

- Exemption from registration in FRRO irrespective of duration of stay.
- Parity with NRIs in economic, financial and educational fields in India except acquisition of agricultural or plantation property.
- Parity with NRIs.
 - for inter-country adoption of Indian children.
 - for air fares in domestic sector.
 - for entry fee to national parks and wild life sanctuaries in India.
 - for visiting national monuments, historical sites and museums in India.
 - for practice as medical professionals, advocates, architects and CAs.
 - to appear in AIPMT and other entrance tests for technical courses in India.
- Permission to OCIs to file an affidavit to declare their address in India.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) have issued regulations to the Universities/Higher Education Institutions in the country for keeping 15% supernumerary seats for Foreign Nationals/PIOs/NRIs out of which five per cent is meant for the Children of Indian Workers in the Gulf countries (CIWG) who want to pursue higher education in India. This facility is available subject to certain conditions, as specified by the above regulatory authorities.

Launch of chip enabled e-passports

2412. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to launch chip enabled e-passports;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the details of enhanced security features to be included therein; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government to secure the data and curb the menace of fake passports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) Yes. The Government has plans to issue chip enabled e-passports to the citizens. The Government has given its approval for procurement of electronic contactless inlays for manufacturing of e-passports to India Security Press (ISP) Nashik. In this regard, ISP, Nashik, has been authorised to float a Global three-stage tender for procurement of International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)-compliant electronic contactless inlays along with its operating

system which is required for manufacture of e-passports. Manufacture of e-passport will commence on the successful completion of the tendering and procurement process by ISP, Nashik.

The personal particulars of the applicants would be digitally signed and stored in the chip. In case, anyone tampers with the chip, the system shall be able to identify it and resulting in the failure of the passport authentication. Access of information is protected in a way that the chip cannot be read without physical possession of the passport.

(c) The process of issuance of passports has been made foolproof under the Passport Seva System. Before granting any passport, in-person appearance is mandatory avoiding chances of impersonation. Background check is carried out from the entire passport database for duplication and criminality status. Capture of Biometric data and photograph on the spot and matching of biometric data with Aadhar database (fully integrated since August, 2015) also ensure issuance of the passport to the right person. Police Verification of personal particulars and antecedents of applicants including address, where required, is very critical for the issue of passports. All these measures and precautions available in the system have made the passport issuance process foolproof.

With the introduction of advanced security features in recent years, possibilities of issuance of fake Indian passports have been eliminated. However, forgery cases, whenever reported, are duly investigated by this Ministry in co-operation with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the concerned police authorities.

Grant to Institute of Chinese Studies

2413. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has recently cut grants to India's premier Institute of Chinese Studies this year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a new director of the institute is yet to be selected; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) and (b) The Ministry of External Affairs extends support to various institutes for their research projects and other activities related to chinese