सत्यमेव जयते

Performance audit of

Passport, Visa and Consular Services

(Ministry of External Affairs
and Ministry of Home Affairs)

Report of the
Comptroller and Auditor General
of India
for the year ended March 2006

Union Government (Civil)
No. 12 of 2007
(Performance Audit)

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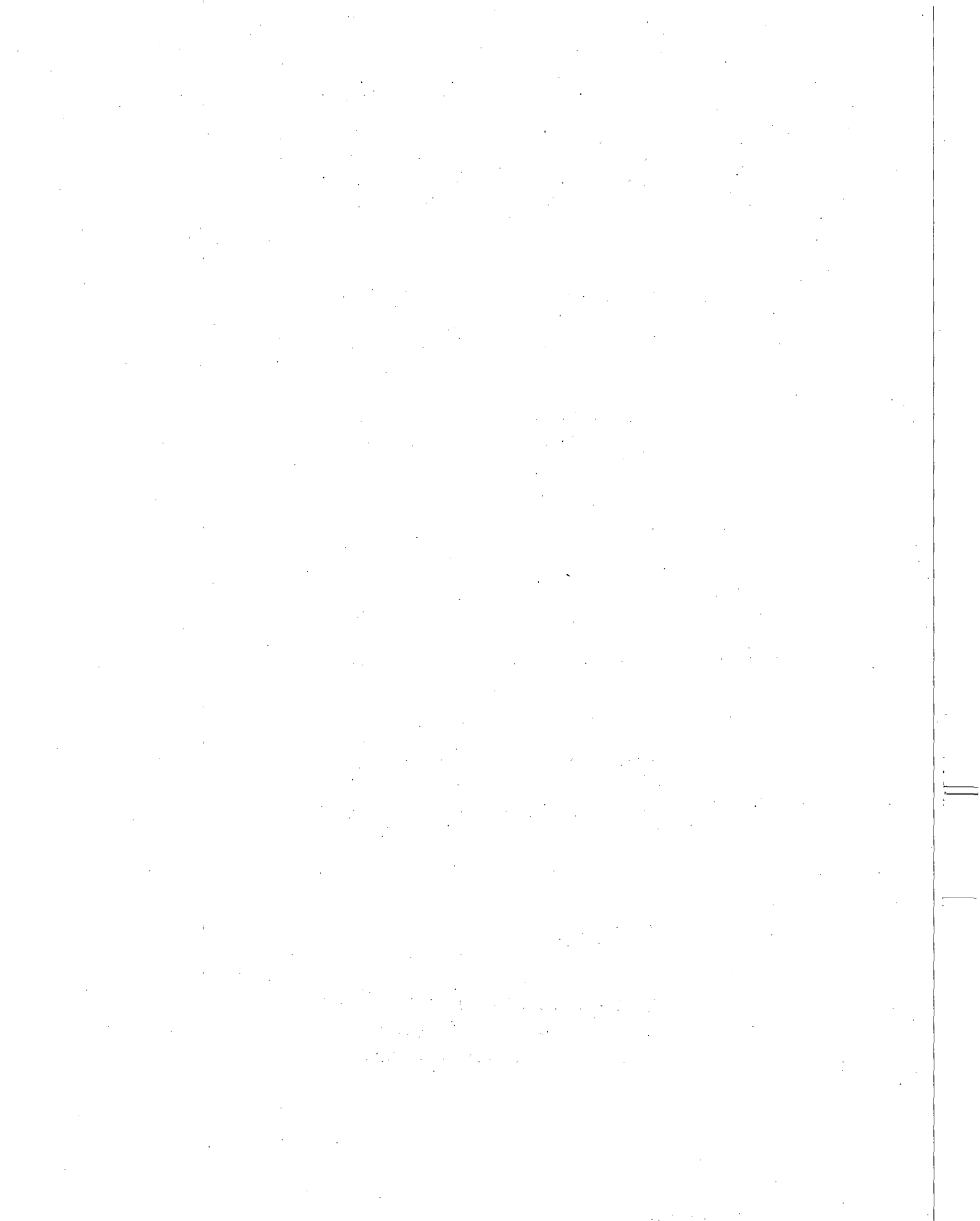**FOREIGN: US$ 5**
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Preface

This report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India containing the results of performance audit of Passport, Visa and Consular Services of the Ministries of External Affairs and Home Affairs has been prepared for submission to the President of India under Article 151 of the Constitution.

The performance audit was conducted through test check of records of the 12 RPOs/POs, CPV Division, Foreigners' Division, all FRROs/CHIO, CFB, BOI and 51 Missions/Posts abroad during the period from December 2005 to September 2006.
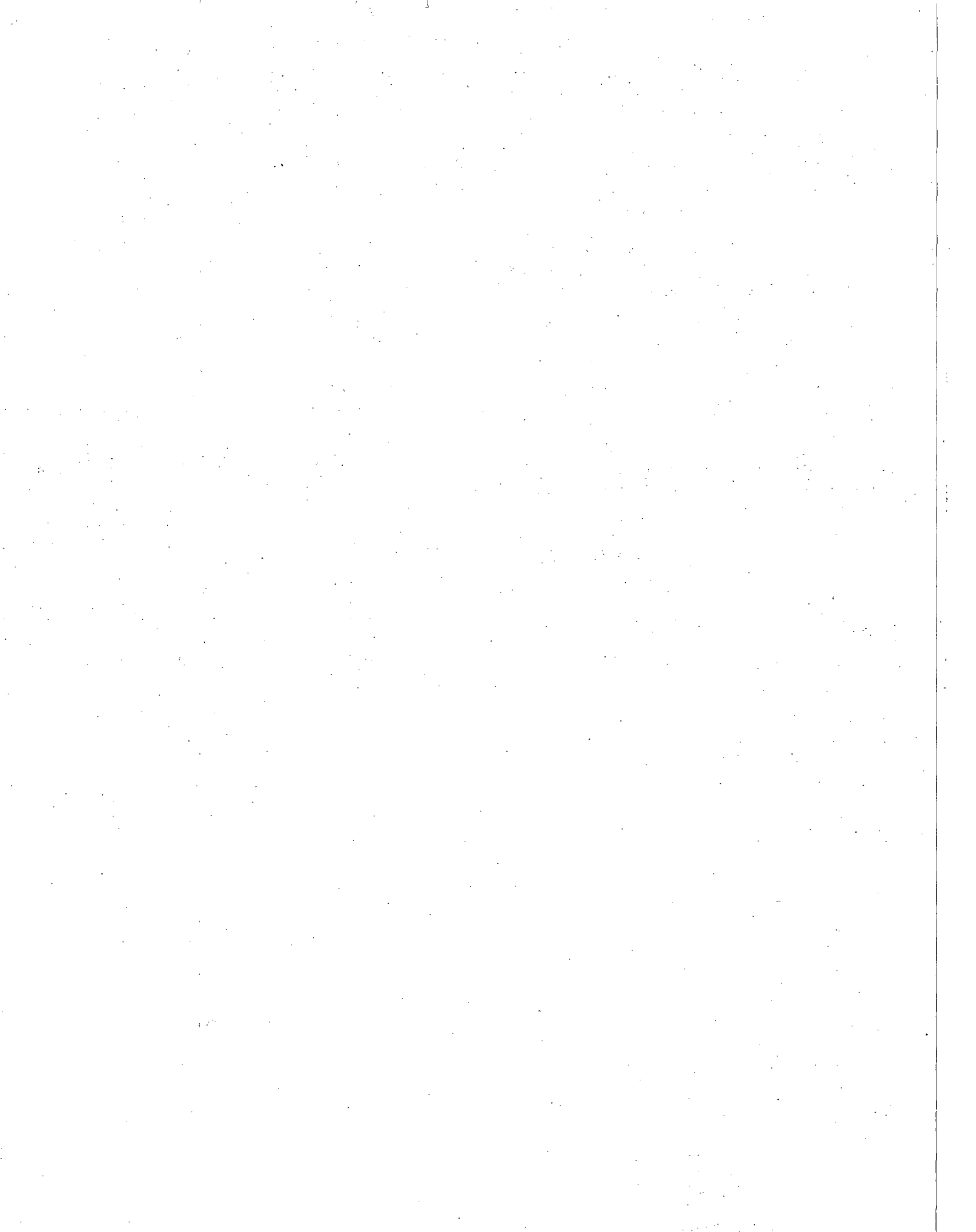
Performance audit of Passport, Visa and Consular Services

Highlights

➢ There were significant delays in the issue of Passports. In the 12 selected RPOs/POs, only 19 *per cent* of the passports were issued within the prescribed time. In nine of the selected RPOs/POs only 12 *per cent* passports were issued on time after receipt of police verification reports (PVRs). In 10 of these RPOs/POs even where police verification was waived, 38 *per cent* of the passports were issued after the prescribed time. The Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh stated that submission of PVRs in 21 days is not possible unless a separate cell is created and police verification for passport applications was not a priority item for the State Police. Under the Tatkal Scheme, in 80,725 cases passports were not issued within the specified time though in these cases additional fees of Rs. 872.49 lakh had been charged by RPOs/POs Kozhikode, Bhopal, Ahmedabad, Pune, Lucknow, Kolkata, Bareilly and Chandigarh.

(Paragraph 7.1.2)

➢ Large number of passports that were returned undelivered were not destroyed by RPOs/POs, Lucknow, Chandigarh, Kolkata, Kozhikode, Pune, Bareilly, Delhi, Bhopal, Nagpur, Jammu and Ahmedabad although this was required. RPOs, Delhi and Jammu did not maintain proper records for this category of passports. The absence of proper accounting and timely destruction of these passports could have serious implications including possible misuse.

(Paragraph 7.1.3)

➢ In RPOs/POs at Bhopal, Delhi, Pune, Kolkata and Lucknow, 244 passports were revoked/impounded after delays ranging from six months to more than eight years from the date of receipt of adverse PVRs. Twenty eight persons had travelled abroad after the receipt of adverse PVRs/issue of impounding/revoking circulars by the RPO/PO. Delay in revocation/impounding of passports provides an opportunity to the concerned persons to continue to misuse their passports, which is against the security interest of the nation.

(Paragraph 7.1.4)

➢ Lack of adequate control in checking the issue of passports resulted in fake passports being issued by RPO, Delhi to different individuals who impersonated others. This is a matter of serious concern because of its likely impact on the national security.

(Paragraph 7.1.5.1)

➢ In RPO, Delhi, the software system did not accurately reflect the status of inter-related revoked/impounded passports thereby leaving scope for manipulation and misuse of the passports not shown as revoked/impounded. The cancelled passports were also not accounted for properly leading to the possibility of their misuse.

(Paragraph 7.1.5.2)

➢ RPO, Delhi issued 5553 loss circulars against 6683 cases of lost passports during 2001-02 to 2004-05. The non-issue/delay in issue of loss circulars can result in misuse of lost passports with adverse implications.

(Paragraph 7.1.6.1)

➢ Sufficient care was not taken in verification of the antecedents and other particulars of the applicants before issue of clear PVRs.

(Paragraph 7.1.8.1)

➢ During 2000-01 to 2004-05, delays in receiving PVRs occurred in 70 to 82 *per cent* of the cases, resulting in the issue of passports on 'PVR overdue basis'. Such delays while adversely affecting the genuine applicants, are fraught with risk of passports being issued to ineligible applicants.

