

Diplomatic Passport

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About Diplomatic Passport

- It has a maroon cover and is valid for **five years or less**.
- Holders of such passports are entitled to certain **privileges and immunities** as per the international law, including immunity from arrest, detention, and certain legal proceedings in the host country.

Issuing Authority:

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) **Consular, Passport & Visa Division** issues diplomatic passports ('Type D' passports) to people falling in broadly five categories:

- those with diplomatic status;
- government-appointed individuals travelling abroad for official business;
- officers working under the branches **A and B of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS)**, normally at the rank of Joint Secretary and above; and
- Relatives and immediate family of officers employed in IFS and MEA.

- select individuals who are authorized to undertake **official travel on behalf of the government**
- The MEA issues visa notes to government officials going abroad for an official assignment or visit.

Revocation of Passport

- As per the **Passport Act 1967**, the passport authority may, as per the provisions of sub-section (1) of section 6 or any notification under section 19, cancel a passport or travel document, with the **previous approval of the Central government**.
- The passport authority can impound or revoke a passport if the authority believes that the passport holder or travel document is in **wrongful possession**; if the passport was obtained by the **suppression of material information** or on the basis of wrong information provided by the individual; if it is brought to the notice of the passport authority that the individual has been issued a court order prohibiting his departure from India or has been **summoned by court**.
- A diplomatic passport can be revoked upon **orders from a court** during proceedings with respect to an offence allegedly carried out by the passport holder before a criminal court.

What is an Operational Visa Exemption Agreement?

- India has **operational visa exemption agreements** for holders of diplomatic passports with **34 countries** and Germany is one amongst them.
 - According to a reciprocal deal signed in 2011, holders of Indian diplomatic passports **do not require a visa** to visit Germany, provided their stay **does not exceed 90 days**.
 - India has similar agreements with countries such as France, Austria, Afghanistan, Czech Republic, Italy, Greece, Iran, and Switzerland.
 - India also has agreements with **99 other countries** wherein apart from diplomatic passport holders, even those **holding service and official passports** can avail operational visa exemption for stays **upto 90 days**.
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Q1: What Is a Visa?

A visa is an official document that allows the bearer to legally enter a foreign country. The visa is usually stamped or glued into the bearer's passport. There are several different types of visas, each of which afford the bearer different rights in the host country.

Source: **Flight of Prajwal Revanna: How diplomatic passports, visa regimes work**

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/diplomatic-passport/>

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