

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2502

ANSWERED ON:04.08.2015

Visa Norms for SAARC Countries

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Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to ease business visa norms and extend e-visa facility for South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries including Pakistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the other SAARC countries also proposes to extend the facility of business visa for Indian nationals; 780

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the names of countries to which the e-visa facility is likely to be extended along with the existing list of countries availing the said facility?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
(SHRI KIREN RIJU)

(a) &(b): As per extant provisions, Business Visa can be granted for a period up to 5 years or for a shorter duration as per the requirement to nationals of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries except in the case of nationals of Nepal, Bhutan and Pakistan. While citizens of Nepal and Bhutan do not require any visa for visiting India, certain category of Pakistan nationals are presently eligible for grant of a multiple entry Business Visa for a maximum period of one year restricted to 10 places. Instructions have been issued by the Government on 7th July, 2015 regarding grant of multiple entry Business Visa for a period up to 3 years to Pakistan nationals restricted to 15 places to special category of Pakistani Businessmen of assured financial standing and credentials.

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Out of the SAARC countries, e-Tourist Visa facility is presently available only for nationals of Sri Lanka.

(c) & (d): Indian nationals do not require any visa to visit Nepal and Bhutan. All other SAARC countries are extending the facility of Business Visa to Indian nationals.

(e) : Presently e-Tourist Visa scheme is available to nationals of 77 countries. List of the countries is given in the Annexure. The inclusion of additional countries in e-Tourist Visa scheme is a continuous process which is done after consultation with all stake holders.