(Paragraph 7.1.8.2)

➢ Passports under the Tatkal Scheme were issued on the basis of verification certificates (VCs) given by the officers mostly to unknown persons on the basis of references made by their friends/relatives etc. In RPOs/POs Delhi, Bareilly, Bhopal, Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Pune, Chandigarh and Kolkata, out of 1,74,177 cases sent for post police verification during 2000-01 to 2004-05, adverse PVRs were received in 1,930 cases, incomplete PVRs in 19,672 and PVRs were not received at all in 44,191 cases. There was no practice of initiating action against the VC issuing authorities where adverse PVRs were received. Not holding the VC issuing authorities accountable has left the entire system vulnerable to malpractices.

(Paragraph 7.1.8.3)

➢ In RPO, Delhi, in 114 cases of revoked/impounded passports, entries regarding their revocation/impounding were not made in the system. These passports could go unnoticed by the PIAs, immigration officers and other security agencies.

(Paragraph 7.1.9.1)

➢ Blank travel documents (passport booklets, visa stickers etc.) went missing in transit while being supplied to 16 Missions/Posts from the India Security Press, Nasik. The blank travel documents received by 10 Missions/Posts/RPO were found damaged. There was absence of proper accounting of blank travel documents. In 13 Missions/Posts, discrepancies in demand, supply and receipt of the blank travel documents were also noticed. The stock register maintained by the Missions/Posts were deficient on many counts. Poor maintenance of proper records as well as accounting of blank travel documents is a matter of serious security concern.

(Paragraphs 7.3.1 and 7.3.2)

➢ Effective supervision, monitoring and internal controls were lacking in passport matters. This resulted in issue of Indian passports to foreign nationals, issue of 275 fake passports and issue of passports to criminals and terrorists. The MEA did not initiate corrective measures to

strengthen its internal controls even after the deficiencies and malpractices were brought to its notice.

(Paragraph 7.6)

Summary of important recommendations

➤ Proper records need to be maintained for receipt, destruction and balance of Returned undelivered (RUD) passports. These passports may be destroyed in the presence of a responsible officer who should certify the fact under his dated signatures. The provisions made in the Passport Manual, 2001 in respect of RUD passports should also be adhered to strictly.

➤ The MEA should institute efficient internal control system to ensure full compliance with rules in regard to impounding/revoking of the passport and determine accountability for non-compliance.

➤ Provisions may be made in the system to prevent the issue of a duplicate passport in lieu of lost passports without a specific reference to the related loss circular. A register of cases containing details regarding lost passports, loss circulars and dates of their despatch needs to be maintained.

➤ The MEA needs to modify the software system so as to show uniform and latest status of a passport wherever it appears in the system.

➤ Proper records of cancelled passports should be maintained. As these passports can not be issued, these should be destroyed in the presence of a responsible officer who may record a certificate under his dated signatures to this effect.

➤ The MHA should persuade the state police authorities to create a separate cell to handle police verification of passport related matters within the prescribed time.

➤ The RPOs/POs need to maintain a record of the revoked/impounded passports, its revocation/impounding circular number, date of its despatch and number of the entry made in the computer system. This record should be reviewed monthly by the concerned RPOs/POs.

➤ The missing and damaged travel documents should be investigated thoroughly and also immediately reported to the concerned security agencies, MEA, MHA, PIAs and other authorities to avoid their misuse.

➤ Stock registers should correctly record each receipt, issue and balance of blank travel documents. Physical verification of stock should be conducted as per codal provisions and the discrepancies promptly investigated to rule out any pilferage.

> **Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs**

Performance Audit of

Passport, Visa and Consular Services

1. Introduction

The Consular, Passport and Visa (CPV) Division of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) provides passport and consular services to Indian citizens through the Central Passport Organisation (CPO) and consular and visa services to foreign nationals through the passport, visa and consular wings of Indian Missions[1] and Posts[2] abroad. There are 30 Regional Passport Offices (RPOs)/Passport Offices (POs) under CPO which deal with passport matters in India as per provisions of the Passport Act, 1967 and the Passport Rules, 1980 as amended from time to time. Foreigners' Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) deals with all aspects relating to entry, stay and registration of foreigners, which are regulated by the Passport (entry into India) Act, 1920, the Registration of Foreigners' Act, 1939 and the Foreigners' Act, 1946. The Union Government has delegated powers to the States/UTs to administer the provisions of these Acts. The Bureau of Immigration (BOI) under the MHA is responsible for the control of immigration, which is an important security function. The Central Foreigners' Bureau (CFB) under the control of BOI is responsible for maintaining complete statistical data on arrival/departure of foreigners, registration of foreigners etc. The Foreigners' Regional Registration Officers (FRROs) at Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Amritsar, Chief Immigration Officer (CHIO) at Chennai and Foreigners' Registration Officers (FROs) in States/UTs {who are Superintendents of Police (SP) of the districts} are responsible for registration of foreign nationals, who enter India on a visa of more than 180 days and also grant extension to the period of visas. The FRROs/CHIO also used to issue Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) cards. This is now being dealt with by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. The accounts of revenue realised by all these offices and the Missions/Posts abroad for providing passport, visa and other consular services, are maintained by the Chief Controller of Accounts (CCA), MEA, New Delhi.

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[1] Indian High Commissions and Embassies
[2] Indian Consulates General

2. Organisational set-up

The organogram of the MEA relating to passport, visa and consular services, including their financial management and accounting is given below:

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                          ┌─────────────────────┐
                          │  Foreign Secretary  │
                          └─────────────────────┘
              ┌──────────────────┴──────────────────────────┐
     ┌──────────────────┐                          ┌──────────────────────┐
     │    Secretary     │                          │ Additional Secretary │
     │     (East)       │                          │  (Financial Advisor) │
     └──────────────────┘                          └──────────────────────┘
              │                                               │
   ┌──────────────────────┐                        ┌──────────────────────┐
   │ Additional Secretary │                        │  Chief Controller of │
   │      (AD/CPV)        │                        │      Accounts        │
   └──────────────────────┘                        └──────────────────────┘
              │                                               │
   ┌──────────────────────┐                        ┌──────────────────────┐
   │  Joint Secretary     │                        │ Deputy Controller of │
   │   (CPV cum CPO)      │                        │      Accounts        │
   └──────────────────────┘                        └──────────────────────┘
         ┌────────┴────────┐
 ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐
 │ Missions/Posts│   │   RPOs/POs   │
 │    abroad     │   │              │
 └──────────────┘   └──────────────┘
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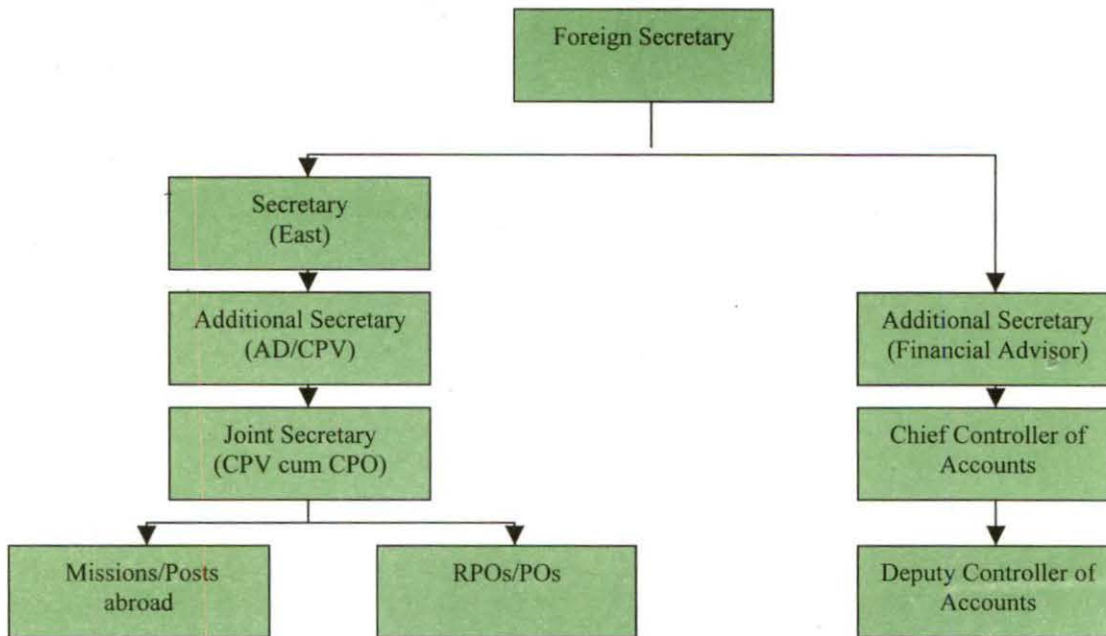
3. Audit objectives

The performance audit was taken up with a view to verify and assess whether:

➢ the policies and procedures laid down by the Government for passport, visa and consular services were adequate and sufficient;

➢ the policies and procedures were effective in providing efficient passport, visa and consular services;

➢ the rules, regulations and procedures relating to the entry, stay and registration of foreigners were adequate and effective and were properly implemented;

➢ there is proper and effective coordination among various passport and visa issuing authorities, immigration officers and security agencies for addressing national security concerns;

➢ the fixation, levy, collection and remittance of fees for passport, visa and consular services were correct and properly accounted for; and

➢ the internal control mechanisms instituted were adequate and effective.

4. Audit methodology

Before taking up the performance audit of passport, visa and consular services, an entry conference was held with the senior officers of the MEA including the Joint Secretary (JS) and Chief Passport Officer (CPO). In this conference, the audit objectives, audit criteria, scope of audit and the main areas of audit examination were explained. The Ministry apprised audit of the various activities related to the passport, visa and consular services and the strengths and weaknesses in providing these services. The future plans of the Ministry for improving the passport, visa and consular services were also mentioned.

An entry conference was also held with the senior officers of the MHA including BOI to discuss the audit objectives, audit approach and areas of audit examination. The issues relating to the policies and procedures laid down by the Government for these services and their implementation by the concerned executive authorities, especially with reference to entry, stay and registration of foreign nationals, were discussed to get the perception as well as suggestions of the MHA.

The audit findings were discussed with the senior officers of the MEA in an exit conference held on 26 February 2007. The MEA has broadly agreed with the observations/recommendations included in the report. In the meeting they had reiterated their written responses that have been appropriately reflected in this report.

5. Audit criteria

Audit criteria used in the performance audit included :

➢ policies and procedures for issue of passport, visa and providing consular services;

➢ various security checks in passport, visa and consular matters;

➢ timely provision of services to public;

➢ action to be taken in cases where passports were issued to ineligible persons;

➢ system and procedure for police verification in passport related matters;

➢ coordination among various passport and visa issuing authorities, immigration officers and security agencies;

➢ registration of foreign nationals and their overstaying;

➢ accounting of blank travel documents;

➢ norms for fixation of fees for passport, visa and consular services, its proper levy, collection and accounting;

➢ internal controls and monitoring system;

6. Scope of audit

The performance audit covered the period 2000-01 to 2004-05. Information beyond this period has been included wherever available. 12 RPOs/POs were selected through statistical sampling using the PPSWR[3] method **(Appendix A)**. The records of these 12 RPOs/POs as well as records of CPV Division, Foreigners' Division, all FRROs/CHIO, CFB, BOI and 51 Missions/Posts abroad were test checked in field audit conducted between December 2005 and September 2006. 160 passport application files were selected for each financial year by using the CSRS[4] method.

