



MESSAGE

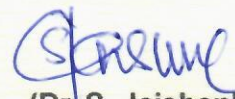
It gives me great pleasure to join all our Passport Issuing Authorities in India and abroad on the occasion of the Passport Seva Divas 2022. The Ministry of External Affairs, along with the Central Passport Organization, has been marking this occasion and renewing our commitment to provide passport and passport-related services to citizens of India in a timely, reliable, accessible, transparent and efficient manner.

I am happy to note that passport services were rendered with the same vigor and enthusiasm even during the testing times of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Ministry rose to the occasion to meet the increased demand for passport services built up due to two and half years of the pandemic, and dealt it swiftly with an impressive monthly average of 9.0 lakhs, with 4.50 lakhs additional applications granted in the last one month, thus setting a record.

As we commemorate the Passport Seva Divas on 24th June this year, we continue our commitment to deliver the next level of citizen experience. Looking back, I am glad that we have been very successful in simplification of the passport rules and procedures for the citizens. To further smoothen the passport delivery ecosystem, the Ministry is continuously working with States/UTs police to reduce the time taken for police verification: the mPassport Police App is now used in 22 States/ UTs covering 8275 Police Stations. The Passport Seva System has also been integrated with DigiLocker system to facilitate paperless documentation process. The Ministry in collaboration with Department of Posts operationalized 428 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSKs) to reach out to our citizens at their doorsteps. The Ministry has successfully integrated the passport issuance systems in 178 of our Embassies and Consulates abroad. This has enabled us to deliver passport related services to the Diaspora efficiently through a centralized and secure application.

Recognizing the need to continually improve the quality of passport services, the Passport Seva Programme (PSP) will be embarking on PSP V2.0, an improved and up-graded version of P SP V1.0, which would ensure a digital ecosystem among all stakeholders and offer enhanced passport services to citizens. It would ensure smooth governance end-to-end through standardized and liberalized processes, use of latest and emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Chat-Bot, Use of Big-Data, Advance Analytics etc. The Ministry is also working to roll out ePassports for Indian citizens which would make easier international travel and enable protection against identity theft and greater data security.

In closing, I would like to emphasize on the word 'Seva' as contained in the 'Passport Seva Programme', which aptly summarizes what we are doing today and where we intend to go further tomorrow.


(Dr. S. Jaishankar)