

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 3642
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.01.2019

STUDENT VISA

3642. SHRI PINAKI MISRA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the British Government has kept India out of the low risk student visa list to facilitate easier visa application and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether this would deprive the Indian students from the privilege of reduced checks on educational, financial and English language skill requirements to study in British Universities and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government will consider to take up the matter with the British Government at the appropriate level to ease out the situation as India is one of the top three nations sending students to U.K. and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) Yes. On 15 June 2018, the UK Government announced the “Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules” affecting a number of visa categories, including Student Visas. As per the new rules, the UK side has expanded the list of countries (called Appendix H) whose citizens qualify for a streamlined visa application process for Tier-4 Visa (Student Visa). A total of 26 countries (16 old, and 10 new) will now benefit from the change. India is not part of this list. The complete list of these countries is provided at **Annexure-1**.

(b) The announcement will not have any impact on the existing visa application process for Indian students, nor will it impact on Indian students already studying in the UK. The UK High Commission in New Delhi in its Note Verbale dated 9th July 2018 to the MEA stated that Indian students will face no difference in procedures compared to the previous years as a result of the announcement.

(c) Issues relating to Indian students have been consistently raised by the Government of India in all bilateral discussions with the UK at various levels. Currently, all consular related issues are discussed regularly by the two sides at the working level both in New Delhi and London. There are also two institutional mechanisms at the level of Minister of State for Home Affairs and Secretary (Home Affairs) wherein all Consular and visa matters are discussed once every six months.

ANNEXURE-1

List of 26 countries that have qualified for reduced level of documentation for Tier 4 Visa

Under the “**Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules**” dated 15 June 2018, nationals of the following 26 countries will be subject to reduced documentary requirements under UK’s Tier 4 Student Visa.

1. Argentina
2. Australia
3. Bahrain
4. Barbados
5. Botswana
6. Brunei
7. Cambodia
8. Canada
9. Chile
10. China
11. The Dominican Republic
12. Indonesia
13. Japan
14. Kuwait
15. Malaysia
16. The Maldives
17. Mexico
18. New Zealand
19. Qatar
20. Serbia
21. Singapore
22. South Korea
23. Thailand
24. Trinidad and Tobago
25. United Arab Emirates
26. United States of America
