

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:178
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2003
VISA RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY RUSSIA
B.K. PARTHASARATHI

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Russia has recently imposed visa restrictions on countries that pose a threat of illegal immigration;
- (b) whether India is one of these countries; and
- (c) if so, the details in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) As per new visa procedures, stemming from a new Law for Foreigners adopted by the Russian Federation, before issuing visas to travellers to the Russian Federation, including Indian travellers, the Embassies and the Consulates General of the Russian Federation seek clearance from the Russian Ministry of Interior. They also require the visa applicants to produce an invitation from recognised Russian institutions. The invitation itself has to be processed through the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow. These procedural requirements, along with some others, result in delays in issuance of visas and cause difficulties for travellers to Russia, including from India. These difficulties have been pointed out to the Russian authorities.