



Urge to Suspend H-1B

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Why in News

The **US President** has been **requested to suspend the foreign workers programme**, including **H-1B** as a huge number of Americans have lost their jobs due to the **Covid-19 pandemic**.

Key Points

- A lawmaker in the US has sought **suspension of the H-1B, H4, L1, B1, B2, Optional Practical Training Program and guest worker admissions**.
- The Congressional Select Committee on the Coronavirus Crisis has also been **urged to take action to protect medical professionals holding H-1B visas** because they are essential to confront and combat the current crisis.
 - Due to the **loss of revenues**, many **health centres are closing down** which will impact H-1B visa holders currently practicing medicine at these facilities.
- **Indians and H-1B Visa**
 - **Indians** are the **largest beneficiaries** of the H1B visas and held three out of four H1B visas as of 2018, data from the **United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS)** shows.
 - Indians held 309,986 H1B visas as of 2018, which was 73.9% of the total H1B visas issued.
 - Indians comprised 68% of H1B registrations for Financial Year 2020-21, followed by China, which accounted for 13.2%.
 - The latest move will hamper Indians who are working in the US on such visas by **decreasing the chances of employment**.
- Earlier, the US temporarily suspended approval of **some Green Cards**.
 - This step ensures the policy of **America First**.

Green Card

- It is officially known as a **Permanent Resident Card**.

- It is **issued to immigrants** to the US under the **Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), 1952**.
- It **allows** a person to **live and work permanently** in the US.

H-1B Visa

- It is a **non-immigrant visa** that allows US companies to employ **graduate level foreign workers in specialty occupations**. Specialty occupations requires:
 - **Theoretical or technical expertise** in specialized fields such as in IT, finance, accounting, architecture, engineering, mathematics, science, medicine, etc.
 - **Any professional level job** that usually requires a bachelor's degree or higher can come under the H-1B visa for specialty occupations.
- The US H1-B visa is **designed to be used for staff in specialty occupations**. H-1B has an **option of green card application**.
- H-1B visa holders can **bring their spouse and children under 21 years** of age to the **US under the H4 Visa category as dependents**.
 - An H4 Visa holder is allowed to remain in the US as long as the H-1B visa holder remains in legal status.
 - While an H4 visa holder is **not eligible to work** in the US, they may **attend school, obtain a driver's license and open a bank account** while in the US.

Source: IE