

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.101
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.03.2017

TALKS WITH BRITAIN ON VISAS

*101. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has opened talks with Britain to facilitate short-term visa for Indian students, businessmen and academics;
- (b) whether it is a fact that Britain has shown a discriminatory visa policy against Indians as opposed to other Asian countries like China; and
- (c) what steps Government would take to negotiate with Britain to reduce the visa fee for Indians?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ)

- (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (c) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 101 REGARDING “TALKS WITH BRITAIN ON VISAS” FOR ANSWER ON 09.03.2017

Government of India has been regularly taking up the issue of visa-related difficulties faced by the Indian nationals, with the Government of the UK including those faced by Indian students and skilled professionals. It was stated in the Joint Statement issued during the visit of the Prime Minister of the UK to India from 6-8 November 2016 that ‘the two Prime Ministers recognised that mobility can strengthen people-to-people relations between the two countries. To this end, both parties agreed that visa regimes need to be as simple and efficient as possible for students, businesses, professionals, diplomats and officials and other travellers, including facilitating short-term mobility of skilled personnel between the two countries.’ The UK visa regime for students, businessmen, academics and skilled professionals is the same for all non-European Economic Area (EEA) citizens including those of India and other countries. Visa fee is part of the overall visa policy and Government of India continues to urge the UK to address our concerns and liberalise its visa regime for Indian students, business people and professionals in the interest of bilateral economic engagement, people-to-people ties and the valuable contributions they make to the UK’s own economy and growth.
