



# External Affairs Ministry Celebrates the Completion of 50 Years of the Passport Act 1967 as Passport Seva Divas and Conference of Regional Passport Officers

## Minister of State for Communications (Independent Charge) releases Special Commemorative Stamp on the special event

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The Ministry of External affairs celebrated the completion of 50 years of the Passport Act 1967 as the 5th Passport Seva Divas and a Conference of the Regional Passport Officers in New Delhi on 22nd and 23rd June 2017. It was on 24th June, 1967 that the Passport Act came into effect. The External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of State for Communications (Independent Charge) Shri Manoj Sinha as well as Ministers of State for External Affairs, Gen V K Singh and Shri M J Akbar addressed the officers and released a Special Commemorative Stamp on this special event. Senior officials of the ministry of External Affairs and other government departments beside 38 Passport officers and officials of service provider TCS attended the function where awards of excellence were presented to the best performing Passport Officers and Police Officers for best passport and verification services.

Speaking at the event marking the completion of 50 years of Passport Act, 1967 The External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj gave this message to Passport Issuing Authorities in India:

"It is a matter of immense pleasure for me to felicitate all our Passport Issuing Authorities in India and abroad on the occasion of the Fifth Passport Seva Divas on 24 June, 2017. This year we are celebrating the completion of 50 Years of the enactment of the Passports Act, 1967. The Ministry of External Affairs and its subordinate office - the Central Passport Organisation - have good reasons to celebrate as well as mark the event with renewed commitment to provide better passport services in a timely, assured, and efficient manner.

The year that went by will go down in history as the one in which this Ministry took path-breaking steps in its endeavour towards building better passport delivery mechanisms. Not only did we simplify the Passport Rules but also we took giant strides in taking passport services closer to our citizens.

We have teamed up with the Department of Posts to utilize the Head Post Offices as Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSK) in order to extend passport services to our citizens on a larger scale and for ensuring wider area coverage. We have decided to set up 235 POPSK in two phases - 86 in Phase-I and 149 in Phase-II. It is matter of satisfaction that 52 POPSK identified in Phase-I have already been operationalized. Applicants, who apply for their passports online through the passport portal, can now schedule an appointment and visit the designated POPSK to complete the formalities similar to those at the PSK necessary prior to the issue of the passport. We have been able to reduce the distance required to travel by an applicant to get a passport.

As a part of our simplification drive, we have permitted submission of several new documents as proof of date of birth and removed several Annexes to the Passport Rules. Our effort would be to continue to provide good governance, effective, transparent and accountable service delivery in the coming days.

I take this opportunity to request you to rededicate yourself to our Government's commitment to the principle of 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance' and work towards putting in place more inclusive and robust mechanisms to achieve our objectives."

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