7. Audit findings

Test check of records disclosed systemic deficiencies, procedural lapses, malpractices in passport matters, delays in issue of passports, revenue losses, irregularities in matters of foreign nationals and lapses in the areas of national security. These have been discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

7.1 Passport services

Passport services are provided by CPV division of the MEA through the CPO, a subordinate office of the MEA, through 30 RPOs/POs located in various parts of the country, and 462 District Passport Cells (DPCs) in the states, which receive, process and forward passport applications to the concerned RPOs/POs. The organisation is placed under the charge of a Joint Secretary who also functions as the Chief Passport Officer. The main function of the RPO/PO is to receive and process applications for issue of passports and to provide miscellaneous services such as change of name, sex, photograph, address, date and place of birth, signature and 'Emigration Check not required' (ECNR) etc. Applicants for passports can apply either directly or by post or through third parties with identification documents or through travel agents (TAs) on the basis of an authority letter.

7.1.1 Improper scrutiny of applications

As per provisions of paragraphs 3, 4(b) and 8 of Chapter IV of the Passport Manual, 2001, all passport offices are required to scrutinise applications when submitted at the counters and have the deficiencies rectified by the applicant, prior to the acceptance of the forms and the fees. The applications received by post, if found deficient in documentation should be returned immediately to the applicant under certificate of posting with suitable advice. Careful scrutiny of original documents at the time of accepting the applications is of utmost importance. Deficiencies noticed after the acceptance of the application forms are to be communicated to the applicants immediately and in case of non-receipt of reply within 21 days, a reminder through registered post is to be issued. In case of no response from the applicants within 21 days from the date of despatch of the registered letter, the case is to be closed under intimation to the applicant.

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[3] PPSWR   Probability Proportional to size with Replacement.
[4] CSRS   Circular Systematic Random Sampling

Test check of the records of the RPOs/POs revealed that the applications were not scrutinised properly before their acceptance. Table 1 includes some instances of improper scrutiny of application forms.

Table 1: Deficiencies noticed in scrutiny of applications

Sl. no.	Name of RPO/PO	Deficiencies noticed
1.	Jammu	141 applications, which were deficient on various counts were accepted. These deficiencies were not communicated to the applicants in 79 cases, while in 62 cases these were communicated after delays ranging between 18 days and 10 months even after the receipt of police verification reports (PVRs).
2.	Kolkata	In 330 out of 508 fresh passport application files pertaining to the period 2000-04 test checked in audit, photocopies of required documents were accepted without attestation.

The absence of proper scrutiny of applications could lead to issue of passports to ineligible persons as well as delays for genuine applicants.

Recommendation

➢   For scrutiny of applications and attached documents, a comprehensive check list needs to be prepared for all categories of passports. The check list will rule out the possibility of acceptance of deficient applications at the counters and will enable the Passport Issuing Authorities (PIAs) to take action on the applications received by post without undue delay.

The MEA has accepted (January 2007) the recommendation and has prepared a check list and circulated it to all POs for necessary action.

7.1.2   Delay in issue of passports

The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) had proposed to bring out a Citizen's charter incorporating an information booklet prepared by the MEA for passport applicants, inter alia, fixing a time-frame for issue of passports under different situations. It was expected that the RPOs/POs would abide by the suggested time frame, both in letter and spirit, thereby improving the overall efficiency of the CPO and also its image in the eyes of the public. Accordingly, the time frame for issue of fresh passports for applications with complete documentation and for issue of duplicate passports in lieu of damaged/lost passport was fixed as five weeks.

A test check disclosed that out of 62,72,049 applications received during the period 2000-01 to 2004-05, only 19 *per cent* of passports were issued within the stipulated time as detailed in Annex -I. In the case of PO Lucknow only 2 *per cent* of passports were issued on time. Delays beyond three months occurred in 38 *per cent* of the cases, while in the remaining cases, delays up to three months occurred. This was not a satisfactory level of service delivery.

The reasons for delay as mentioned in the weekly work statement for the period ended 31st March 2006 of the MEA and reiterated during their exit conference with Audit were inadequate supply of passport booklets, non-receipt of police

verification reports (PVRs), receipt of incomplete applications and shortage of staff. Regarding non-receipt of PVRs on time, the police authorities[5] stated that the RPOs/POs had also been responsible for delays on their part in processing and dispatching applications for verification. Test check of records of RPO, Delhi revealed that proper follow-up action was not taken to get the PVRs on time.

During 2005, the MEA reduced the time limit for issue of passports from 35 days to 30 days. Accordingly, the MHA also instructed all the state governments to send the PVRs within 21 days. The MEA lowered the time limit for the issue of passports without working out any concrete plan to tackle the problems of delay and pendency in passport related matters which were prevailing even when the time period was 35 days. During inspection of PO, Lucknow in December 2005 by the CPV Division, it was noticed that more than 76,000 cases were pending for police verification. During discussion with the MEA, DGP, UP stated that submission of PVRs in 21 days was not possible unless a separate cell was created for this purpose and further remarked that police verification in respect of passport applications was not a priority item with the state police.

7.1.2.1 Delay in issue of passports after receipt of Police Verification Reports

Paragraphs 6 and 21 of Chapter IV of the Passport Manual, 2001 provide for issue of fresh passports within five weeks from the date of application. The prescribed time for receipt of PVR was 30 days. Therefore, five days' time was prescribed for issue of fresh passports after the receipt of PVR. The time limit for issue of passports was reduced to 30 days in the year 2005.

In the following RPOs/POs passports were issued within the prescribed time in a very small number of cases even after the receipt of the PVRs as shown in Table-2 below.

Table-2: Delay in issue of passports after the receipt of PVRs during the period 2000-01 to 2004-05

Name of the RPO/PO	Number of cases in which passports were issued in time after receipt of PVRs	Number of passports issued after the receipt of PVRs with delay of			Total passports issued after receipt of PVRs
		More than one week to one month	More than one month to three months	More than three months	
Chandigarh	Nil (0%)	3,12,350	3,24,983	43,609	6,80,942
Pune	1,892 (1%)	1,64,326	23,335	3,779	1,93,332
Delhi	50,897 (8%)	3,56,781	1,86,140	71,675	6,65,493
Jammu	3,910 (8%)	4,716	8,335	32,391	49,352
Ahmedabad	1,06,612 (12%)	2,29,733	2,62,276	2,58,062	8,56,683
Lucknow	72,049 (13%)	3,46,408	73,970	41,872	5,34,299
Bhopal	55,239 (29%)	1,03,788	21,083	7,485	1,87,595
Bareilly	89,921 (55%)	55,740	11,066	7,597	1,64,324
Nagpur	50,613 (58%)	26,287	8,063	2,348	87,311
Total	4,31,133 (12%)	16,00,129	9,19,251	4,68,818	34,19,331

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[5] of the states of Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Chandigarh (UT)

Out of a total of 34,19,331 passports issued after receipt of the PVRs only 4,31,133 (12 *per cent*) passports were issued within the prescribed time, while 16,00,129 (47 *per cent*) were issued after a delay of more than one week to one month, 9,19,251 (27 *per cent*) after a delay of more than one month to three months and 4,68,818 (14 *per cent*) were issued after a delay of more than three months.

In the following RPOs/POs, out of 6,91,346 cases where police verification had been waived during the period 2000-01 to 2004-05, 2,65,776 passports (38 *per cent*) were issued after the prescribed period as indicated in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Delay in issue of passports where the police verification was waived

Name of the RPO/PO	No. of cases where police verification was waived	No. of passports issued after the prescribed period
Kolkata	26,119	25,393 (97%)
Bhopal	13,301	11,478 (86%)
Lucknow	37,909	30,382 (80%)
Pune	931	536 (58%)
Ahmedabad	2,14,575	1,09,977 (51%)
Delhi	1,48,916	58,170 (39%)
Nagpur	3,802	1,260 (33%)
Bareilly	17,676	4,017 (23%)
Chennai	1,29,752	24,563 (19%)
Chandigarh	98,365	Nil (0%)
Total	6,91,346	2,65,776 (38%)

7.1.2.2 Delay in issue of passports under the Tatkal Scheme

Chapter III of the Passport Manual 2001 provides that passports under Tatkal Scheme can be issued only in specific cases without prior police clearance subject to production of verification certificates (VCs) and documentary evidence substantiating the urgency. Passports can be issued on out of turn basis even if there is no genuine urgency, at the discretion of the Passport Officer keeping in view volume of work. Under the scheme, passports are issued within 10 days and between 11 to 35 days (11 to 20 days from 5.5.2005) on payment of an additional fee of Rs. 1500 and Rs. 1000 respectively as notified in Schedule IV to the Passport Rules. There is no provision in the rules for refund of the additional fee in the cases where passports are not issued on time.

Audit in the following RPOs/POs revealed that in 80,725 cases during the period 2000-01 to 2004-05, passports were not issued within the specified time of Tatkal Scheme as shown in Table 4. Thus, Rs. 8.72 crore was collected as additional fees without extending the benefit due to the applicants under the Tatkal Scheme.

Table 4: Cases where Tatkal fees were charged but passports were not issued within the prescribed period

Name of the RPO/PO	No. of cases	Additional fees charged (Amount in Rs.)
Kozhikode	67,823	6,97,60,800
Ahmedabad	1,430	20,68,500
Bhopal	9,174	1,24,05,500
Pune	1,037	12,10,500
Lucknow	478	7,02,500
Kolkata	393	5,30,000
Bareilly	333	4,85,500
Chandigarh	57	85,500
Total	**80,725**	**8,72,48,800**

The RPOs/POs at Kolkata (April 2006), Ahmedabad, Kozhikode and Pune (November 2006) attributed the delay in issue of passports to various reasons such as receipt of incomplete police report, doubts about the verification certificates and incomplete documents furnished by the applicants. The reply of the RPOs/POs was not tenable because as per paragraph 3 of Chapter IV of the Passport Manual, all passport offices were required to scrutinise applications when submitted at the counters and have the deficiencies rectified by the applicant prior to acceptance of the forms. The fees should be accepted only after such scrutiny. As far as possible, once an application is accepted at the counter after scrutiny, no further documents/information should be called for. Further, no police verification is required prior to the issue of passport in Tatkal cases and any doubts about the verification certificates should be resolved within the prescribed time. Thus, proper care was not taken in the scrutiny of applications even in cases under Tatkal Scheme where additional fees had been charged.

Thus, non-issue of passports on time even after charging additional fee under the Tatkal Scheme defeated the objective of the scheme and constituted a serious deficiency in the quality of service.

Recommendation

➤ **Officials need to be made accountable for delays and inefficient rendering of passport services.**

7.1.3   Non-disposal of returned undelivered passports

Paragraph 18 of Chapter IV of the Passport Manual, 2001 provides that passports that are returned undelivered (RUD) should be retained only for one year after which they must be destroyed if nothing further is heard from the applicant and he/she does not respond to the intimations sent to him/her by the PO. All communications to the applicant should be sent both at his present and permanent addresses by registered post/acknowledgement due. A record of all RUD passports should be kept properly.

