

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India**

**26,786 Long Term Visas granted to Foreigners, including 25,782 from Minority
Communities in Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan, from 01.01.2015 to 31.12.2019:
Shri Nityanand Rai**

New Delhi, March 17, 2020

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Nityanand Rai, in a written reply to questions regarding visas to minorities from neighbouring countries, in Lok Sabha today, said that Long Term Visa (LTV) is granted to the following categories of persons of Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan coming to India on valid travel documents i.e. valid passport and valid visa, and seeking permanent settlement in India with a view to acquire Indian citizenship:-

- (i) Members of minority communities in Bangladesh/ Afghanistan/ Pakistan, namely Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians.
- (ii) Bangladesh/ Pakistan women married to Indian nationals and staying in India; or Afghanistan nationals married to Indian nationals in India and staying in India.
- (iii) Indian origin women holding Bangladesh/ Afghanistan/ Pakistan nationality married to Bangladesh/ Afghanistan/ Pakistan nationals and returning to India due to widowhood/ divorce and having no male members to support them in Bangladesh/ Afghanistan/ Pakistan.
- (iv) Cases involving extreme compassion.

The Minister stated that LTV has been granted to 26,786 such foreigners from 01.01.2015 to 31.12.2019, after their arrival in India. Of these, 25,782 persons belonging to minority communities in Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan have been granted LTV in the same period, after their arrival in India. There is no specific provision for grant of such LTV to minorities from Sri Lanka.

Shri Rai also informed the House that the Government has extended various facilities to such persons living in India on LTV. These include grant of LTV for a period of 5 years at a time, allowing children of such LTV holders to take admission in schools, colleges, universities, technical/professional institutions etc. without any specific permission from the State Government/UT Administration, permitting them to engage in employment in private sector, purchase of dwelling unit & accommodation for carrying out self employment, Re-entry (Return Visa) to go to their native country/third country, allowing free movements within the State/UT, reduction of penalty on non-extension of LTV on time, opening of bank accounts, issuance of Driving License, PAN card and Aadhaar number etc.

The Minister also stated that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 facilitates grant of citizenship to migrants belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan who have entered India on or before 31.12.2014 and who have been exempted by the Central Government by or under clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 3 of the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920 or from the application of provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 or any rule / order made there-under.

VG/VM