



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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27 July 2010

### BGD103530.E

Bangladesh: Procedures and requirements to acquire a passport; characteristics of a Bangladesh passport  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

#### Procedures and requirements

The website of the High Commission for Bangladesh in Ottawa states that, starting on 1 April 2010, the government of Bangladesh has introduced a Machine Readable Passport (MRP) for which an application can only be made at ten designated regional passport offices in Bangladesh (Bangladesh n.d.a). However, the website states that "until 31 March 2013, all Bangladesh Embassies and High Commissions abroad will issue the traditional hand written Emergency Passports" (ibid.). According to the website, these passports can be issued or renewed for a period of up to three years (ibid.).

The National Web Portal of Bangladesh indicates that while the period of validity of a passport is five years for minors under the age of five years, for most people passports are generally valid for a period of ten years (ibid. n.d.b). In answer to a question about why an individual should renew a passport, the FAQ [Frequently Answered Questions] section of the website of the High Commission of Bangladesh in Ottawa specifies that a passport is first issued for a period of five years and may be renewed for an additional period of up to a maximum of five years, thus, a passport may be used for up to ten years (ibid. n.d.c). The High Commission's website notes that a new passport is required after this ten-year period (ibid.). The website adds that "in some exceptional cases, a passport is issued with a period of limited validity," such as for one or one and a half years if a previous passport was lost (ibid.).

The Web Portal states that there are three types of passports issued by Bangladesh: an international passport for travelling abroad, a special passport used to travel to India only, and a diplomatic passport (ibid. n.d.b). However, a brochure detailing the characteristics of the new MRP does not mention the special passport for travel to India, but provides information on ordinary, official and diplomatic passports (ibid. n.d.f).

The Web Portal states that an application for a passport includes a properly filled application form (Bangladesh n.d.b). A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section dealing with passports on the website of the Department of Immigration and Passports states that two copies of the completed application forms should be submitted, each with an affixed photograph (ibid. n.d.e). The FAQ section also states that the form can be completed in either Bengali or English, but that English is preferred as the passport entries are made in English (ibid.).

The Web portal states that the application must be "attested by a Member of Parliament or a gazetted official" (ibid. n.d.b). However, the Department of Immigration and Passport FAQ section does not mention Members of Parliament, but states that in addition to gazetted officers of the government of Bangladesh, each copy of the application form may be attested by authorities such a teacher from a public university or a public college, the principal of a private college, the headmaster or the

headmistress of a private school, the chairperson of a *pourasava* (municipality), or the mayor or "word commissioner" of a city corporation (ibid. n.d.e).

The Web Portal states that applicants must pay a fee and include two passport-sized and one stamp-sized photographs (ibid. n.d.b). In contrast, the Department of Immigration and Passports' FAQ site states that three passport-sized photographs and one stamp-sized photograph should be submitted with the application (ibid. n.d.e). The website of the High Commission of Bangladesh in Ottawa indicates that four recent passport-sized photographs are required with an application, with five photographs to replace a lost passport (ibid. n.d.a.).

According to the Web Portal, passports may be issued within 72 hours to 30 days, depending on the urgency of the request (ibid. n.d.b). The Web Portal states that the application form can be obtained in Bangladesh at regional passport offices and some deputy commissioner's offices and in foreign missions abroad, as well as by downloading it from the website of the Ministry of Home Affairs' Department of Immigration and Passports (ibid.). According to the Web Portal, passport offices can handle modifications, corrections or updates to passports within a day through one-stop desks (ibid.).

The FAQ section on the website of the Department of Immigration and Passports states that police verification is necessary before a passport is issued (Bangladesh n.d.e.). However, police verification is not necessary for some individuals whose character and antecedents have been verified by employers such as the government, statutory organizations and financial institutions (ibid.). Such individuals must submit a "No Objection Certificate" from their employer (ibid.).