Audit in the following RPOs/POs revealed that 6,061 passports for the period 2000-01 to 2004-05 were lying with them as indicated in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Undelivered passports lying with RPOs/POs

Name of the RPO/PO	No. of passports received undelivered	No. of passports still lying with RPO/PO
Lucknow	9,312	2,186
Chandigarh	7,272	1,559
Kolkata	5,096	635
Kozhikode	7,702	447
Pune	2,834	330
Bareilly	974	252
Delhi	7,174	245
Bhopal	2,913	156
Nagpur	628	107
Jammu	99	99
Ahmedabad	7,451	45
Total	51,455	6,061

The RPO, Delhi stated (August 2006) that the RUD passports pertaining to the periods 2000-01 to 2002-03 were destroyed as per the MEA's instructions of October 1997. However, scrutiny of the register provided to audit regarding destruction of RUD passports disclosed that none of the RUD passports were destroyed after March 2000 in RPO Delhi, though 973 RUD passports were found entered in the register in April 2005. No separate records were maintained regarding receipt, disposal and balance of RUD passports. Proper handing and taking over of the charge of RUD passports had not been done. Further, out of 2,465 RUD passports pertaining to the period from 2003-04 to 2004-05, 245 were physically available with the RPO, Delhi. The RPO stated that the remaining RUD passports for the period 2003-04 to 2004-05 were disposed either by redespatch or by delivery at the counter. However, no records were made available in support of their disposal.

The RPO, Kolkata stated (April 2006) that no RUD passports had been destroyed after August 2000. The PO, Jammu stated (November 2006) that no stock account of the RUD passports had been maintained. He assured that they would be maintained now and all RUD passports would be destroyed as per rules. The RPO, Chandigarh stated (November 2006) that RUD passports were destroyed only on the expiry of their validity, while the RPO, Ahmedabad stated (November 2006) that action was being taken for delivery/destruction of these passports. The PO, Pune stated (November 2006) that destruction of RUD passports was under process and would be completed by the month of November 2006.

The absence of proper accounting and timely destruction of RUD passports could have serious implications including possible misuse.

Recommendation

➢ **The provisions of the Passport Manual, 2001 in respect of RUD passports should be adhered to strictly.**

The MEA has accepted (January 2007) the recommendation and has issued instructions to all the RPOs/POs for strict compliance.

7.1.4 Delay in impounding/revocation of passports

The Passport Issuing Authority (PIA) may impound or revoke a passport under Section 10 (3) of the Passport Act for reasons including, *inter alia*, the following:

(a)   if the PIA is satisfied that the holder of the passport or travel document is in wrongful possession thereof;

(b)   if the passport or travel document was obtained by suppression of material information or on the basis of wrong information provided by the holder of the passport or travel document or any other person on his behalf;

(c)   if the PIA deems it necessary so to do in the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the country or her friendly relations with any foreign country, or in the interests of the general public; and

(d)   if any of the conditions of the passport or travel document has been contravened.

In all cases of revocation/impounding of passport, a show cause notice should be given to the individual prior to revoking of passport facilities. Test check of records of RPOs/POs at Delhi, Bhopal, Kolkata, Pune and Lucknow disclosed that 244 passports were revoked/impounded after delays ranging from six months to more than eight years from the date of receipt of adverse PVRs. Taking advantage of this, 28 persons had travelled abroad after the receipt of adverse PVRs/issue of impounding/revoking circulars by the RPO/PO. Out of these, six persons had left the country and had not returned even after more than seven months to four years.

Delay in revocation/impounding of passports provides an opportunity to the concerned persons to misuse their passports for longer periods, possibly for illegal purposes.

Recommendation

➤   **The MEA should institute efficient internal control system to ensure full compliance to rules in regard to impounding/revoking of the passports and determine accountability for non-compliance.**

7.1.5 Suspected fraud in passport matters

Test check of database from the system of RPO, Delhi revealed cases of suspected fraud in the issue of passports as detailed below.

7.1.5.1 Cases of impersonation

(i)   **Seven fake passports were issued to different individuals by using the particulars of two persons in 2003 and 2004.**

The RPO accepted the issue of these fake passports and all the seven passports were revoked and entries made in the system after the matter was pointed out by audit.

(ii)   10 passports were issued to different individuals with the particulars of only one person. On the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) enquiry, nine passports had been revoked by the RPO in August 2004. However, entries regarding revocation were not made in the system. One remaining passport was revoked and entries of all the ten revoked passports were made in the system at the instance of audit.

(iii)   Four fake passports were issued to different individuals with the particulars of one person. Only three passports had been revoked by the RPO. The remaining passport was revoked in September 2006 at the instance of audit.

RPO, Delhi stated that the cases of above named persons were under investigation and were being registered and investigated by CBI. The concerned officials of the RPO had already been placed under suspension.

7.1.5.2 Delay in entries about revocation of fraudulently issued passports

Necessary entries of revocation/impounding were not made in the system in the cases of fraudulently issued passports detailed below.

(i)   Six passports were issued to different individuals in the name of one person. Though all the six passports had been revoked by the RPO in August 2005, yet necessary entries in the system were not made for two passports. These were made in August 2006 at the instance of audit.

(ii)   In another case, four fake passports were issued to different individuals in the name of one person. Though these passports had been revoked by the RPO in May 2005, necessary entries in the system regarding revocation were made only in August 2006 at the instance of audit.

Lack of prompt action in checking fraudulent issue of passports could be a matter of serious concern because of its likely impact on national security.

7.1.5.3 Passports issued to different persons with same number

Test check of entries of impounding/revocation of passports made in the database of the computer system of RPO, Delhi revealed two cases where passports were issued having the same numbers as detailed below.

(i)   Passport bearing no. R769865 was issued to a person in the year 1981 by PO, Trichy. A passport bearing the same number was also issued to another person in the year 1994 by RPO, Delhi.

(ii)   Passport bearing no. U643162 was issued to a person in the year 1983 by PO, Cochin. A passport bearing the same number was also issued in 1995 to another person by RPO, Delhi.

The RPO, Delhi confirmed the facts in September 2006.

This indicated deficiencies in the system and poor monitoring of the printing of blank passport booklets by the India Security Press (ISP), Nasik.

Recommendations

➢ Fraudulent issue of passports need to be seriously investigated by the MEA and stringent action taken against those found responsible.

➢ The system needs to be reviewed in depth to prevent fraudulent issue of passports and also to ensure their immediate detection.

➢ The system of printing of blank passport booklets needs to be streamlined to prevent issue of passports with the same number and ensure immediate detection of such errors.

Regarding fraudulent issue of passports the MEA stated (January 2007) that the cases where connivance of passport officials was noticed, were handed over to the CBI or Police authorities and in cases of negligence on the part of the passport officials, departmental action was initiated. It further added that a proposal to institute more stringent penalties against the officials involved in fraudulent issue of passports was under its consideration. However, the MEA has accepted the recommendation regarding review of the system and has issued necessary instructions to the RPOs/POs. The MEA also noted the recommendation regarding streamlining of the system of printing of blank passport booklets for compliance.

7.1.6 Deficiencies in the IT System

7.1.6.1 Non-issue of loss circulars

In terms of paragraph 12.2 of Chapter VII of the Passport Manual 2001, all PIAs are required to issue loss circulars immediately upon receiving reports of lost passports from the passport holders to all the check posts and Indian Missions/Posts abroad. PIAs have no discretion to issue duplicate passports without issuing the loss circulars before hand.

Test check of records in RPO, Delhi revealed that these norms were not being followed as detailed in Table 6.

Table 6: Discrepancies in issue of circulars

Period	Number of lost passports	Number of loss circulars issued	Excess (+) Short (-)
2001-02	1454	1040	(-) 414
2002-03	1529	1728	(+) 199
2003-04	1911	1374	(-) 537
2004-05	1789	1411	(-) 378
Total	6683	5553	(-) 1130

The above table indicates that only 5553 loss circulars were issued against 6683 lost passports during 2001-02 to 2004-05. Further, during the period 2002-03, the number of circulars issued against the lost passports was more.

Test check of records further revealed that in four cases neither entries were made in the system nor were loss circulars issued. The entries were made at the instance of audit.

The RPO stated (August 2006) that the number of loss circulars shown issued pertains to the specified period, but these may relate to the applications received prior to April 2001. It is logical that counts of lost passports of the previous financial year may be included in the next year's total of loss circulars issued but there should be a system in place for one-to-one tracking of lost passports and loss circular. Loss circular should also be issued immediately on receipt of report of passport being lost.

(ii)   In RPO, Kolkata, test check of 27 cases of duplicate passports for the period 2000 to 2005 revealed that in four cases duplicate passports were issued without issue of loss circulars.

In the absence of entries in the system as well as non-issue of loss circulars, the possibility of misuse of lost passports with consequential serious implications could not be ruled out.

Recommendations

➢   Suitable application controls should be built into the system to prevent the issue of a duplicate passport in lieu of lost passports without a specific reference to the related loss circular.

➢   As soon as information or application for issue of duplicate passport in lieu of lost passport is received, an entry to this effect should be made in the system.

➢   In order to ensure the dispatch of the loss circular, a register of such cases needs to be maintained containing details regarding lost passports, loss circulars and dates of dispatch. The register needs to be reviewed by the concerned RPOs/POs monthly.

The MEA stated (January 2007) that the National Institute of Smart Government had been, *inter alia*, asked to suggest a system where on entry of an application for issue of a duplicate passport, a loss circular is issued simultaneously. It also accepted the recommendation regarding maintenance of register to monitor the dispatch of loss circulars and has stated that instructions were being issued to all the RPOs/POs in this regard.

7.1.6.2 Status of revoked/impounded passports

RPO, Delhi maintains a database that provides information relating to a passport like name of the holder, status of the passport, passport number, issue/expiry date, file number, status of ECNR/ECR[6], date/place of birth, father's name, mother's name, spouse's name, old passport details, other related passport details, details of Lost/Damaged/Impounded/ Revoked (DRIL) passports.

Test check of status of revoked/impounded passports issued by RPO, Delhi revealed that data relating to revoked passports that were linked needed to be entered separately for each such passport. The system needs to be modified so that data entered in respect of a particular passport is linked automatically to other passports linked to it.

The RPO stated that the necessary entries had been made against the concerned revoked passports in respect of which incomplete data entry had been pointed out by audit, and that the matter of upgrading the software would be taken up with National Informatics Centre (NIC) for provision of automatic linkages in the system.

7.1.6.3 Treatment of cancelled passports

Table 7 indicates the position of passports cancelled due to mistakes of officials during printing, lamination etc. in RPO, Delhi for the period 2000-01 to 2005-06.

Table 7: Position of cancelled passports

Year	Wrongly printed	Mistakes of officials
2000-01	267	273
2001-02	1,592	150
2002-03	1,027	180
2003-04	474	298
2004-05	18	911
2005-06	20	1,103

No separate records were maintained for the cancelled passports. However, the data about the cancelled passports were obtained from the system with the help of NIC and examined in audit. The status of 14 illustrative cases of cancelled passports was checked in audit. On checking the status of individual cancelled passports, the system showed 'error: record not found' against them instead of an indication regarding the fact of their cancellation. Therefore, in case of misuse of any of the cancelled passports, the other PIAs, investigating agencies, immigration officers etc. would not be able to detect the cancelled passports from the system.

