

US rolls out expedited entry for low-risk Indian travellers through Global Entry programme

The United States of America has started rolling out for Indian citizens its Global Entry programme which allows for expedited clearance of pre-approved, low-risk travellers. Navtej Sarna, Indian Ambassador to the US, on Monday became the first Indian national to enroll in the programme. With this initiative, India has become the 11th country whose citizens are eligible to enroll in the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) initiative.

As per the initiative, once a traveller lands at one of the select airports, the programme members enter US through automatic kiosks, rather than queueing up to clear the immigration check by meeting an immigration officer. At these select airports, the specified members proceed to the Global Entry kiosks, present their machine-readable passport, place their fingerprints on the scanner for verification and complete a customs declaration. The Global Entry kiosk then issues the traveller a transaction receipt and directs him or her to the baggage claim and the exit.

According to the Global Entry programme, travellers must be pre-approved for the initiative. As per the CBP website, all applicants undergo a rigorous background check and in-person interview before enrolment. Kevin McAleenan, Acting Commissioner of US Customs and Border Protection, said: "CBP is excited to offer our flagship Trusted Traveller programme to Indian citizens." The official further said that CBP is essentially transforming the international arrivals process, thereby making it easier, secure and efficient for millions of Indian citizens visiting the United States each year, as reported by PTI.

Presently, Global Entry programme is available at 53 US airports and 15 pre-clearance locations. It is now available to US citizens, Green Card holders and nationals from Argentina, Colombia, Germany, Mexico, the Netherlands, Panama, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, besides India. Canadian citizens and residents enrolled in NEXUS may also use the Global Entry kiosks. The NEXUS programme allows pre-screened travellers expedited processing when entering the United States and Canada.

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