gopalganj
7.	Bihar	Muzaffarpur
8.	Bihar	Bhagalpur

Sl. No.	State	Locations
9.	Bihar	Siwan
10.	Chhattisgarh	Surguja
11.	Daman	Daman
12.	Diu	Diu
13.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	Silvasa
14.	Delhi	East Delhi
15.	Delhi	Noth East Delhi,
16.	Delhi	North West Delhi
17.	Delhi	South Delhi
18.	Delhi	West Delhi
19.	Goa	South Goa
20.	Gujarat	Bhuj
21.	Gujarat	Palanpur
22.	Gujarat	Dahod
23.	Haryana	Hisar
24.	Haryana	Karnal
25.	Haryana	Faridabad
26.	Himachal Pradesh	Palampur
27.	Himachal Pradesh	Hamirpur
28.	Jammu and Kashmir	Leh
29.	Jammu and Kashmir	Udhampur
30.	Jharkhand	Jamshedpur
31.	Jharkhand	Dhanbad
32.	Jharkhand	Deoghar
35.	Karnataka	Belgaum
34.	Karnataka	Devangere
35.	Karnataka	Hassan
36.	Karnataka	Gulbarga
37.	Karnataka	Mysuru

Sl. No.	State	Locations
38.	Kerala	Pathanamthitta
39.	Kerala	Kasargod
40.	Lakshadweep	Kavaratti
41.	Madhya Pradesh	Gwalior
42.	Madhya Pradesh	Satna
43.	Madhya Pradesh	Jabalpur
44.	Madhya Pradesh	Vidisha
45.	Maharashtra	Aurangabad
46.	Maharashtra	Beed
47.	Maharashtra	Ghatkopar
48.	Maharashtra	Mumbai North Central
49.	Maharashtra	Mumbai South Central
50.	Maharashtra	Jalgaon
51.	Maharashtra	Kolhapur
52.	Maharashtra	Pimpri Chinchwad
53.	Odisha	Rourkela
54.	Odisha	Sambalpur
55.	Odisha	Koraput
56.	Punjab	Bhatinda
57.	Punjab	Gurdaspur
58.	Punjab	Patiala
59.	Rajasthan	Kota
60.	Rajasthan	Jaisalmer
61.	Rajasthan	Jhunjhunu
62.	Rajasthan	Bikaner
63.	Rajasthan	Jhalawar
64.	Tamil Nadu	Salem
65.	Tamil Nadu	Vellore
66.	Telangana	Mehbubnagar

Sl. No.	State	Locations
67.	Telangana	Warangal
68.	Uttar Pradesh	Agra
69.	Uttar Pradesh	Allahabad
70.	Uttar Pradesh	Ayodhya
71.	Uttar Pradesh	Bijnaur
72.	Uttar Pradesh	Deoria
73.	Uttar Pradesh	Gautam Budh Nagar (NOIDA)
74.	Uttar Pradesh	Gazipur
75.	Uttar Pradesh	Jhansi
76.	Uttar Pradesh	Mathura
77.	Uttar Pradesh	Meerut
78.	Uttar Pradesh	Pilibhit
79.	Uttar Pradesh	Sultanpur
80.	Uttarakhand	Almora
81.	Uttarakhand	Haldwani
82.	Uttarakhand	Nainital
83.	West Bengal	North Kolkata
84.	West Bengal	Asansol
85.	West Bengal	Nadia
86.	West Bengal	Raiganj

Extension of grace period for relocating Indian workers in USA

3204. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the USA administration has given grace period of up to sixty days for certain categories of non-immigrant workers E-1, E-2, E-3, H-1B etc., following loss of employment;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government would take up the matter with USA administration to