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Title: Need to grant residency rights and identity cards to Hindu/Sikh nationals who have come from Pakistan on valid Visas.

SHRI PRATAP SINGH BAJWA (GURDASPUR): There are thousands of Hindu/Sikh families who came to India from Pakistan on a valid Visa, but do not want to go back for various reasons. One of their chief fears is the prevailing law and order situation is very bad in Pakistan, besides their poor economic conditions. There are some nationals who stayed back in Pakistan at the time of partition for various compulsions, but now they want to come back to their motherland for the rest of their lives. In some cases, it has even been reported that they have torn their passports into pieces so that they would not be forced to go back to their homes in Pakistan.

Recently, the Ministry of Home Affairs has asked the State Governments/UT Administration to consider the cases for extension of long-term visa of certain categories of Pakistani nationals, and also granted exemption to such Pak nationals from the provisions of Rule 3 of the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920.

However, it is the desire of these nationals that instead of extension of long-term of visa, they should be given asylum in India so that they can get residency rights and identity cards to enable them to have access to various welfare schemes.

I, therefore, request the Hon'ble Minister to kindly take a sympathetic view on this matter and issue necessary directions in this regard.