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40. Shri Deepak Talwar	LOC issued. Seeking cooperation from Government of	
41. Smt. Deepa Talwar	UAE under MLAT provisions is pursued upon.	
42. Shri Lalit Modi	NBW issued. Investigation of money trail through LRs is under progress. LRs sent to Singapore, Hong Kong, UAE and Mauritius.	
43. Shri S. Harpal Singh Dutta	LOC issued.	
44. Shri Ritesh Jain	NBW issued. Prosecution complaint filed. Hon'ble Delhi High Court ordered interim stay on proceedings of the Provisional Attachment/Original Complaint. Writ petition filed by Shri Jain pending before Hon'ble Supreme Court.	
45. Shri Mugundhan Ganyam	Summons issued by Ld. Special Court, PMLA Chandigarh returned by Malaysian authorities with certain queries. The queries along with fresh summon have been issued again that has been sent to MHA.	
46. Shri Nitish J. Thakur	Extradition request sent to UAE authorities in April, 2018.	
47. Shri Mihir Rashmi Bhansali	Extradition request forwarded to USA in November, 2018.	
48. Shri Carlo Valentino	Separate requests for the extradition of Mr. Gerosa and	
49. Fernando Gerosa	Mr. Haschke were forwarded in November, 2017 and	
Shri Guido Ralph Haschke	January, 2018 respectively, to Italy. Italy returned the requests in March, 2018. Separate requests for extradition of Mr. Gerosa and Mr. Haschke again forwarded to Italy in October, 2018.	

Passport Seva Project

1130. DR. BANDA PRAKASH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to extend Passport Seva Project to all the Indian missions;

(b) whether Government has directed Indian missions to issue passports in less than 48 hours to citizens abroad;

(c) whether the Indian missions have been digitally linked with the data centre back home to speed up the process of issuing passport;

(d) whether Government proposes to simplify rules and regulations for passport applicants and digital verification of their information;

(e) whether Government proposes to issue a new set of passports with all kinds of security features and better printing and paper quality; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) Yes, the Ministry proposes to link and integrate all the Missions abroad with the Passport Seva Project. It has been extended to the Embassies and Consulates in the United Kingdom and the United States of America so far.

As per statutory provisions, on the receipt of an application, the Passport Issuing Authority (PIA), after making such inquiry as it may consider necessary, shall issue the passport or travel documents. Fresh passports on 'Tatkaal' basis and those which are to be reissued by the Passport Issuing Authorities in the Embassies and Consulates abroad are to be issued within 7 working days in all such cases where no Police Verification is required.

(d) In order to streamline, liberalize and ease the process of issue of passport, the Ministry of External Affairs has announced a number of steps in the realm of passport policy which is expected to benefit the citizens of India applying for a passport. The details of these steps are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(e) and (f) Yes, the Ministry has plans to issue chip enabled e-passports to citizens with advanced security features and better printing and paper quality. The Government has given its approval for procurement of electronic contactless inlays for manufacturing of e-passports to India Security Press (ISP), Nashik. In this regard, ISP, Nashik, has been authorized to float a Global three-stage tender for procurement of International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)-compliant electronic contactless inlays along with its operating system which is required for manufacture of e-passports. Manufacture of e-passport with advanced security features and better printing and paper quality will commence on the successful completion of the tendering and procurement process by ISP, Nashik.

The personal particulars of the applicants would be digitally signed and stored in the chip. In case, anyone tampers with the chip, the system shall be able to identify it resulting in the failure of the passport authentication. Access of information is protected in a way that the chip cannot be read without physical possession of the passport.

Statement

Simplification of passport rules

In order to streamline, liberalize and ease the process of issue of passport, the Ministry of External Affairs has taken a number of steps in the realm of passport

policy to ease the process of issue of passports. The details of these steps are given below:—

A. Documents in support of proof of Date of Birth

As per the extant statutory provisions of the Passport Rules, 1980, all the applicants born on or after 26.01.1989, in order to get a passport, had to, hitherto, mandatorily submit the Birth Certificate as the proof of Date of Birth (DOB). It has now been decided that all applicants of passports can submit any one of the following documents as the proof of DOB while submitting the passport application:

- (i) Birth Certificate (BC) issued by the Registrar of Births and Deaths or the Municipal Corporation or any other prescribed authority whosoever has been empowered under the Registration of Birth and Deaths Act, 1969 to register the birth of a child born in India;
- (ii) Transfer/School leaving/Matriculation Certificate issued by the school last attended/recognized educational board containing the DOB of the applicant;
- (iii) PAN Card issued by the Income Tax Department with the DOB of applicant;
- (iv) Aadhaar Card/e-Aadhaar having the DOB of applicant;
- (v) Copy of the extract of the service record of the applicant (only in respect of Government servants) or the Pay Pension Order (in respect of retired Government Servants), duly attested/certified by the officer/in-charge of the Administration of the concerned Ministry/Department of the applicant, having his DOB;
- (vi) Driving license issued by the Transport Department of concerned State Government, having the DOB of applicant;
- (vii) Electors Photo Identity Card (EPIC) issued by the Election Commission of India having the DOB of applicant;
- (viii) Policy Bond issued by the Public Life Insurance Corporations/Companies having the DOB of the holder of the insurance policy.

B. Other Changes:

- (i) The online passport application form now requires the applicant to provide the name of father or mother or legal guardian, *i.e.*, only one parent and not both. This would enable single parents to apply for passports for their children and to also issue passports where the name of either the father or the mother is not required to be printed at the request of the applicant.
- (ii) The total number of Annexes prescribed in the Passport Rule, 1980, has been reduced to 9 from the present 15. Annexes A, C, D, E, J, and K have been removed and certain Annexes have been merged.

