

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 897**

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 25TH JULY, 2023/ SRAVANA 3, 1945 (SAKA)

FRAUDULENT PRACTICES IN VISA PROCESS

897. SHRI BRIJENDRA SINGH:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the fraudulent practices in the visa process and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government has details on the number of reported cases involving visa fraud agencies during the years 2021-23;

(c) if so, the measures taken by the Government against the visa fraud agencies;

(d) whether the Government has implemented measures to strengthen the oversight and regulation of visa service providers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
(SHRI NITYANAND RAI)**

(a) to (e): With respect to e-Visas, from time to time it has come to the notice of Government that some unauthorized and unrecognized private websites try to intermediate and facilitate issuance of India e-Visa. Some of them also appear similar to official Indian Visa website (indianvisaonline.gov.in) and also appear through the search engines. Govt. of India has taken several steps to minimize such a practice. In this regard National Informatics Centre (NIC) has coordinated with Google

search engine to ensure that Indian Visa official link appears prominently in the search engine. Secondly, Bureau of Immigration (BOI) refers from time to time the list of such unauthorized websites to CERT-In (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team) to disable them from accessing Indian official visa portal. Thirdly, Government has advised all Indian Missions/Posts abroad to place an advisory or caution notice on their website or through social media platforms for the benefit of foreigners applying for Indian Visa.

With respect to Visa processing at Indian Missions overseas, bulk applications from touts or unauthorized agencies are not allowed/accepted in order to prevent fraudulent practices. When any information regarding such unauthorized agents comes to the notice of the Indian Missions/Posts abroad, the same is taken up with the local authorities for action.

Visa service providers are engaged by Indian Missions under the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). With respect to such service providers, it is specifically mentioned in the contract/Request for proposals (RFPs) for tenders that Outsourced Service Providers (OSPs) will properly scrutinize the application forms submitted before forwarding the same to Indian Missions/Posts abroad. To avoid any lapses on their part, a check list is also maintained. Regular inspections/surprise visits, are also carried out.
