

New Category of Visas Likely for Entrepreneurs, Researchers

Making It Simple

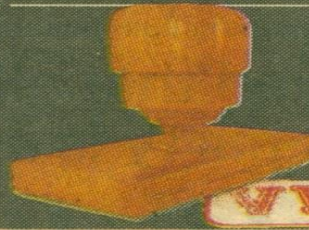
NITI AAYOG'S PLAN TO LIBERALISE VISA FRAMEWORK

Set up centralised system for granting entrepreneur visas

Criteria to be tech novelty, the sector and job-creation potential

Set up international centres for document verification and initial handholding

Feasibility analysis of project to be completed by 2018



Required mechanism may be in place by 2020

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New Delhi: India is looking to introduce a new category of visas with a liberal framework for entrepreneurs and researchers.

A senior government official told ET that the proposal, mooted by Niti Aayog, was being discussed at the highest level and the country could in future issue this new category of visas to a select few based on a set criteria. "Human capital is one of the key pillars contributing to the innovation quotient of a country. Encouraging high-skilled immigration will foster healthy competition and go a long way in improving the quality of domestic skills," the official said, on condition of anonymity.

According to the official, the idea was to establish a centralised system for granting entrepreneur visas based on criteria including novelty in technology, sector, job-creation potential and ease of dissemination of products or service, among other things. India could also set up international centres to facilitate document verification and offer some initial handholding. "The idea is to complete the feasibility analysis of this project by next year and set up the required mechanisms by 2020," the official added.

Entrepreneurs coming to India are either issued business or employment visas, both of which put conditions on the visitors, such as annual registration with the police and requirement of leaving the country periodically. They need to return to their home country for renewal of the visas and there is no provision of permanent residency. While India issues research visas, most people choose to apply for tourist permits if they are visiting the country to conduct research informally and won't stay here for more than six months.