The RPO stated (August 2006) that the cancelled passports were cut at the corners and enclosed with the respective file. The reply is not tenable because the status of a cancelled passport was not shown in the system nor was there any proper accounting of the cancelled passports leading to the possibility of such passports

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[6] Emigration check not required/Emigration check required.

being left without their corners being cut. This procedure also leaves scope for manipulation and misuse of these passports. The RPO accepted the fault regarding the status of cancelled passports shown in the system and agreed to take up the matter with NIC.

Recommendations

➢ The MEA needs to modify the software system so as to show uniform and latest status of a passport wherever it appears in the system.

➢ Proper records of the cancelled passports should be maintained. As these passports cannot be issued, these should be destroyed in the presence of a responsible officer who may record a certificate under his dated signatures to this effect.

The MEA stated (January 2007) that the recommendation regarding need to modify the software system had been noted for compliance. It also accepted the recommendation regarding proper maintenance of records and destruction of cancelled passports and has issued necessary instructions to the RPOs/POs.

7.1.7 Non-finalisation of pending cases

Position of pending cases for issue of passports in 10 RPOs/POs[7] showed that 2,72,295 cases were pending from 1st April 2000 to 30th June 2006 out of which, in 1,87,677 cases, PVRs had already been received but the RPOs/POs had not issued/denied the passports thus finally disposing the applications. There were as many as 63,454 cases pending for more than three years, yet no decision had been taken to dispose them finally either by granting or denying passports.

The PO, Jammu stated (November 2006) that delay in disposal of cases was due to acute shortage of staff.

The PO, Nagpur stated (November 2006) that delay in disposal of cases for the period 2001-02 to 2004-05 was due to suppression by the applicants of old references and want of clearance from the authority. For the period 2005-06 (upto June 2006) it was due to want of previous address clearance from the concerned police authority and for want of other required information from the applicants.

The RPO, Ahmedabad stated (November 2006) that delay in disposal of cases was due to suppression by the applicants of previous particulars of the applications and passports, present/previous address, marital status/name of spouse, non submission of proper No Objection Certificate, and non-disclosure of pending criminal cases by the applicants.

The PO, Pune stated (November 2006) that delay in disposal of cases was due to receipt of adverse/incomplete PVRs, suppression of old passport particulars, want of documents for reverification and wrong entry made by staff members.

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[7] Delhi, Kozhikode, Nagpur, Pune, Jammu, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Bareilly, Lucknow and Kolkata

Recommendation

➤ The RPOs/POs need to review the pending cases periodically. The cases which can not be resolved should be closed under intimation to the applicant.

The MEA stated (January 2007) that the RPOs/POs were advised from time to time to conduct special pendency drives and further added that the POs had been instructed to hold Passport Adalats regularly.

7.1.8 Police verification

Paragraph 7 of Chapter III of the Passport Manual, 2001 provides that the passport authority may make such enquiry, as deemed necessary, prior to the issue of passport. In the absence of any other independent source at its disposal, such enquiries are usually made through the police authorities. The PO should ensure that the personal particular forms are detached from the application form on the day the application is submitted and sent to the local District Police the same day. A period of four weeks is allowed for receipt of reports from the police (reduced to 21 days in the year 2005). If the PVR is not received within a period of 30 days and all other documents are in order, the passport may be issued on 'Police verification report overdue basis'. However, in view of the present law and order situation in Jammu and Kashmir, passports of all categories in the state including those covered under the Tatkal Scheme are issued only after the receipt of PVRs. Paragraph 6 of Chapter IV of the Passport Manual, 2001, provides that if police reports are not received within two months from the date of reference, the authorities concerned should be reminded. If adverse reports are received, then action should be taken under the relevant provisions of the Passport Act for refusal, impounding or revocation of passport after serving due show cause notice to the passport applicant/passport holder.

The police verification procedures presently being followed require the police to report, inter alia, on aspects of citizenship of India, conviction in any crime during the last five years, issue of warrant for arrest by any court, prohibition of applicant's departure from India, travel abroad and possession of passport etc.

7.1.8.1 Inadequate police verification

Test check of police verification reports prepared by the Special Branch of Delhi Police revealed as under:-

(a) The PVRs did not indicate whether all requisite checks had been applied before issue of clear PVR.

(b) The criminal aspects were checked on the basis of data collected from State Crime Record Bureau (SCRB), which compiles data of crimes reported in the various police stations in Delhi and arrests made in such cases. The criminal aspects like conviction in any crime, issue of warrant for arrest by any court were not verified outside the jurisdiction of Delhi.

(c)   The aspects relating to possession of a passport/travel document and travel abroad in the past were not being verified.

The verification of antecedents and criminal records of an applicant for issue of passport is a very important part of police verification. Inadequate police verification can result in issue of passports to unscrupulous and undesirable persons.

7.1.8.2 Non-receipt/delay in receipt of PVRs

During test check in 12 selected RPOs/POs, it was noticed that there were long delays in the receipt of PVRs. Out of 60,70,203 cases sent for police verification during the period 2000-01 to 2004-05, PVRs were not received in time in 45,43,381 (75 *per cent*) cases in all the 12 RPOs/POs, PVRs were not received at all but passports were issued on 'PVR overdue basis in 3,63,070 (six *per cent*) cases by RPOs/POs at Kozhikode, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata, Chennai and Nagpur. Table 8 depicts the year-wise position of overall delay in receipt of PVRs.

Table 8: Year-wise details of PVRs

Period	No. of cases sent for police verification	No. of cases in which PVRs were not received on time	No. of cases in which PVRs were not received but passports were issued on overdue basis
2000-01	11,42,253	9,31,380 (82%)	1,12,216
2001-02	12,73,967	10,40,788 (82%)	77,207
2002-03	10,62,736	7,49,513 (71%)	77,462
2003-04	12,63,648	8,85,278 (70%)	49,467
2004-05	13,27,599	9,36,422 (71%)	46,718
Total	**60,70,203**	**45,43,381 (75%)**	**3,63,070**

Thus, despite a marginal improvement since 2002-03, the receipt of PVRs in time was the exception rather than the rule.

Non-receipt of PVRs within the prescribed time not only delayed issue of passports but also compelled the PIAs to issue passports on 'PVR overdue basis'. Such delays, while causing harassment to the applicants, are fraught with the risk of passports being issued to ineligible applicants, including foreigners.

State governments/police authorities stated that RPOs/POs were also responsible for delays on their part for the time taken in processing and dispatching applications for verification. Other reasons for delay included deployment of inspecting officers on law and order duties, non-availability of applicants sometimes at the given address, incomplete address, delayed production of desired necessary documents etc. In respect of Jammu and Kashmir, the prevalent scenario in the state and coverage of far flung areas for verification were the other reasons for delay.

7.1.8.3 Non-receipt of PVRs under the Tatkal scheme

Passports under the Tatkal Scheme are issued on the basis of verification certificates (VCs) given by officers not below the rank of Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Joint Secretary to a State government, SDM/DSP of district of

residence of applicant, Colonel and above or equivalent ranks in the Air Force and the Navy, General Manager of a Public Sector Undertaking and Resident Commissioners/ Additional Resident Commissioners of all State governments based in Delhi. In August 2005, RPO Mumbai brought to the notice of the MEA that the officers had issued VCs mostly to unknown persons on the basis of references given by their colleagues/friends/relatives etc. Any person who issues incorrect VC is liable to be prosecuted under Section 12 (2) of the Passport Act, 1967.

Audit in the following RPOs/POs for the period 2000-01 to 2004-05 revealed the position of receipt of PVRs under the Tatkal category as given in Table 9.

Table 9: Details of PVRs under the Tatkal category

Name of the RPO/PO	No. of cases sent for police verification	No. of adverse PVRs received	No. of incomplete PVRs received	No. of PVRs not received
Delhi	72,028	720	10,037	8,439
Bareilly	3,955	479	193	366
Lucknow	7,766	346	922	311
Bhopal	8,477	207	326	589
Ahmedabad	33,641	62	3,296	15,013
Nagpur	5,911	60	0	669
Pune	13,602	29	1,694	953
Chandigarh	14,643	21	976	13,646
Kolkata	14,154	6	2228	4,205
Total	**1,74,177**	**1,930**	**19,672**	**44,191**

Out of 1,74,177 Tatkal scheme cases sent for post police verification i.e. after the issue of passports, adverse PVRs were received in 1,930 cases, incomplete PVRs were received in 19,672 cases and in 44,191 cases, PVRs were not received. In RPO Delhi, out of 71 cases of adverse/incomplete PVRs in 26 cases, passports were impounded/Show Cause Notices (SCNs) issued by the MEA. But in cases of adverse PVRs, no action was initiated by the RPO against the VC issuing authorities. The RPO, Delhi stated that there was no procedure in practice for initiating action against the VC issuing authorities. However, SCNs were issued to the passport holders in 43 of the remaining cases at the instance of audit. Impounding orders were issued in two other cases and one of the VC issuing authority was issued a show-cause letter after these were pointed out by audit in September 2006.

Thus, by not fixing accountability and not taking action against the erring officers, the Tatkal Scheme for facilitating issue of passports to bonafide citizens without prior police verification, was vitiated. Issue of passports under the Tatkal category without holding the VC issuing authorities accountable has serious adverse implications.

Recommendations

> **The MEA should persuade the state police authorities to create a separate cell to handle police verification of passport related matters within the prescribed time.**

> The MEA should make the VC issuing authorities accountable for the specific items in the verification certificate, which were subsequently found adverse in the PVRs.

The MEA accepted (January 2007) the recommendation about the state police authorities and has addressed the MHA in the matter. It further added that this problem would be effectively tackled once they have national identity cards.

7.1.9 Other irregularities

7.1.9.1 Non-recording of information about revoked/impounded passports in the computer system

In cases of impounding/revocation of passports, circulars need to be issued by the PIA to all concerned authorities like other PIAs, immigration officers and both the Ministries. At the same time details about such impounded/revoked passports are required to be entered in the computer system for centralised access.

In RPO, Delhi, during test check of records for the period from April 2000 to June 2005, it was noticed that in 114 cases, entries regarding revocation/impounding of passports were not made in the system. Absence of such entries was fraught with the risk of the revoked/impounded passports going unnoticed by the PIAs, immigration officers and other security agencies.

The RPO, Delhi stated (August 2006) that the entries had been made regularly since September 2005 but no entries were made prior to that although circulars were issued to the concerned authorities. However, no separate record was maintained regarding despatch of the impounding/revocation circulars.

The reply of the RPO indicated that the prescribed system was not followed.

Recommendation

> The RPOs/POs should maintain a record of the details of the revoked/impounded passports, their revocation/impounding circular number, and date of despatch and number of each entry made in the computer system. This record should be reviewed monthly by the concerned RPOs/POs.

The MEA stated (January 2007) that the RPOs/POs were maintaining record of the revoked/impounded passports. With a view to further streamlining the use of PISON facilities, MEA instructed PIAs to use 'DRIL' facilities by making prompt entries regarding 'Damaged', 'Revoked', 'Impounded' and 'Lost' Passports.

7.2 Visa services

Every foreigner entering India is required to possess a valid national passport and any other internationally recognised travel documents establishing his/her nationality and identity and a valid visa for India granted by an authorised Indian representative abroad.