The High Commission for Bangladesh in Ottawa provides the following specific guidelines to apply for a passport:

- Please duly fill-in the prescribed form (form can be downloaded from our website and be photocopied). All section[s] must be filled in with correct and appropriate information.
- Please type or write in block letters clearly ...
- Please enclose your old passport.
- Four (4) recent passport size colour photographs are needed. Background of the photo should be white and photo should show your face clearly. For application in case the passport is lost, enclose five (5) photos.
- Please attach Bank Draft or Postal Money Order of appropriate fees / charges. For details of fees, please see the relevant section of this website. Please note that we do not [accept] any cash or personal cheque.
- All fees should be payable to "Bangladesh High Commission". High Commission will not be held responsible if you have sent any bank draft or postal order blank or in any other's name.
- Please note that your fees/charges vary according to your choice of service priority (Regular or Urgent).
- If you are sending your application by mail, please use the guaranteed or registered or express mail. Ordinary mail sometimes gets lost or occurs delay. Please also enclose a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postal stamps to return a passport by registered or guaranteed or express post.
- We do not accept application by Courier (FedEx, DHL, etc.).
- Please sign the application with place and date. In case of application for a child,

parents can sign on behalf of the child. (Bangladesh n.d.a.)

The High Commission's website also notes that "[i]ssuance of a Passport can be denied on grounds of suppression of facts or submission of incorrect information" and that a passport will be rendered invalid by any "willful damage" or by unauthorized changes or corrections (ibid.).

## Characteristics

A brochure provided to the Research Directorate by the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA), produced by the Machine Readable Passport and Machine Readable Visa Project Authority of the Department of Immigration and Passport of the Government of Bangladesh, which describes the new MRP and its security features, states that the MRP contains 48 numbered pages, including a data page with personal data, the image of the passport holder's face and his or her signature (ibid. n.d.f.). The booklet measures 125 x 88 mm (ibid.). The cover of the passport is made of "high quality cloth material" and is green for ordinary passports, blue for official passports and red for diplomatic passports (ibid.). The emblem of the government of Bangladesh is embossed in gold foil in the centre of the cover (ibid.). The passport type and the words "People's Republic of Bangladesh" are indicated respectively above and below the emblem, also in gold embossing and in both Bengali and English (ibid.). For more detailed descriptions of the security features of the MRP and how to interpret them, please see the attached brochure.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

## References

Bangladesh. N.d.a. High Commission for Bangladesh in Ottawa. "Guideline for a New Passport." <[http://www.bdhc.org/print\\_new\\_passport\\_guide.php](http://www.bdhc.org/print_new_passport_guide.php)> [Accessed 12 July 2010]

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d.b. National Web Portal of Bangladesh. "Citizens Services: Passport." <[http://www.bangladesh.gov.bd/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=category&id=141&Itemid=27](http://www.bangladesh.gov.bd/index.php?option=com_content&task=category&id=141&Itemid=27)> [Accessed 14 July 2010]

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d.c. High Commission for Bangladesh in Ottawa. "FAQ." <<http://www.bdhc.org/index.php?go=faq>> [Accessed 19 July 2010]

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d.d. High Commission for Bangladesh in Ottawa. "Passport." <<http://www.bdhc.org/index.php?go=passport>> [Accessed 20 July 2010]

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d.e. Department of Immigration and Passports. "Passport Frequently Asked Question." <<http://www.dip.gov.bd/?q=content/page/passport-frequently-asked-question>> [Accessed 19 July 2010 ]

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d.f. Machine Readable Passport & Machine Readable Visa Project Authority. "The Machine Readable Passport (MRP) for the People's Republic of Bangladesh." Provided in 20 July 2010 correspondence by the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA).

## Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** A representative of the High Commission of Bangladesh in Ottawa was unable to provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

**Internet sources, including:** Bangladesh - Embassy of Bangladesh, Washington, DC,

Bangladesh - High Commission for the People's Republic of Bangladesh, London,  
Bangladesh - Ministry of Home Affairs.

Attachment

Bangladesh. N.d. Machine Readable Passport & Machine Readable Visa Project Authority. "The Machine Readable Passport (MRP) for the People's Republic of Bangladesh." Provided in 20 July 2010 correspondence by the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA).

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