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Danish National ID Centre

Adelgade 13
DK-1304 Copenhagen K
Denmark

Phone +45 61 98 39 00
Email nidc@nidc.dk
Website www.nidc.dk

Attestation of Bangladeshi documents

Introduction

The following note provides a description of how documents are attested by the Bangladeshi Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). It also contains examples of the stamps used to attest documents by the MFA.

The content within this note is based on information, obtained by the Danish National ID Centre (NIDC), from a meeting with representatives from the MFA.

Attestation of Bangladeshi documents

The consular section of the MFA receives over thousand documents per day and attests 36 different types of documents to be used in foreign countries.¹

Prior to the MFA attestation, Bangladeshi marriage certificates must be notarised by a public notary and certified by the Bangladeshi Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. Bangladeshi marriage certificates without certification from the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs cannot be attested by the MFA. The MFA uses the Online Birth Registration System (BRIS) to verify birth certificates and is in possession of a list of officials from the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, who are authorised to certify marriage certificates.²

MFA attestation

A number of the MFA officials are authorised to attest documents, and each official has two personal ink stamps. To prevent fraud, the stamps are used at random. At the beginning of each working day, the official in question chooses which stamp to use and registers the choice in a book kept in the office of the consular section of the MFA. This record can be used to verify if a document has, in fact, been attested by the MFA. The choice of stamp is made by the individual official, and there is no management proscribed timeframe.³

Figures 1 and 2 below contain genuine examples of the two personal stamp types used by the consular department of the MFA to attest Bangladeshi documents.

¹ MFA, november 2018.

² MFA, november 2018.

³ MFA, november 2018.

Both are rectangular blue wet ink stamps and are characterised by sharp corners. The attestation date is inscribed with red ink. The outline of the two stamp types is different. The outline will either contain two rounded indents or three connected circles along the vertical section of the outline, depending on which stamp type is used.⁴



Figure 1: Genuine personal MFA attestation stamp

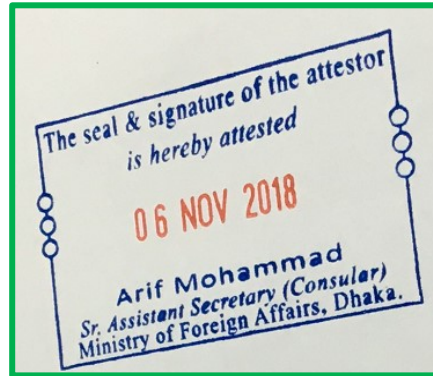


Figure 2: Genuine personal MFA attestation stamp

The attesting official will also sign their initials within or around the personal stamp used to attest a document. The personal stamp should be accompanied by a handwritten serial number applied by a MFA official. This serial number is not always applied, and although attestation stamps without a serial number should raise awareness, they should not be considered fraudulent without this verification. The personal stamp of the attesting official will usually be accompanied by a blue wet ink stamp depicting the Bangladeshi coat of arms. According to the MFA, the appearance of this stamp can vary slightly. See figure 3 below.⁵



Figure 2: Genuine MFA stamp depicting Bangladeshi coat of arms.

Verification

According to the interviewed MFA officials, the attestation stamps are usually tested by the authorised officials prior to commencement of their shift, and attested documents should therefore contain stamps of good quality with well-defined outlines. Poor quality stamps should raise concerns regarding whether a stamp is genuine.⁶

⁴ MFA, november 2018.

⁵ MFA, november 2018.

⁶ MFA, november 2018.

Suspicious Bangladeshi attestation stamps and the accompanying initials can be verified by contacting the NIDC.

References

Oral sources

Bangladesh: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, meeting in Dhaka, November 2018.