

**Government of India
Ministry of External Affairs
CPV Division
(Patiala House, Tilak Marg, New Delhi)

December 23, 2014

PUBLIC ADVISORY

Indian citizens living in India and abroad are advised to apply for urgent re-issuance of their passports in the following cases:-

(i). **HANDWRITTEN PASSPORTS**

The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) has set a deadline of the 24th November, 2015 for globally phasing out of all non-Machine Readable Passports (MRPs). From the 25th November, 2015 onwards, foreign Governments may deny Visa or entry to any person travelling on a non-Machine Readable Passport.

The Government of India has been issuing Machine Readable Passports since 2001. The Passports, however, issued before 2001 and particularly those issued during mid 1990s with a validity of 20 years will fall in the category of non-MRPs. All handwritten passports with pasted photographs are also considered non-MRPs.

By the end of November 2014, it is estimated that there are approximately 2.86 lakh handwritten passports in circulation. Approximately 6 crore Indian hold valid passports.

Indian citizens residing in India and abroad and holding such passports with validity beyond the 24th November, 2015 are advised to apply for re-issue of their passports well before the deadline in order to avoid any inconvenience in obtaining valid visa or international travel.

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(ii) **PASSPORTS VALID FOR LESS THAN SIX MONTHS**

Many international travellers may not realise that having an unexpired passport is sometimes not enough to obtain Visas or to enter certain foreign countries. **Indian citizens travelling on Passports which may expire in less than six months should renew their passports** before any upcoming international travel. It is especially important to check the passports needs of any minor who may be accompanying their parents as passports for minors have a shorter validity period (5 years) than passports for adults (10 years). The universal practice in vogue now is; **“Once your passport crosses the nine-year mark, it is time to get new passport”**.

(iii) **EXHAUSTION OF VISA PAGES**

Some countries do not accept passports which may have fewer than two pages remaining. **Please check your passport to ensure that you have enough visa pages. There is no provision of additional booklets/pages and you will be required to apply reissuance of passport following standard procedures. Frequent travellers may opt for Jumbo Passport containing 64 pages.**
