

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.5435**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.03.2018

**H1B VISA**

5435. DR. ANSHUL VERMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there was an arbitrary hike in the Visa fees by the US recently and if so, the details thereof; and
- (b) the steps the Government has taken to raise this issue with the US Government and the result of such steps?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) There has been no hike in the visa fee by the US Government recently. However, on December 18, 2015, the US President signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114-113) which increased the supplemental visa fee for L-1 and H-1B visas for a period of 10 years for companies employing 50 or more employees in the United States, 50% or more of which were on L-1 and H-1B visas (50:50 rule). With this legislation in place, 50:50 companies are required to pay an enhanced fee of \$4,500 for each L-1 visa and \$4,000 for each H-1B visa as compared to \$2,250 and \$2,000 previously.

(b) Government of India remains closely engaged with the US Administration and the Congress on all issues relating to movement of Indian professionals under the H-1B and L-1 visa programmes, including the increase in visa fee. 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 US economy and have helped the US retain its competitive edge and innovation advantage. They are a big stakeholder in India-US relations and their backward linkages to India have helped US businesses.

The matter on US visa fee hike has also been raised by India at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Geneva. India held consultations with the United States on 11-12 May 2016 at the WTO, Geneva under the dispute settlement procedures of the World Trade Organisation on the basis that the increased fees appear to result in treatment that is less favourable to Indian firms and consequently violate provisions of the General Agreement on Trade in Services.

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