

Indian policy makers must take tough stand on Immigration Bill in US: NIAPPI

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As Prime Minister Narendra Modi prepares for his maiden trip to the US, voices around the need to address the US Immigration Bill are getting stronger.

The National Indian American Public Policy Institute (NIAPPI), a US-based think tank that works for improving relation between India and the US, said that the US immigration bill that is under consideration in the US Parliament can lead to a loss of \$ 30 billion annually for India, if passed.

“This bill could also negatively impact India’s GDP by 1.5%, because 5,000 Indian American owned small IT firms to go under and cause massive unemployment in India as well as in US,” said Shalabh Kumar, Chairman of Indian American Advisory Council of House Republican Conference of US Parliament & Chairman of NIAPPI Business Council.

The S744 Immigration Bill — the Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013-though is a comprehensive immigration bill that will overhaul the immigration system of the country, it also has provision that impacts the employees being hired by the Indian IT firms.

During the recent visit of the US Secretary of State John Kerry to India, Kerry for the first time acknowledged that the Bill will see some form of amendment. Answering media question he said: “The Immigration Bill and it is a critical priority for President Obama. And we are very aware of the need to make sure that there are more people able to travel, more people able to become part of the commerce...But the way it left the Senate leaves that in need of some amending. The House has not taken it up yet. And it really appears as if they won’t certainly before the election which is in three months.”

The NIAPPI has been trying to push the Indian government to take a strong stand on the bill. “The Immigration Bill S744 in US Parliament is the biggest hurdle in front of the people of India and Indian Americans in the United States. It would also disrupt the economic activity of a large number of US companies. Around 500,000 engineers from India on H1 and L1 visas may have to return back to India causing a loss of around Rs 200,000 crore per year to the Indian exchequer,” said Kumar.

The Bill S744 was introduced in US Senate on 16th April 2013 and was passed on 27th of June 2013. Now the bill is pending in US House of Representatives awaiting consideration. Once it is approved, the bill will become a law.