- (iii) All the annexes that are required to be given by the applicants would be in the form of a self declaration on a plain paper. No attestation/swearing by/ before any Notary/Executive Magistrate/First Class Judicial Magistrate would be henceforth necessary.
- (iv) Married applicants would not be required to provide the erstwhile Annexure K or any marriage certificate.
- (v) The passport application form does not require the applicant to provide the name of her/his spouse in case of separated or divorced persons. Such applicants for passports would not be required to provide even the Divorce Decree.
- (vi) In case of children not born out of wedlock, the applicant for the passport of such children should submit only extant Annexure C while submitting the passport application.
- (vii) In case of issue of passport to in-country domestically adopted children, submission of the registered adoption deed would no longer be required. In the absence of any deed to this effect, the passport applicant may give a declaration on a plain paper confirming the adoption.
- (viii) Government servants, who are not able to obtain the Identity Certificate (extant Annexure-A)/No-Objection Certificate (extant Annexure-G) from their concerned employer and intend to get the passport on urgent basis can now get the passport by submitting a self-declaration in extant Annexure-'H' that he/she has given prior Intimation Letter to his/her employer informing that he/she was applying for an ordinary passport to a Passport Issuing Authority.
- (ix) Sadhus/Sanyasis can apply for a passport with the name of their spiritual Guru mentioned in the passport application in lieu of their biological parent(s) name(s) subject to their providing of at least one public document such as Electors Photo Identity Card (EPIC) issued by the Election Commission of India, PAN card, Aadhaar Card, etc wherein the name of the Guru has been recorded against the column(s) for parent(s) name(s).
- (x) Orphaned children who do not have any proof of DOB such as Birth Certificate or the Matriculation Certificate or the declaratory Court order, may now submit a declaration given by the Head of the Orphanage/Child Care Home on their official letter head of the organization confirming the DOB of the applicant.
- (xi) An applicant for a passport has to submit any one of the documents as mentioned in (A) above as proof of Date of Birth (DOB) while submitting the passport application. The DOB mentioned in the document would be

recorded in the passport. In case there is a discrepancy between the DOB previously recorded in the passport and the new proof of DOB submitted by the applicant, the Passport Issuing Authorities (PIA) have been authorized to consider the explanation of each applicant seeking change in the DOB (irrespective of the period that would have lapsed after the issue of the passport) to find the genuineness of the claim and if the PIA is satisfied with the claim and with the document(s) submitted by the applicant in support of the claim, the PIA shall accept all such requests made by the applicant to issue the passport with revised DOB.

- (xii) Passports can be now obtained under the 'Tatkaal' Scheme without providing the Verification Certificate from a Gazetted Officer, which was required earlier. The documents to be submitted for getting a passport under this Scheme have been notified *vide* G.S.R. 39(E) dated 18 January, 2018 and O.M. No. VI/401/1/4/2013 dated 23 March, 2018 read with O.M. of even number dated 17 April, 2018. Applicants may submit minimum three out of the following documents for obtaining passport:—
- (a) Aadhaar Card/e-Aadhaar containing the 12 digit Aadhaar number/28-digit Aadhaar Enrolment ID printed on the Aadhaar Enrolment Slip issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI);
 - (b) Electors Photo Identify Card (EPIC);
 - (c) Service Photo Identity Card issued by State or Central Government, Public Sector Undertaking, local bodies or Public Limited Companies;
 - (d) Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Class Certificate;
 - (e) Arms License;
 - (f) Pension Document such as Ex-servicemen's Pension Book or Pension Payment order, ex-servicemen's widow or dependent Certificate, Old Age pension Order;
 - (g) Self-Passport (unrevoked and undamaged);
 - (h) Permanent Account Number (PAN) Card;
 - (i) Bank/Kisan/Post Office Passbook;
 - (j) Student Photo Identity Card issued by an Educational Institution;
 - (k) Driving License (valid and within the jurisdiction of State of submission of applicant);
 - (l) Birth Certificate issued under the Registration of Births and Deaths Act; and
 - (m) Ration Card.

- (xiii) Now Passports can also be obtained under the Normal scheme on out-of-turn post-Police Verification basis without paying any additional fees on the submission of minimum three documents mentioned in para-xii above.

Talks with USA on changes in H-1B visa policy

1131. KUMARI SELJA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has held talks with United States of America (USA) about any changes in their H-1B Visa Policy and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the details of Indian professionals working in USA right now who would be affected by any changes in that policy; and

(c) whether Government has planned some safeguards or measures for the Indian professionals in USA in case that Policy is changed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) Government of India has closely consulted all stakeholders and engaged with the U.S. Administration and Congress on all issues relating to movement of Indian professionals, including issues pertaining to the H-1B programme. Most recently, PM discussed this during his meeting with the Vice-President of the United States, Michael R. Pence, in Singapore on 14 November, 2018 underlining the contributions made by Indian nationals to the U.S., which should be looked at while considering the H-1B visa issue. Earlier, External Affairs Minister had taken this up with the visiting U.S. Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo, in New Delhi on 06 September, 2018 and conveyed our expectation for a non-discriminatory and predictable H-1B visa regime.

The U.S. Administration has adopted certain administrative measures in the H-1B application process that have introduced greater scrutiny of applications and increased documentation. No comprehensive changes have been made to the H-1B visa programme so far. Government of India is keeping a close watch on the developments that may have a bearing on the Indian nationals in the U.S. and will do everything possible to safeguard their interests and welfare.

Indians held hostage in Ethiopia

1132. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether three Indian employees of the Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services were taken hostage by local staff in Ethiopian town of Bure, 400 kms.