In India, visa services are provided to foreign nationals through Foreigners' Regional Registration Officers (FRROs)/Chief Immigration Officer (CHIO) under the administrative control of Foreigners' Division of the MHA.

7.2.1 Irregularities in visa matters

As per paragraph 24 of the Visa Manual, whenever a visa is granted to a foreigner, the type of visa e.g. T (tourist), S (student) etc. should be indicated in the appropriate column of the visa sticker. However, the MHA noticed that some of the Missions were issuing LT visas presuming them as 'Long Term' visas whereas there is no provision for Long Term visas according to the Manual. Missions were therefore, advised to issue visas of appropriate category. Test check revealed that despite the instructions of the MHA incorporated in the Visa Manual of July 2003, Missions/Posts issued 6,888 LT visas during 2004. The MEA stated (January 2007) that instructions to all the Missions/Posts for following the provisions of Visa Manual had been issued.

7.3 Management of travel documents

7.3.1 Blank travel documents

The MEA paid Rs. 43.42 crore, Rs. 49.71 crore, Rs. 45.25 crore and Rs. 57.01 crore in 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 respectively to the ISP, Nasik for supply of blank passport booklets, visa stickers and other travel documents to the CPV Division, various Missions/Posts abroad and RPOs/POs in India without actually verifying the receipt of these documents by the concerned user offices. Test check of records revealed that in certain cases, these documents were either not received or received late by the Missions/Posts or there were deficiencies as detailed in Tables 10 to 12.

Table 10: Details of cases involving missing travel documents

Sl. no.	Name of the Missions/Posts abroad	Missing travel documents (date of intimation to MEA/ISP)
1.	CGI, Jeddah	200 passport booklets (August 2003).
2.	CGI, Osaka	One visa sticker (July 2001).
3.	EI, Valdstejnska	One visa sticker (July 2001).
4.	EI, Tokyo	Four visa stickers (September 2001).
5.	HCI, Dar-es-Salaam	One visa sticker (October 2001).
6.	EI, Helsinki	Two packets containing 40 booklets (June 2003).
7.	CGI, Jeddah	One packet containing 100 booklets (December 2003).
8.	EI, Mongolia	500 visa stickers (June 2005).
9.	EI, Moscow	2000 visa stickers (July 2005).
10.	EI, Berlin	One visa sticker (June 2004).
11.	CGI, Jeddah	300 passport booklets (October 2005).
12.	HCI, Kuala Lumpur	10 passport booklets (May 2002).
13.	HCI, Kampala	500 ordinary passport booklets (March 2005).
14.	EI, Baghdad	40 ordinary passport booklets (February 2005) (booklets had been misplaced in March 2003).
15.	EI, Bucharest	11 blank ECs. Revocation circular issued by the Post in July 2002.
16.	CGI, Houston	400 passport booklets. Loss circular issued by the Post in August 2003.
17.	CGI, Mandalay	Four visa stickers lost. Loss circular issued by the Crime Branch, New Delhi in April 2003.

Sl. no.	Name of the Missions/Posts abroad	Missing travel documents (date of intimation to MEA/ISP)
18.	EI, Tokyo	Four visa stickers (September 2001).
19.	HCI, Dhaka	Short receipt of 34 visa stickers during January 2004 to April 2006.

Table 11: Details of cases involving receipt of damaged travel documents

Sl. no.	Name of the Missions/Posts abroad	Damaged/faulty documents (date of intimation to MEA/ISP)
1.	CGI, Jeddah	2000 visa stickers (January 2001).
2.	HCI, Port Moresby	155 visa stickers (April 2004).
3.	RPO, Chennai	One passport booklet (January 2004).
4.	RPO, Chennai	One passport booklet (February 2004).
5.	CGI, Osaka	One visa sticker (September 2001).
6.	HCI, Dar–Es–Salaam	Two visa stickers of same number (February 2002).
7.	EI, Bangkok	Two visa stickers of same number in two cases (February 2002).
8.	HCI, Wellington	Two visa stickers of same number (August 2002).
9.	RPO, Chennai	One passport booklet (October 2003).
10.	CGI, New York	10 visa stickers (June and October 2002).
11.	HCI, Dhaka	71 visa stickers from January 2004 to April 2006
12.	Asstt. HCI, Chittagong	Two sets of duplicate visa stickers (June and October 2005).

Table 12: Discrepancies in the demand, supply and receipt of travel documents

Sl. no.	Name of the Mission/Post	Observations
1.	EI, Stockholm	In December 2003, the Mission received 20,000 Pakistani visa stickers for granting visas to Pakistani nationals, which were not required by them. This was reported to the MEA in January 2004.
2.	EI, Madrid	ISP supplied 20,000 passport booklets against the indent of 2,500 booklets. The Mission received only 19,900 booklets.
3.	HCI, Brunei	The Mission received 5,000 visa stickers against the indented quantity of 400. This was intimated to the MEA in July 2002. After retaining 500, the remaining 4,500 were sent to other Missions in September 2002 according to their requirement.
4.	EI, Bonn	ISP supplied 20,000 visa stickers to EI, Bonn in June 2005, though, this Mission had been closed in 2002. These stickers were later received by EI, Berlin.
5.	PO, Secunderabad	The PO received more than 4,000 official passport booklets. They already had a stock of 750 official passports and had no requirement of additional booklets. This was intimated to the MEA in April 2003.
6.	EI, Kathmandu	ISP Nasik supplied 1,000 passport booklets to the Mission in July 2005 without their requirement.
7.	EI, Lisbon	The Mission received the following items from the ISP, Nasik against their nil indents for the year 2004-05. (i) 50 ECs in July 2004. (ii) 2,000 visa stickers in November 2004. (iii) 25 official passport booklets in December 2004. (iv) 2,000 ordinary passport booklets in November and December 2004. (v) 38 diplomatic passport booklets December 2004.
8.	HCI, Colombo	During the period from 2.7.2004 to 13.5.2005, 23 visa stickers were found damaged, 19 missing and 16 in excess. This was intimated to the MEA in September 2004 and August 2005.
9.	HCI, Singapore	The Mission received one packet of 100 ECs which was meant for CGI, Jeddah. This was reported to ISP in September 2005.

Sl. no.	Name of the Mission/Post	Observations
10.	CGI, Johannesburg	In October 2004, the Post intimated to ISP about non-receipt of 100 ECs from CGI, Jeddah which were meant for their post.
11.	CGI, Jeddah	The Post received and utilised one parcel containing 100 passport booklets meant for CGI, Chicago.
12.	Asstt. HCI, Chittagong	The Post received 2,000 visa stickers in September 2005 intended for Sri Lanka.
13.	CGI, Shanghai	In 2004, the ISP sent 16,000 visa stickers against the consumption of 7,800. Similarly, in 2005, 750 blank passport booklets were sent against the consumption of 200.

CPV Division, which is the nodal authority to assess the requirement of blank travel documents and place orders on ISP, Nasik for their supply, failed to monitor the demand, supply and receipt of documents which led to the above deficiencies. In the absence of proper accounting and monitoring of blank travel documents sent by ISP there was the risk of misuse of the missing as well as excess documents.

The MEA in its reply (January 2006) stated that ISP, Nasik while raising bills for the blank travel documents enclosed a copy of the challan through which supply was made and the quantity shown in challan was matched with the billed quantity before payment.

The reply of the MEA does not address the issue of payment to ISP on the basis of bills/challans alone without confirming receipt of these documents from the user offices.

Recommendation

> **The missing and damaged travel documents should be investigated thoroughly and also immediately reported to the concerned security agencies, MEA, MHA, PIAs and other authorities to avoid their misuse.**

The MEA stated (January 2007) that all PIAs and check posts in India are informed immediately about the lost/missing passport booklets so that anybody found travelling on a lost blank passport booklet is detected. The reply is not tenable since the above instances involving the missing travel documents demonstrate that these cases were not investigated and hence no pre-emptive action was taken.

7.3.2 Stock register

In November 1998, the MEA instructed all the Missions/Posts abroad to vigorously implement the security procedures for safe custody of blank passport booklets and visa stickers. The MEA further instructed (October 2000) that the Head of the Consular wing should verify the stock of blank documents at least once in a month and the Head of Mission/ Head of Post should conduct regular surprise checks of the existing stock. The Missions were required to send half-yearly returns on 1st January and 1st July each year in prescribed proforma indicating the position of stock. As per the instructions of the MEA, the blank passports, visa stickers and other documents should be in the custody of an officer not below the rank of an Attache and at the time of handing over of charge, the blank documents should be fully counted

and physically verified. Such handing over report should be counter signed by the Head of the Consular wing. Table 13 depicts the deficiencies noticed during the test check of stock registers.

Table 13: Deficiencies in the stock register

Sl. no.	Name of the Mission/Post	Deficiencies noticed
1.	EI, Baku	50 visa stickers of Pakistan variety received in April 2002 were not taken in stock and this remained un-noticed even during physical verification conducted in August 2005. These stickers were taken in stock after being pointed out by audit.
2.	EI, Berlin	Passport nos. E 3560004 to 3560011 and 3560039 were recorded as issued in May 2003, whereas the Mission had not received passport booklets with these numbers.
3.	EI, Madrid	Details of 241 PIO cards found short during physical verifications conducted on 12th October 2004 and 16th November 2005 were not recorded in the stock register.
4.	EI, Moscow	Visa issue register was not maintained during the period from 17th to 31st March 2005 though 1862 visas were issued during this period.
5.	EI, Rome	The Mission received 15,000 visa stickers from ISP, Nasik in July 2005 but these were not entered in the stock register.
6.	EI, Dublin	(i) 200 visa stickers were taken on stock twice, once on 2nd July 2003 and again on 22nd April 2004. (ii) Physical verification conducted by audit on 4th May 2004 revealed that 8,500 stickers were available instead of 12,450 as shown in the stock register.
7.	EI, Nairobi	The closing balance of ordinary passport booklets as on 13th December 2002 was shown as 2018 in the stock register whereas it actually worked out to 2008. Similarly, on 7th April 2003, the closing balance was shown as 1308 instead of 1408. Further, at the time of handing over of charge on 4th December 2003, 1787 blank passport booklets (including seven damaged/spoilt booklets) were handed over against 1798 shown as balance in stock register. The short accounting of 11 booklets remained unreconciled (June 2006). The Mission confirmed these facts and figures in June 2006 and stated that short accounting of 11 passport booklets would be looked into and intimated in due course.
8.	HCI, Singapore	(i) On 8th November 2004, the closing balance of visa stickers was shown as 35,000 instead of 36,000. On the matter being pointed out by audit, the Mission conducted physical verification of visa stickers on 26th May 2006 and took necessary corrective measures by making stock entries for these 1000 visa stickers. (ii) As per the stock register of passports (jumbo booklets) there was a nil balance on 28th March 2006 and fresh stock of 1,000 booklets was received on 24th April 2006 from Bangkok. It was not clear how 200 booklets on 4th April 2006, 200 booklets on 17th April 2006 and 220 booklets on 19th April 2006 were shown issued in the stock register. The Mission stated (May 2006) that it had received 1000 passports on 4.4.2006 from EI, Jakarta but they were entered in the stock register only after being pointed out by audit.
9.	Asstt. HCI, Chittagong	The visa stock register was not updated with either daily closing or even monthly closing. No authentication was done of the receipts and issues at any time during the last five years by anyone

Sl. no.	Name of the Mission/Post	Deficiencies noticed
		including the First Secretary and the AHC. The Post found five visa stickers missing in 2005. No action was taken to trace these although this was fraught with the risk of misuse.
10.	Washington, Venezuela, Brasilia, Berlin (after August 2000), Kiev, Bucharest, Dublin, Minsk, Rome, Sao Paulo, New York, Chittagong, Singapore, Male and Kathmandu.	Physical verification of stock of travel documents was not carried out.
11.	Berlin, Kiev, Minsk and Kathmandu.	No half yearly returns indicating the position of stock were being sent.

