

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-569
ANSWERED ON- 24/07/2025

US STUDENT VISA ISSUES

569. SMT MAHUA MAJI

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government is aware of US student visa issues being faced by prospective Indian students;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government is taking any active steps to solve the issues;
- (d) if so, the details of steps taken thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a to e) On 18 June 2025, U.S. Department of State (DOS) issued a Press Release titled 'Announcement of Expanded Screening and Vetting for Visa Applicants.' In the said press release, DOS stated that it uses all available information in its visa screening and vetting to identify visa applicants who are inadmissible to the United States, including those who pose a threat to U.S. national security.

- Under the new guidance, the U.S. would conduct a comprehensive and thorough vetting, including online presence, of all student and exchange visitor applicants in the F, M, and J nonimmigrant classifications. To facilitate this vetting, all applicants for F, M, and J nonimmigrant visas would be instructed to adjust the privacy settings on all of their social media profiles to "public."
- DOS also stated that every visa adjudication is a national security decision and that the U.S. must be vigilant during the visa issuance process to ensure that those applying for admission into the United States do not intend to harm Americans and U.S. national interests, and that all applicants credibly establish their eligibility for the visa sought, including that they intend to engage in activities that are consistent with the terms for their admission.
- Following these developments, the Ministry of External Affairs has received several representations from Indian students and their family's flagging difficulty in obtaining student visa appointments. The Ministry took up the matter with U.S. Embassy in New Delhi as well as the U.S. Department of State.

- In response, the US side has shared the following:
 - Additional security requirements for student visas have further reduced the capacity of the U.S. Embassy and Consulates in India to process visas. However, student visa appointments are now open.
 - For J-1 physician category, the US side has launched a software-based solution to prioritize their appointments. Several students who had previously reported unavailability of appointment slots under this category of visa and have now been able to get appointments.
 - U.S. Embassy is working to open a limited number of additional student visa appointments through the end of August in recognition of the urgent need for these appointments before the start of the new academic year.
 - The US Embassy is developing a student visa fact sheet with Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that should help reduce uncertainty around this issue.
- While the issuance of visa is a sovereign prerogative of the concerned state, the Ministry of External Affairs has consistently raised with the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi as well as the U.S. State Department in Washington D.C., the issues being faced by prospective Indian students in obtaining U.S. visas.

The Government of India remains engaged with the U.S. Government to promote mutually advantageous and secure mobility frameworks that allow for streamlining avenues for legal mobility of students and professionals, and facilitating short-term tourist and business travel.
