

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HOME AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1987  
ANSWERED ON:13.03.2007  
LIBERALISATION OF VISA  
Saradgi Shri Iqbal Ahmed

**Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether Foreign Secretary urged the Home Secretary for liberalising and simplifying the current system for granting visas to international students citing about the liberal visa regime in China wooing away research scholars and foreign students from India;
- (b) if so, the details of specific measures suggested for granting long term visas to foreign students already studying in India;
- (c) the action so far taken on such suggestions;
- (d) whether the Coordination Committee with representatives from Ministries of Home, Human Resource Development and External Affairs has been set up to speed up pending research proposals for clearance, including those proposals on which security agencies have not responded within time; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof ?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL)

(a) to (e) : A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PART (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1987 FOR ON 13.03.2007 BY SHRI. IQBAL AHMED SARADGI TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.03.2007.

(a) to (e) : Foreign Secretary in his letter dated 21.12.2006 addressed to Union Home Secretary raised various issues relating to liberalization and simplification of the system for grant of long term visa to foreign students and scholars. The suggestions made in the letter inter-alia, included grant of long term visa to foreign students who are already in India, delegation of powers to Foreigners Regional Registration Officers

(FRRO) for renewal of visas of foreign students, setting up of a Coordination Committee for clearing research proposals of foreign scholars, introduction of 'Green List' of countries and subjects etc.

The entire matter relating to policy and processes with respect to research proposals from foreign scholars was reviewed in a meeting taken by Union Home Secretary which was also attended amongst others by Foreign Secretary. It was decided in the meeting that FRROs/State Governments would be delegated powers for extension of Research Visa of foreign scholars upto 5 years or the duration of the project, whichever is earlier. Further it was decided that Research visa can be extended for a further period of 6 months on the completion of the duration of the project, if required, by the foreign scholars to complete final formalities. As was decided in the said review meeting, a Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Higher Education) with representatives of Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Human Resource Development has already been constituted to streamline and expedite pending research proposals. The committee is required to meet on a monthly basis. The said Committee has so far held two meetings on 15.01.2007 and 15.02.2007 respectively in which various aspects with respect to research proposals have been reviewed, and appropriate action taken to expedite the pending research proposals.