The above irregularities/deficiencies show deficient maintenance of records as well as accounting of blank travel documents. This was of serious concern as missing blank travel documents could jeopardise national security. Whether the missing documents have since been traced needs to be reported.

Recommendation

➢ **Stock registers should correctly record each receipt, issue and balance of blank travel documents. Physical verification of stock should be conducted as per codal provisions and the discrepancies promptly investigated to rule out any pilferage.**

The MEA noted (January 2007) the recommendation for compliance.

7.4 Financial management

7.4.1 Payments to India Security Press, Nasik

The MEA made payments to ISP, Nasik at a provisional rate of Rs. 135 and Rs. 146 per booklet during 2000-01 and 2001-02 respectively for supply of ordinary passport booklets. Subsequently, the ISP intimated the final rates as Rs. 130 and Rs. 136 for the period 2000-01 and 2001-2002 respectively. However, the MEA did not recover the excess payment of Rs. 455.77 lakh from ISP, Nasik.

On the matter being pointed out by audit, the MEA requested ISP, Nasik in May 2006 to send a credit note for Rs. 455.77 lakh for adjusting the excess payment against the current bills. The adjustment of credit note against the current bills was still awaited (January 2007).

7.5 Other points of interest

7.5.1 Wasteful expenditure due to failure of computerised Passport, Visa and PIO card system

The Consulate General of India (CGI), New York in February 1998 projected an urgent need for computerisation of visa services to cope with the increasing

demand for visas. Since adhoc computerisation in different Missions/Posts was an unsatisfactory practice, the MEA set up a Task Force in May 2000 to assess the extent of computerisation required in Headquarters, Passport Offices and Missions/Posts and for monitoring its speedy implementation. In August 2000, the MEA signed a contract with a private sector firm in New Delhi for the development of application software at a cost of Rs. 18.50 lakh and its installation at two pilot sites viz. CGI, Dubai and CGI, New York at an additional payment of Rs. 3.00 lakh and Rs. 2.75 lakh respectively. The project was initiated in August 2000 and was to be commissioned by February 2001. The firm submitted the system requirement specification document in October 2000, which was approved by the MEA in January 2001. The firm submitted system design document in February 2001 which was approved by the MEA in May 2001. In February 2001, the MEA had directed the Consulates to procure necessary hardware and system software for facilitating installation and running of the system at these sites. Accordingly, CGI, New York procured hardware and system software for US $ 93972, equivalent to Rs. 46 lakh. The firm demonstrated the application software to the members of the technical committee in August 2001. Some changes/modifications/enhancements in the application software were suggested by the MEA. The MEA erroneously informed (April 2002) the Finance Division that the firm had already delivered the software which had been tested and found in order, although MEA had accepted the software only in August 2002.

The firm installed the system in CGI, New York in January 2003, against the original schedule of February 2001 without carrying out the suggested modifications. In April 2003, the MEA released the last payment of Rs. 3.70 lakh to the firm stating that the firm had supplied the source code to it as per the contract. The suggestions were again addressed at the meeting of the Negotiation Committee for replication of the Birla software in 32 Missions/Posts abroad in October 2003, almost after ten months of the installation of the software at two pilot sites viz. CGI, Dubai and CGI, New York. There was no provision of printer in the original configuration. The MEA could not instal the printer required for printing of passports as the one suggested by the firm did not give satisfactory results when tried in Dubai. Other printers could not be tried, as the firm had not provided the source code, which also contradicted the MEA's earlier claim that the firm had supplied the source code, the ownership of which was that of the MEA as per the terms of the contract.

Under the agreement, the firm agreed to provide post warranty maintenance of the system for a fee of Rs. 60,000/- per annum for remote support, besides reimbursement of the actual cost involved in any visit of the firm's consultant/expert for onsite support. The MEA failed to award the annual maintenance contract to the firm or any other agency in time i.e. till the expiry of warranty period of one year in February 2004 which led to the problems remaining unattended. The situation became so critical at CGI, New York that the system which was developed with the intention of replication in other Missions/Posts, finally crashed in October 2004. The temporary measures taken by the Consulate to keep the system working by engaging local agencies from New York also did not work. Finally, the MEA decided in May 2005 to install an upgraded software system which was in use in HCI, London after necessary modifications.

Thus, poor planning implementation and monitoring of the project led to wasteful expenditure of Rs. 45.15 lakh which included Rs. 21.25 lakh on software (Rs. 18.50 lakh as cost of software + Rs. 2.75 lakh on installation) and Rs. 23.90 lakh on hardware (Rs. 22.51 lakh on servers + Rs. 1.39 lakh for post warranty maintenance of the server) besides delaying computerisation of passport, visa and consular services in other Missions/Posts.

7.6   Internal controls

Internal controls are designed to provide reasonable assurance about the achievement of the objectives of an entity in three broad categories i.e. effectiveness, efficiency and reliability.

In the preceding paragraphs, some of the deficiencies in passport services as noticed by audit have been mentioned. These include improper scrutiny of passport applications, non-disposal of RUD passports, delay in impounding/revocation of passports, suspected fraud in passport matters, treatment of cancelled passports, non-finalisation of pending cases etc. which are indicative of lack of effective internal controls resulting in deficient management of passport services.

The MEA conducts inspection of the RPOs/POs through its Inspection unit to ensure their proper functioning. Various deficiencies and lapses like low average output of the employees, pendencies in issue of passports, deployment of casual employees on sensitive work, harassment of public and other procedural lapses were pointed out during such inspections. Apart from the deficiencies noticed through its own inspections, the MEA also received following information about malpractices in rendering passport services through RPOs/POs, security agencies, public etc.

➤   Although passports can be issued to Indian nationals only, these were issued to foreign nationals on the basis of clear PVRs. These included six passports to Afghan nationals and two to Bangladeshi nationals by RPO, Delhi, one to Afghan national by PO, Bareilly, two to Sri Lankan nationals by PO, Chennai, and one to Pakistani national by PO, Mumbai.

➤   In PO, Trichy 112 passports were missing from the strong-room. There were also cases of issue of fake passports on the basis of incorrect PVRs and issue of Indian passports to Sri Lankan nationals.

➤   In RPO, Ahmedabad, there was large scale connivance between officials of the RPO and touts and passport matters were being handled with disregard to all rules, regulations and procedures.

➤   During raid at the residence of an official of PO, Panaji, Goa, CBI recovered 14 passports, other files and records issued by different PIAs and some original files and other documents.

➤   In November, 2000, Delhi police arrested five Afghan nationals with Indian passports issued by RPO, Delhi.

> During surprise check conducted by CBI in October 2000, seven officials of PO, Patna were found indulging in irregular practice.

> Passports stolen in December 2002 from the safe custody of RPO, Kolkata were recovered from two persons having suspected links with ISI.

> In September 2005, instances came to the notice that Indian Missions/Posts were issuing Emergency Certificates (ECs) to Pakistani nationals.

> CBI detected about 275 fake passports issued by various RPOs/POs in the country during the period from 1998 to 2002. Out of these passports, 45 belonged to PO, Bhopal in which police officials and some agents were involved.

> A passport was issued by the PO, Bhopal to a person who was later on identified as a terrorist.

> A person involved in criminal cases obtained multiple passports from PO, Jaipur with the help of fake/bogus supportive documents. Interestingly, one passport was issued on the basis of verification certificate issued by SDM, Jaipur.

The MEA did not initiate corrective measures to strengthen its internal controls even after the deficiencies and malpractices in passport matters had been brought to its notice through its own inspections and other sources.

Recommendations

> The MEA may revamp and enforce internal controls in the light of audit findings, which are only illustrative.

> Similarly, the MHA may evolve a strong internal control mechanism to ensure efficient visa services.

The MEA stated (January 2007) that a total of 38 inspections of POs had been carried out in 2006. It also added that the observations of the Inspection unit and Vigilance branch were acted upon expeditiously. It also stated that the matter had been taken up with the MHA for establishing proper coordination among different agencies.

7.7 Response of the Ministries

The draft report on performance audit of 'Passport, Visa and Consular Services' was sent to the Secretaries of both MEA and MHA in November 2006 for verification of facts and figures as well as their comments on the audit findings and recommendations. As already mentioned in paragraph 4, the MEA has broadly accepted the recommendations of audit and issued suitable instructions. The reply of MHA was received (March 2007). Their written response has also been received which has been appropriately included in this report.

8.   Conclusion

Ministry of External Affairs is responsible for the administration of Passport, Visa and Consular Services. This includes the issue of passport to Indian citizens both within the country and abroad as well as the issue of visas to citizens of other countries. In carrying out these responsibilities, it has to work closely with the Ministry of Home Affairs as well as with the Police Forces of the various States in order to verify the antecedents of passport applicants as well as those sponsoring visa applications from some neighbouring countries. Ministry of Home Affairs and State Police Forces are also responsible for keeping track of foreign citizens who have entered the country on valid visas to ensure that the conditions on which visas are issued are complied with.

Our performance audit has showed that there are serious grounds for concern at nearly all aspects of the administration of Passport, Visa and Consular Services. During the year 2001-05, on an average only one out of five applications for passports resulted in the passports being issued within the stipulated time period. Our audit showed that the primary cause for delays in the issue of passports was due to delays in the receipt of police verification reports. A further cause of concern is that the Director General of Police of a major State stated that carrying out such verification and issuing reports was accorded a very low priority, and going by the fact that such delays are more or less evenly spread throughout the country, the issue need to be addressed by the Ministry of External Affairs. In this connection, however, we have noted that the Ministry have promulgated new rules which would address the reasons for many of the delays.

Our audit showed that there were serious lacunae both in the systems design as well as in the implementation of the IT systems that are intended to provide support to the officials responsible for issue of passports and visas. This is an area which needs to be addressed at appropriately senior levels within the Ministry rather than being relegated to lower levels.

It goes without saying that passports as well as visa stickers are security documents which have to be adequately safeguarded through strict adherence to procedures for their receipt from the printing press, custody and issue. Similarly cancelled passports or defective passports are also susceptible to misuse and have to be accounted for in terms of well laid down procedures that must be meticulously observed. Failure to observe such procedures can not be relegated to instances of mere procedural lapses but as instances of dereliction of duty that could have serious implications. This is an aspect that needs to be addressed by the Ministry at adequately senior levels and with effective steps beyond mere reiteration of rules.

