

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
POWER
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4643

ANSWERED ON:23.04.2010

VISA REGULATIONS FOR FOREIGN ENGINEERS IN POWER PROJECTS

Jagannath Dr. M.

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a number of engineers/professionals from foreign countries including China are engaged in power projects in the country;
- (b) if so, the details of such power projects along with their power generation capacity, State-wise and project-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has enforced new visa regulation for these foreign engineers/professionals as a result of which many professionals left the country, affecting the power generation capacity of the power projects;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER(SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI)

(a) & (b) : Engineers/professionals from foreign countries are engaged on various thermal power generation projects where power plant equipment has been sourced from abroad. The details of such power projects targeted for commissioning during the 11th Plan and sourcing equipment from abroad are enclosed at Annex-I-A (Thermal) and I-B (Hydro).

(c) & (d) : Ministry of Labour & Employment vide its O.M. dated 8th Sept, 2009 has, inter-alia, stated that a company shall not be permitted to bring any un- skilled, semi-skilled or skilled persons for execution of the projects. It further states that highly skilled and professionals may be granted employment visas to the extent of 1% of the total persons employed on the project subject to a maximum of 20. Subsequently, the guidelines were revised by the Ministry of Labour and Employment. As per the revised guidelines dated December 22, 2009, maximum ceiling of issuance of E-Visas to foreign nationals may be limited to 1% of total number of workers working on the project with a minimum of 5 and maximum of 20 for all sectors except Power and Steel where 1% of the total workers (with a minimum of 5) on the project or 40 whichever is higher would be permissible upto June, 2010. It also provides that where the project is very large and the limit of foreign highly skilled persons exceeds permissible limits, proposals shall be forwarded to the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

In view of the requirement of employment visas, many foreign professionals working on such projects left the country, resulting in reduced availability of technical professionals for project execution. The sudden departure of foreign professionals from these projects has affected the commissioning schedule of about 16793 MW capacity of projects targeted for commissioning during the Eleventh Plan period (list enclosed at Annex-II).

(e) : The Ministry of Labour & Employment, with the approval of the Cabinet Secretary, constituted a committee to examine all aspects of Guidelines for issue of employment visa for foreign personnel for Power sector. The Committee has since submitted its report.