

Rejection of H-1B visa for Indian software companies

3693. SHRI T. K. RANGARAJAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of H-1B visas issued by US for software companies in India during 2018-19;

(b) the details of visa issued for the Indian software companies and foreign software companies operating from India;

(c) whether it is a fact that there were more rejections of H-1B visa for the Indian software companies in comparison to foreign companies operating in India; and

(d) if so, the manner in which Government proposes to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) According to U.S. official data, the total number of H-1B visas issued to Indian nationals in U.S. Fiscal Year 2018 is 125,528; the total number of these visas issued to software companies in India is not separately available.

(b) and (c) The top 30 companies accounting for 24.34% of all H-1B visas issued in U.S. Fiscal Year 2018 include 8 Indian IT companies and 8 foreign IT companies that also operate in India. The detailed official data on approval and denial of H-1B visa in respect of these companies for U.S. Fiscal Year 2018 are given below:—

H-1 B Approval and Denial data for eight (in Top 30) Indian IT companies

Company	Approvals for Initial Employ- ment	Denials for Initial Employ- ment	Approvals for Continuing Employ- ment	Denials for Continuing Employ- ment	Total Approvals	Approval Percentage
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TCS	528	152	8,232	1,744	8,760	82%
Infosys	69	80	5,897	2,042	5,966	74%
Wipro	273	82	2,877	599	3,150	82%
HCL	196	100	2,105	509	2,301	79%

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tech Mahindra	579	201	1,781	300	2,360	82%
L&T Infotech	154	43	1,285	171	1,439	87%
L&T Tech services	253	50	906	102	1,159	88%
Mindtree	148	98	762	89	910	83%

H-1B Approval and Denial data for eight (in Top 30) Foreign IT companies operating in India

Company	Approvals for Initial Employment	Denials for Initial Employment	Approvals for Continuing Employment	Denials for Continuing Employment	Total Approvals	Approval Percentage
Cognizant	500	790	8,746	3,548	9,246	68%
Deloitte	593	295	4,193	1,281	4,786	75%
CapGemini	273	1,061	2,664	914	2,937	60%
Microsoft	1,252	13	3,200	54	4,452	99%
Amazon	2,399	23	1,993	45	4,392	98%
Accenture	363	160	2,656	451	3,019	83%
Apple	698	13	2,387	25	3,085	99%
Ernst and Young	716	93	1,760	150	2,476	91%

Source: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

(d) Government of India has closely consulted all stakeholders and engaged with the U.S. Administration and Congress on issues related to the movement of Indian professionals, including those pertaining to the H-1B programme. Most recently, issues of H-1B visa were raised during the visit of the U.S. Secretary of State, Michael R.

Pompeo, to India on 26 June, 2019. In our engagements, we have emphasized that this has been a mutually-beneficial partnership which should be nurtured. Indian skilled professionals have contributed to the growth and development of the U.S. economy and have helped the U.S. retain its competitive edge and innovation advantage.

India-Iran Joint Consular Committee Meeting

3694. SHRIMATI SHANTA CHHETRI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has, in the India-Iran Joint Consular Committee Meeting held recently, pledged for mutual legal assistance on civil and commercial matters with Islamic Republic of Iran extending longer duration of e-Visa for nationals of each other on reciprocity and visa facilitation for greater people to people contacts; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) and (b) An Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance on Civil and Commercial Matters is presently being negotiated with Islamic Republic of Iran. During the India-Iran Joint Consular Committee Meeting (JCCM) which was held in New Delhi on May 14, 2019, the proposed Agreement was discussed with a view to its expeditious conclusion.

During the India-Iran JCCM both sides agreed to take steps to further streamline visa issuance process on reciprocal basis to facilitate people to people contacts and promote friendly exchanges. Iran is one of the 167 countries to whom the Indian e-Visa facility has been extended. Pursuant to discussions in JCCM, Iran has now extended the Visa on Arrival facility for Indian nationals from 30 to 90 days. Further, Indian nationals can now receive one-year multiple-entry Entry Visa from the Missions and Consulates of the Islamic Republic of Iran located in India.

Relationship with Buddhist countries

3695. SHRI RAKESH SINHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the manner in which Government is planning to strengthen relationship with Buddhist countries;

(b) whether Government has started cultural centres in these countries;