

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1515  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.11.2019**

**H-1B VISA**

**1515. MS. PRATIMA BHOUMIK:**

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether United States of America's restrictive immigration policies have led to massive increase in the rejection of petitions for H-1B visas with the highest denial rate among major Indian IT companies and if so, the details thereof along with the action taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (b) whether in the first three quarters of fiscal 2019, US Citizenship and Immigration Services adjudicators denied 24 per cent of H-1B petitions for "initial" employment and 12 per cent of H-1B petitions for "continuing" employment and if so, the details thereof along with the action taken by the Government?

**ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
[SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN]**

(a) & b) The H-1B visa application process has become more complex for employers worldwide, including for Indian IT companies, due to certain recent administrative changes in the H-1B programme which have increased documentation requirements on the petitioners. These changes have impacted the processing of H-1B petitions in general, entailing a higher level of scrutiny. According to latest publicly available statistics of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), 116,031 initial or new H-1B petitions were processed and completed in Fiscal Year 2019, out of which 27,707 petitions accounting for about 23.9% were denied. During the same period, a total of 209,884 H-1B petitions for continuing employment were processed and completed, with 24,725 denials accounting for about 11.8%. The share of Indian nationals in total H-1B visas has, however, remained stable at around 70% between Fiscal Years 2015 and 2018.

Government of India has closely consulted all stakeholders and engaged with the U.S. Administration and Congress on issues related to the movement of Indian professionals, including those pertaining to the H-1B programme. These issues were raised by External Affairs Minister with his U.S. counterpart in New Delhi in June 2019 and with U.S. interlocutors in Washington D.C. in September/October 2019. In our engagements, we have emphasized that this has been a mutually-beneficial partnership which should be nurtured.

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