

## News

### Singapore Set to Roll Out Biometric Passport

Singapore is all set to roll out its first biometric passports, or BioPass, an effort to increase security and forgery. These BioPasses will have a chip embedded, which has pre-recorded passport holders' finger-prints and facial features.

Uptil now the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) has received some 1,000 applications for the new passport to be launched from August 15 at the cost of USD 80. The ICA has announced that passport applications made after August 8 will be processed to make BioPasses.

But the foundation of biometric passport, which is formulated to provide security, is often debated. Recently, a German expert claimed that information on a biometric passport could be cloned.

According to Lukas Grunwald, a consultant with DN-Systems, information stored on RFID chips, could be copied on to blank chips which could then be used in fake passports.

Lukas ruled out the various claims that information copied on RFID is safe and cannot be copied. He said the investment in RFID is a complete waste as it is not going to help address the security solution. Lukas said that he discovered the flaw in just two weeks and it would not take long for the hackers to follow suit to hack any new British passport.

ICA, however claimed that the BioPass complies with the recommendations and requirements laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organization. These include security standards established to ensure the integrity of passports.

"The claims by Mr Grunwald that the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology is flawed have not been supported by other experts," said the ICA.



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