

Trump's immigration plan may help Indians

U.S. President Donald Trump has proposed a merit-based immigration system that could benefit highly-skilled Indian workers but prevents them from sponsoring their extended families, as part of an aggressive plan which he said will serve national interest.

However, there was no reference to the H-1B visas, the most sought after by Indian IT professionals, in the proposal which Mr. Trump sent to Congress on Sunday.

Besides overhauling the country's green-card system, the Trump administration's wish list also includes the funding of a controversial border wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and a crackdown on unaccompanied minors entering the country.

Extended family

The move to establish a merit-based immigration system could benefit highly-skilled Indian immigrants, especially those from the IT sector.

However, the new policies would badly impact those thousands of Indian-Americans who want to bring in their family members to the U.S. particularly their aged parents.

The demands were denounced by Democratic leaders in Congress who had hoped to forge a deal with Mr. Trump to protect younger immigrants, known as "dreamers", who were brought to the U.S. illegally as children.

Trump last month announced plans to phase out the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals programme that had provided two-year work permits to the dreamers that Trump called "unconstitutional".

"Decades of low-skilled immigration has suppressed wages, fueled unemployment and strained federal resources," he rued.

Mr. Trump proposed ending extended-family chain migration by limiting family-based green cards to spouses and minor children and replace it with a merit-based system that prioritises skills and economic contributions over family connections. He called for establishing a new point-based system for awarding the green cards.

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