We appreciate the fact that the Ministry of External Affairs has a difficult role in the management of passport, visa and consular services in as much as it has to balance the demands of service delivery to citizens both of India as well as of other countries but is constrained by the need to follow procedures that address genuine concern over national security. We also appreciate that to a

large extent, on both accounts, the Ministry of External Affairs is largely dependent on the Ministry of Home Affairs as well as on State Police Forces which have the primary responsibility to verify the antecedents of passport applicants and visa sponsors on the one hand as well as in keeping track of foreign citizens who have entered the country on valid visas. Our audit has clearly shown that much higher priority and importance needs to be shown by the Ministry of Home Affairs on both accounts.

In conclusion, we would like to recommend much closer liaison between the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs and the State Police Forces so as to ensure an optimum level of service delivery consistent with the needs of national security.

9.   Acknowledgement

We place on record our sincere appreciation of the cooperation extended by officials of the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs at various levels in making available the records required for our audit as well as in furnishing replies to our audit enquiries.
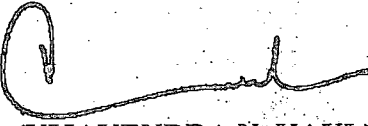
(A.K. THAKUR)
Director General of Audit
Central Revenues

New Delhi
Dated : 1st May, 2007

COUNTERSIGNED

(VIJAYENDRA N. KAUL)
Comptroller and Auditor General of India

New Delhi
Dated : 4th May, 2007
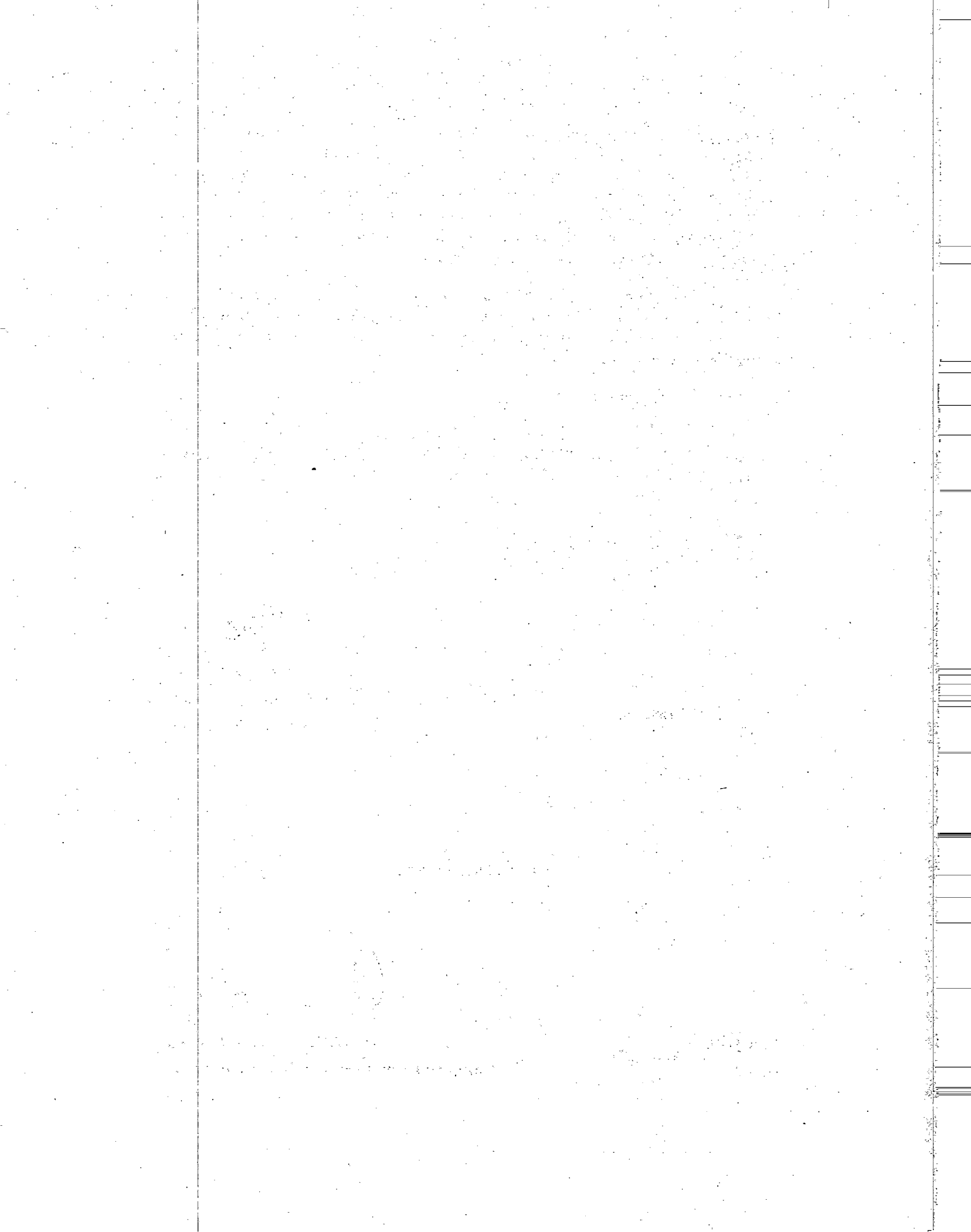
Appendix 'A'
(Refers to Paragraph 6)
Sampling Design

(1)   Sample size and selection of units (RPOs/POs)

The MEA has categorised RPOs/POs into three categories, which were placed in three strata as mentioned below.

Stratum I	: Category 'A'	Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Kochi, Chandigarh, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Jalandhar, Kozhikode, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Tiruchirappalli, Trivandrum (15 offices)
Stratum II	: Category 'B'	Pune, Patna, Thane, Vishakhapatnam (4 offices)
Stratum III	: Category 'C'	Bhubaneshwar, Bareilly, Bhopal, Guwahati, Ghaziabad, Jammu, Nagpur, Panaji, Ranchi, Srinagar, Surat (11 offices)

❑   **Stratum I**

Category A was further sub-stratified into two.

❑   **Sub-stratum I**

The selection of RPO Delhi was made mandatory as CPV Division and Foreigners' Division are in Delhi.

❑   **Sub-Stratum II**

The selection of remaining RPOs from category A was made by "Probability Proportional to size (PPS) Systematic method" of sampling where size stands for money value (receipts), after arranging the RPOs geographically.

For strata II and III there is no sub-stratum. Selection is done by using the PPS method.

·Selected RPOs/POs

Delhi, Chandigarh, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Kozhikode, Kolkata, Lucknow, Pune, Jammu, Bareilly, Bhopal and Nagpur.

Selection of FRROs/CHIO

All the four FRROs at New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Amritsar and the CHIO at Chennai were selected because of small population size.

51 Missions/Posts as detailed below were test checked.

List of Missions/Posts

Sl. no.	Name of Missions/Posts	Sl. no.	Name of Missions/Posts	Sl. no.	Name of Missions/Posts
1.	HCI, Dhaka	18.	CGI, Dubai	35.	CGI, Mazar-e-Sharif
2.	EI, Beijing	19.	EI, Hanoi	36.	CGI, Herat
3.	CGI, Shanghai	20.	EI, Algeria	37.	EI, Mombassa
4.	EI, Tokyo	21.	HCI, Canberra	38.	CGI, Zanzibar
5.	EI, Kuwait	22.	EI, Jakarta	39.	CGI, Chiangmai
6.	EI, Tripoli	23.	CGI, Kobe	40.	LO, Abuja
7.	EI, Yangoon	24.	HCI, Nairobi	41.	CGI, Kandhar
8.	EI, Kathmandu	25.	EI, Beirut	42.	EI, Berlin
9.	EI, Muscat	26.	HCI, Kualalumpur	43.	EI, Tashkent
10.	HCI, Islamabad	27.	HCI, Male	44.	EI, Kyiv
11.	EI, Doha	28.	CGI, Durban	45.	CGI, Munich
12.	EI, Seoul	29.	EI, Dar-es-Salaam	46.	PMI, Geneva
13.	EI, Riyadh	30.	HCI, Darussalam	47.	CGI, Sao Paulo
14.	HCI, Singapore	31.	EI, Kabul	48.	CGI, New York
15.	HCI, Colombo	32.	CGI, Sydney	49.	EI, Washington
16.	EI, Bangkok	33.	AHCI, Chittagong	50.	EI, Brasilia
17.	EI, Abudhabi	34.	CGI, Istanbul	51.	EI, Venezuela

Annex-I
(Refers to Paragraph 7.1.2)
Delay in issue of passports

Name of RPO/PO	Total passports issued	Number of passports issued on time	Number of passports issued after a delay of			
			Upto three months	More than three months to six months	More than six months to one year	More than one year
Lucknow	6,12,694	11,652 (2%)	1,59,570	2,98,888	1,05,919	36,665
Jammu	49,352	3,910 (8%)	13,051	20,532	8,022	3,837
Chandigarh	7,94,730	97,323 (12%)	1,22,638	2,24,300	3,46,687	3,782
Delhi	7,27,435	91,311 (13%)	4,70,461	1,24,318	30,867	10,478
Bareilly	1,79,164	26,281 (15%)	1,31,042	13,067	5,688	3,086
Ahmedabad	9,83,642	1,67,415 (17%)	2,71,016	3,50,670	1,68,320	26,221
Pune	2,08,797	41,937 (20%)	1,54,564	10,542	1,561	193
Kozhikode	9,87,864	2,19,982 (22%)	4,69,739	2,77,238	16,897	4,008
Kolkata	5,16,472	1,40,493 (27%)	2,27,460	1,08,847	27,398	12,274
Chennai	9,22,561	2,75,808 (30%)	5,34,075	89,793	17,751	5,134
Bhopal	2,00,908	66,718 (33%)	1,15,005	15,324	2,812	1,049
Nagpur	88,430	52,610 (59%)	34,028	1,203	499	90
Total	**62,72,049**	**11,95,440 (19%)**	**27,02,649 (43%)**	**15,34,722 (24%)**	**7,32,421 (12%)**	**1,06,817 (2%)**

List of Abbreviations

BOI	Bureau of Immigration
CBI	Central Bureau of Investigation
CCA	Chief Controller of Accounts
CFB	Central Foreigners Bureau
CGI	Consulate General of India
CHIO	Chief Immigration Officer
CPO	Central Passport Organisation
CPV	Consular, Passport and Visa
DARPG	Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances
DGP	Director General of Police
DPC	District Passport Cell
DPG	Department of Public Grievances
EAM	External Affairs Minister
EC	Emergency Certificate
ECNR	Emigration Check not Required
EI	Embassy of India
FRO	Foreigners Registration Officer
FRRO	Foreigners Regional Registration Officer
GOI	Government of India
HCI	High Commission of India
HOM	Head of Mission
HOP	Head of Post
ICCR	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
ISP	India Security Press
LOC	Look out Circular
LT	Long Term
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MP	Member of Parliament
NIC	National Informatics Centre
PAC	Prior Approval Category
PAO	Pay and Accounts Office
PG	Public Grievances
PIA	Passport Issuing Authority
PIO	Persons of Indian Origin
PO	Passport Offices/Passport officer
PVR	Police verification report
RPO	Regional Passport Offices/Regional Passport Officer
RUD	Returned Undelivered
SCN	Show Cause Notice
SCRB	State Crime Record Bureau
SIU	Staff Inspection Unit
SP	Superintendents of Police
TA	Travel Agent
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USA	United States of America
VC	Verification Certificates
VIP	Very Important Person