

India Visa Appointment Delays Reducing with a Top Priority and Innovative efforts by the State Department noted by FIIDS

In a meeting organized by FIIDS, the State Department officials outlined innovative efforts done with a top priority to reduce Visa Appointment Delays in India

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, February 28, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- When the US consulates opened up for visa appointments post pandemic in 2022, there were delays ranging from 300 to 900 days based on visa-categories for visa appointments in India. These delays had widespread impacts on relatives of American citizens, business

visitors, immigrant tech workers and university students. To address these delays, since August 2022, the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies (FIIDS) has created awareness on this issue, launched a petition, met elected officials and discussed the same with the Department of State, which has been working overdrive on this issue.

“

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Julie Stufft, The Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Consular Affairs



Press Meet of the State Department on Visa Appointment Delays in India

During an event organized by Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies on 21st February, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) for Visa Services in the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Julie Stufft said, "India is the number one priority that we are facing right now. We are absolutely committed to getting out of this situation. This year, we have issued 36% more visas than we did before the covid pandemic in India." During the meeting, she outlined various steps taken, including increasing staff, remote processing of visa paperwork from other locations, hosting 'Super-Saturdays' and allowing visa appointments in other places like Bangkok for applicants from India.

“We thank Deputy Assistant Secretary Julie Stuftt for leading the bureau of Consular affairs to experiment outside-the-box and genuinely innovative ideas like Super Saturday, remote processing and allowing outside-India appointments. We are happy to see that the appointment delays for H-1B, L1, F1 appointments came down from 300-400 days to around 40-60 days and B1/B2 appointments from 900 days to 600 days. We hope that the delays in B1/B2 also are eliminated by the end of 2023”, said Khanderao Kand, President and Policy Director of FIIDS.

The Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of South and Central Asia, Nancy Jackson, emphasized the priority and importance given to addressing the issue. The DAS Nancy Jackson said, “As I look at the (US-India) relationship it strikes me that people-to-people ties between our two nations are really the bedrock of what is one of the most consequential relationships in the world and that is the India-US relationship. And we can’t underscore that enough and so addressing the visa wait time that we were facing is critical; not only to maintain these people-to-people ties, but also to expand in that space. So, because of that, this issue remains a top priority.”

“We thank DAS Nancy Jackson as we are able to see the results of the given importance and focus in progress not only on this issue but also on the openness to engage with the Indian American community on various matters related to US-India relations.”, said Narsimha Koppula, an advisor of FIIDS.

During July-September 2022, FIIDS raised awareness about this issue within the Indian-American community and their elected representatives. FIIDS then expressed the community's concerns to the Secretary of State Antony Blinken and India’s external affairs minister (EAM) Dr. S. Jaishankar on Sept 25th. Subsequently, Secretary Blinken and Dr. Jaishankar discussed this issue on 27th of Sept 2022.




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 U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE — BUREAU of CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Eliminate Visa Appointment Delays
<http://fiids-usa.org>

Select a U.S. Embassy or Consulate:

Mumbai (Bombay)

#EliminateVisaWaitTime
#IndoAmericansVotesMatter

Nonimmigrant Visa Type	Appointment Wait Time
Interview Required Visitors (B1/B2)	931 Calendar Days
Interview Required Students/Exchange Visitors (F, M, J)	401 Calendar Days
Interview Required Petition-Based Temporary Workers (H, L, O, P, Q)	343 Calendar Days
Interview Waiver Visitors (B1/B2)	
Interview Waiver Students/Exchange Visitors (F, M, J)	
Interview Waiver Petition-Based Temporary Workers (H, L, O, P, Q)	

US Visa Appointment delays in India in Oct 2022

Mumbai (Bombay)

Nonimmigrant Visa Type	Appointment Wait Time
Interview Required Students/Exchange Visitors (F, M, J)	49 Calendar Days
Interview Required Petition-Based Temporary Workers (H, L, O, P, Q)	38 Calendar Days
Interview Required Crew and Transit (C, D, C1/D)	35 Calendar Days
Interview Required Visitors (B1/B2)	694 Calendar Days
Interview Waiver Students/Exchange Visitors (F, M, J)	36 Calendar Days
Interview Waiver Petition-Based Temporary Workers (H, L, O, P, Q)	38 Calendar Days
Interview Waiver Crew and Transit (C, D, C1/D)	2 Calendar Days
Interview Waiver Visitors (B1/B2)	14 Calendar Days

[See details on appointment availability and processing times](#)

Feb 2023 Visa Appointment wait times in Mumbai, India

On 30th October, FIIDS launched a Change.org petition on this issue and received over 2200 supporters. We highlighted the immigration issues among the top issues of concern of Indian American voters in Nov 2022 elections. Mr. Khanderao Kand and Mr. Narsimha Koppula from FIIDS subsequently discussed the concerns with the US's Charge D'affair Mr. Heath in the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi on the 9th of Nov as a part of a joint delegation of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) and FIIDS to India.

On the kind invitation from Deputy Assistant Secretary, Nancy Jackson, on 21st of December, FIIDS met and discussed the issue with officials from the Bureau of Central and South Asia and the Bureau of Consular Affairs State Department official. During the meeting, Jennifer Sudweeks from the Consular Affairs discussed various steps taken to expedite the processing, including reducing H-1B and F1 visa appointment wait times to less than a few months.

During the meeting on 21st Dec, FIIDS raised on humanitarian grounds the need to expand the scope of expedited visa appointments to also cover attending life events like childbirth, marriage, graduation, or emotional help to relatives with medical conditions. FIIDS also requested the Department of State to consider H1B visa stamping within the United State itself to reduce both burdens on the visa appointments as well as to avoid business interruptions, which they acknowledged was under consideration. "We were thrilled to hear from DAS Julie Stuftt in the meeting on 21st Feb that the pilot for this will be in this summer and it will be launched around Sept 2023", said Yogi Chugh, FIIDS Legislative Affairs and Policy analyst.

Khanderao

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