

*report (PVR) to the RPO in the given format. Hereto annexed and marked as **Exhibit- "A"** is the copy of PVR.*

3. I say that during the process of verification, police follows the circulars issued from time to time by the Commissioner of Police, Mumbai specifying the process to be followed for the same. Hereto annexed and marked as Exhibit- "B" is the copy of the Standing Order No. 167 dated 05/04/2022 issued by the office of the Commissioner of Police, Mumbai. This document is available on the website of Mumbai Police and citizens are free to go through it to understand the police verification process.

4. It is pertinent to note that the format for PVR has been formulated by the MEA and the first question to be answered as part of the verification process is stated as "Is there conclusive proof that the applicant is a citizen of India: Yes/No".

5. I say that Citizenship of most applicants as mentioned in their application forms is by birth and the citizenship verification is carried out as per section 3 of the Citizenship Act. Many times the applicants are unwilling to share their documents. Sometimes they do not possess the requisite documents. And at other times, the documents provided by them are not sufficient to prove their citizenship. In all such cases an Adverse PVR is sent to the RPO.

6. I say that it is important to note that before issue of a document like a national passport, which an individual

uses to identify himself/herself internationally as an Indian national, it is imperative that the citizenship verification is done accurately. Numerous cases of Bangladesh and Nepal nationals managing to acquire Indian passports have been reported and it was only possible because the citizenship verification was not done properly in their cases.

7. I say that it has also come to notice that certain individuals for whom adverse PVR was been sent to the RPO, passports were issued and they were later intercepted at Indian airports and cases were registered against them for fraudulently obtaining Indian passports.”

2. In view of the aforesaid, it appears that the Police have taken appropriate steps to address the issues involved and have also uploaded the same on their website. Hence, nothing survives for further consideration in the aforesaid petition.

3. Petition is accordingly disposed of.

4. We appreciate the efforts taken by the Police of the Passport branch for streamlining the process for verification of passport.

5. All concerned to act on the authenticated copy of this order.

DR. NEELA GOKHALE, J.

REVATI MOHITE DERE, J.