

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) Under existing bilateral Memorandums of Understanding, China provides to India hydrological information of Brahmaputra River (Yarlong Zangbo) and Sutlej River (Langqen Zangbo, of which Parechu is a tributary) during the flood seasons. The Chinese side did not provide the hydrological information with respect to either of the two rivers in 2017. This issue has been taken up with the Chinese side, who have conveyed that the non-provision of data was due to technical reasons.

Government continues to carefully monitor the water flow in trans-border rivers, including Sutlej River, for early detection of any abnormality so that corrective and preventive measures are taken to safeguard livelihood of the people in these regions.

Various issues relating to trans-border rivers are discussed with China under the ambit of an institutionalized Expert Level Mechanism which was established in 2006, as well as through diplomatic channels. We intend to remain engaged with China on the issue of trans-border rivers to safeguard our interests.

Post Office Passport Seva Kendra in Maharashtra

†645. SHRI AMARSHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of passport kendras functioning at present, the details thereof State-wise including Maharashtra;
- (b) the details of the places from where services to issue passports through post offices have been started, State-wise;
- (e) whether Government has received proposals to open passport seva kendras at post offices; and
- (f) if so, the views of Government with regard to Pune district of Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH]: (a) At present, 92 Passport Seva Kendras (PSK) are operating across the country as extended arms of the 37 Passport Offices, thus providing extended reach to passport applicants. The list is given in the Statement-I. [Refer to the Statement Appended to the Answer to SQ No. 65 (Part (a))] The 93rd PSK is scheduled to be inaugurated at Siliguri on 17 February, 2018.

- (b) The Ministry in association with the Department of Posts has decided to

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

open 251 Passport Seva Kendras at the Head Post Offices (HPO)/ Post Offices (PO) in the country called 'Post Office Passport Seva Kendra' (POPSK). The list of these 251 POPSK is given in the Statement-II. [Refer to the Statement Appended to the Answer to SQ No. 65 (Part (a))]. 60 POPSKs are functional as on 3 February, 2018 including three in Maharashtra at Aurangabad, Kolhapur and Pimpri Chinchwad.

17 more POPSK would be set-up in Maharashtra at Ahmednagar, Beed, Ghatkopar, Jalgaon, Jalna, Latur, Mumbai North Central, Mumbai South Central, Pandharpur, Sangli, Satara, Sindhudurg, Wardha, Dombivoli, Nanded, Navi Mumbai and Panvel. The Ministry intends to complete the requisite formalities for these locations at the earliest.

(c) and (d) The Government intends to open POPSK in the HPO in the country in such a manner that Passport Seva Kendra facility is available to citizens within a radius of approximately 50 kms.

Opening of PSKs in Punjab

646. SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) in the country which have been made operational during last three years till date, State-wise;

(b) by when the remaining PSKs would be made operational, location-wise;

(c) whether, Government proposes to open more Passport Offices and PSKs in the country, including Punjab and if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(d) the other steps taken/being taken by Government to cut down the delay in issuing passports and mitigating the hardships being faced by the applicants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) At present, 92 Passport Seva Kendras (PSK) are operating across the country as extended arms of the 37 Passport Offices, thus providing extended reach to passport applicants. The list is given in the Statement-I. *The 93rd PSK is scheduled to be inaugurated at Siliguri on 17 February, 2018. [Refer to the Statement Appended to the Answer to SQ 65 (Part a)].*

(c) The Ministry in association with the Department of Posts has decided to open 251 Passport Seva Kendras at the Head Post Offices (HPO)/ Post Offices (PO) in the country called 'Post Office Passport Seva Kendra' (POPSK). The list of these 251 POPSK is given in the Statement-II. [Refer to the Statement Appended to the Answer to SQ 65