

PRESS RELEASE

EAM addresses Passport Officers' Conference

1. On the occasion of observance of Passport Seva Divas, a four day Passport Officers' Conference was organised at the Jawahar Lal Nehru Bhavan on 23 - 26 June, 2015. Thirty seven Passport Officers participated in the Conference.

2. The Ministry of External Affairs commemorates 24th June as 'Passport Seva Divas' as this was the day on which the Passports Act, 1967 was enacted. The Act lays down the foundation of a sound legal framework for issuance of Passports and other travel documents in India.

3. The External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj in her valedictory address heartily congratulated the Passport Issuing Authorities on achieving the goals set last year and overcoming the obstacles with sustained diligence and dedication. She said that people were effusive in their praise for promptness, positivity and quality of service rendered by Passport Offices. In the past one year, the Ministry rendered one crore passport services, organised more than 500 Passport Melas on weekends at various Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) and more than 100 Passport Seva Camps in far-off locations across the country to take the passport services closer to citizens. Four PSKs were operationalised in the North-East and one in Karnataka since the taking over of this Government taking the number of PSKs in the country to 82. Three ISO Certifications accorded in one go to Passport Seva last month came in for special mention.

4. The Minister launched a prototype of mPassport Police, an app which would revolutionise police verification process and an e-Book containing information on Passport Seva.

5. The Minister, in recognition of the outstanding services rendered to citizens, gave away Passport Seva Puraskars to the best performing Passport Offices and the personnel of the Service Provider. Police verification, being a critical component of passport issuance, awards were also given away to the Police Departments of Delhi, Goa and Haryana to recognise their efforts in speedy police clearances.

6. The Minister of State, General Dr. V.K. Singh, (Retd.) expressed satisfaction at the working of the Central Passport Organisation (CPO)

and at the operationalisation of PSKs in the North-East. He hoped that the CPO officials would continue to achieve more milestones with renewed vigour and motivation.

7. The Passport Officers' Conference was inaugurated on the Passport Seva Divas by Foreign Secretary, Dr. S. Jaishankar. Speaking on the occasion, Foreign Secretary emphasised that the observance and commemorations are opportunities to assess our strength and weaknesses, achievements and shortcomings and to look for ways and means to fill the gaps. In particular, he exhorted the Passport Officers to pay special attention to redressal of grievances of passport applicants.

8. More than 2.8 crore passport services have been rendered since the inception of Passport Seva. The Conference deliberated on improving overall management of passport delivery, reliability, speed, security and transparency. A session on Yoga was also included in the agenda to improve work-life balance of CPO personnel. The Passport Officers are also being looked at as an important link for coordinating activities between the centre and the state governments.
