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Heading: Our endeavour is to work with multiple governments in different geographies

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## 'Our endeavour is to work with multiple governments in different geographies'

Delhi-based BLS International Services is a leading Government to Consumer (G2C) service provider with business across 60 countries, offering consulate and e-governance services. The Spanish Visa processing contract that the company garnered more than a year ago made BLS International a player to reckon with globally. BLS International has been able to deliver results by processing 15-20% more Spanish visa within a year, which **Shikhar Aggarwal**, Joint Managing Director, feels will make governments to sit up and take note of its capabilities. In an interaction with **P Krishna Kumar**, Aggarwal said that the company's mission is to touch at least a billion lives through its outsourced services by 2020.



**Shikhar Aggarwal,**  
Joint Managing  
Director,  
BLS International

**Q** While BLS International is in the G2C services for more than 15 years, the Spanish Visa processing contract has been a milestone. How do you look at the evolution of the company in the light of Spanish contract?

We started our outsourced services for foreign governments in 2005. We started with Embassy of Greece and Portugal in New Delhi. Then we saw the opportunity with the Indian government when they started outsourcing their visa services for foreigners coming to India. Being an Indian company, we understood the Indian systems better and therefore bid successfully for services in many overseas markets. Even today, we handle consular services for the Indian government for foreign citizens in many countries and also passport services, OCI, PIO cards, attestation and affidavit services for Indians settled abroad. By 2010-11, we had presence in 24 countries offering these services to people. Using our expertise, we signed Hungary and Denmark then. When the Spanish government called for tenders in 2016, we saw the opportunity and we bid for it. Understanding our innovative solutions and capabilities the Spanish government accorded the contract to us. Today, we handle Spanish visas in 49 countries. There has government. We hope that other governments will take note of our capabilities. We see tremendous opportunities opening before us in the coming years.

**Q How governments benefit from outsourcing consular services?**

It's a transparent concept beneficial to both governments and their citizens, and end-consumers. It has zero cost involved for governments. Infrastructure is provided by the service provider. The entire non-judgmental part of the process is done by the service provider, leaving the judgemental part to the government. It relieves the burden on the governments to a large extent. Countries which have outsourced their visa services have benefited from increased travel, tourism, etc. Seeing this, a lot of countries which were averse to the idea of outsourcing earlier have now started looking at the concept of outsourcing. Companies like us are investing in a lot on technology to make the processes simple but at the same time secure. We were the first company to launch a mobile biometric system. This eliminates the hassle of applicants' physical presence at the centre to process his application. This is quite convenient for people with disabilities and people who have paucity of time.

**Q With advancement in technology, many countries are switching to electronic-visa now. How would it impact your business?**

e-visa is also a technology-driven system, and we are also capable of providing the e-visa platform. We are regularly investing in technology to remain not only relevant today, but to be ahead of the curve when it comes to innovations. Whether it is change in technology or systems, BLS will have a role to play as an interface between the government and the customer.

**"BLS International has been growing at 40% CAGR for the last four years, and our endeavour is to maintain the growth momentum going forward. We are regularly engaging with governments inviting them to our centres and showcasing our capabilities."**

**Q BLS has also become a e-governance technology partner for governments. How do you look at that business?**

We are the first company in India to deliver e-governance services. We have a tie-up with the Government of Punjab where we handle 223 services and have more than 2,000 centres across the state. We process 40,000 applications per day through these centres. We have taken this service to international markets as well. Today, we handle the registration of Afghan citizens in the Middle East and their biometrics.

As a G2C service provider, we want to be the interface between citizens and the government. We are capable of delivering any service effectively for governments. Moreover, governments are also recognising the value we deliver. Our vision is to touch one million lives by 2020, and we are already among the 60 countries. Our endeavour is to grow our footprint and work with multiple governments in multiple geographies.

We have been growing at 40% CAGR for the last four years and our endeavour is to maintain that growth momentum going forward. We are regularly engaging with governments, inviting them to our centres and showcasing our capabilities. In order to bring transparency and build trust, we got listed in BSE and NSE last year.