Consulate General of Italy
KOLKATA

Press Release

VFS Global opens a new Italy Schengen Visa Application Collection Centre in Guwahati

Guwahati, 9 October 2014: The Consulate General of Italy in Kolkata, along with its outsourcing agency VFS Global, inaugurated the first Schengen Visa Application Collection Centre today in the North-East, in Guwahati. With this centre, the applicants will be facilitated in applying for Italy Schengen visas, which will allow them to travel to Italy and Europe.

According to Schengen rules (26 European countries are now members); all applicants who intend to spend the maximum number of days in Italy or if Italy is the first port of entry or the main destination of their trip, can apply for a visa to the Consulate General of Italy in Kolkata through this new Collection Centre facility in Guwahati.

Mr Cesare Bieller, Consul General of Italy in Kolkata along with Mr Gaurav Gogoi, Member of Parliament inaugurated the new Visa Application Collection Centre today at 1200hrs at Nilgiri Path, Near Doordarshan Kendra, R. G. Baruah Road, Guwahati.

The Collection Centre will accept applications for visas to Italy from applicants and travel agents residing in Guwahati and other parts of North East India. All applications will continue to be assessed and processed by the Consulate General of Italy in Kolkata. The service would attract a nominal service fee, payable at the Collection Centre at the time of submitting applications. The Collection Centre will remain open from 1000hrs to 1600hrs for enhanced convenience to applicants and travel agents.

The key features of the Collection Centre facility include:

- ✓ Conveniently located and easily accessible Collection Centre
- ✓ Dedicated website with information on visa categories, fees, and other application related details.
- ✓ Call centre and email support to answer queries
- ✓ 100% secure handling of documents and personal information
- ✓ Tracking of application status-website, optional SMS and email alerts
- ✓ Convenient and secure return delivery of visa documents

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Speaking on the occasion, Mr Bieller stated, *"Italy is the first Schengen country to take concrete steps in facilitating visa processing of applicants from the North-east who are travelling, for tourism and business, to Italy and Europe. We are expecting a significant increase in visa applications in the coming months as applicants or their travel agents can now drop the applications in Guwahati, which VFS Global will then forward to the Consulate General of Italy in Kolkata for processing. VFS Global offers many services to the applicants and from my side I can inform you that we have already set up procedures to issue the visas in the shortest time possible."*

Mr Vishal Jairath, Regional Head - South Asia, VFS Global said, *"It is our privilege to extend our services to the Consulate General of the Italian Republic in Kolkata with a visa application Collection Centre for the residents of Guwahati and North East India, at large. This is the client's first such initiative in Eastern India to provide convenience and accessibility to applicants from the region thus eliminating the need to travel to Kolkata. This extension of association further affirms the Italy Government's faith on VFS Global and its services."*

Italy Schengen Visa Application Collection Centre Details

Address: Nilgiri Path, Near Doordarshan Kendra, R. G. Baruah Road, Guwahati 781024.

Helpline: 022 6786 6004 | **Email:** infonorth.italyin@vfshelpline.com | **Website:** www.vfs-italy.co.in

Business Hours:
Acceptance of Applications: 1000hrs to 1600hrs (Monday to Friday)
(Except listed holidays)

Return Delivery of Passports: Passports will be returned by courier

Service Fee and other charges (over and above the Consulate's visa fees) will be payable at the Collection Centre at the time of application submission.

**VFS Global will be responsible only for accepting applications for visas to Italy. All applications will continue to be assessed and processed by the Consulate General of Italy, Kolkata. Timelines for turn-around-time of visas are as per the discretion of the authorities.*

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About VFS Global

VFS Global is the world's largest outsourcing and technology services specialist for governments and diplomatic missions worldwide. With **1375 Application Centres** and operations in **117 countries** across **five continents** as at 31 August 2014, VFS Global serves the interests of **45 client governments.** The company has successfully processed over **86 million applications** since its inception in 2001. VFS Global's worldwide operations are certified **ISO 9001:2008** for Quality Management System, **ISO 27001:2005** for Information Security Management System and **ISO 14001:2004** for Environmental Management System by TÜV SÜD, one of the world's leading external and independent certification bodies. For more information, please visit www.vfsglobal.com

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