

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4400
ANSWERED ON- 02/04/2026

REDUCTION IN ENROLMENT OF INDIAN STUDENTS IN US

#4400. SHRI GOLLA BABURAO

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

- (a) whether Indian student enrolments in the USA is down by 75 per cent;
- (b) to what extent scarce visa slots and high percentage of rejections of Visas is contributing to the above fact;
- (c) whether the increase in visa scrutiny is contributing to this decline; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a to d) As per the data released by the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Mapping Tool of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the total number of Indian students pursuing various educational programs (primary, secondary, other vocational, high school, language training, flight school, associate, bachelors, masters, doctorate, and others) in the United States of America are as follows:

- Feb 2025: 378,787 students
- Feb 2026: 352,644 students

The above figure indicates a decline of about 6.9% in overall student enrolments in U.S. academic institutions.

On 18 June 2025, U.S. Department of State issued a Press Release titled, ‘Announcement of Expanded Screening and Vetting for Visa Applicants.’ The said press release mentions that the U.S. uses all available information in its visa screening and vetting process to identify visa applicants who are inadmissible to the United States, including those who pose a threat to U.S. national security. The current U.S. Administration has also announced that a U.S. visa is a privilege, not a right.

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 non-immigrant classifications. To facilitate this vetting, the U.S. has required all applicants to adjust the privacy settings on their social media profiles to “public.” The new U.S. guidance mentions that every visa adjudication is a national security decision and calls on all applicants to credibly establish their eligibility for the visa sought, including that they intend to engage in activities consistent with the terms for their admission.

Furthermore, the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi in an advisory of June 2025 conveyed that grant of a student visa does not guarantee the continued stay of the student in the United States. They

confirmed that the visa monitoring continues post-approval and rule breaking can lead to revocation of visa and deportation. Such violations may include:

- Discontinuing academic programmes without notification;
- Minor legal infractions such as driving without a licence or traffic violations;
- Driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while intoxicated (DWI);
- Overstaying visa validity; or
- Engaging in activities inconsistent with visa conditions.

The above measures, including increased scrutiny and compliance requirements, have had an impact on the number of U.S. student visas issued to Indian nationals.

While issuance of visa and the related policy and processes are the sovereign prerogative of the concerned state, Government of India has been regularly raising all issues being confronted by Indian students with the U.S. authorities at various levels. The Ministry of External Affairs continues to remain engaged with the relevant U.S. authorities to promote mutually advantageous and secure mobility frameworks that allow for streamlining avenues for legal mobility of students and professionals.
