

07.09.2021

Bengaluru

To,
The Chief Secretary,
Government of Karnataka,
Vidhan Soudha, Bengaluru.

Subject: Seeking support and cooperation with students from Afghanistan enrolled in several Universities across Karnataka arising out of the recent crisis in Afghanistan

Annexure: List of students under SII, self-financed students and those with backlogs

Respected Sir,

This letter is to bring to your attention the plight of the students from Afghanistan who are residing in various parts of Karnataka and are enrolled in Universities across Karnataka, in the wake of the political turmoil currently unfolding in Afghanistan. The humanitarian crisis that has arisen due to the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan after two decades of US imperialism. From repeated meetings and conversations with a majority of Afghan students, there are some serious concerns that they are presently facing and the same have been elaborated as below:

1. **Financial Concerns:** Afghan students in India are in requirement of urgent financial assistance since their families have been displaced, lost employment, homes and property in Afghanistan. Even where the students want to leave Afghanistan and are currently in Kabul, with their visas, they are unable to afford a ticket. As also that international bank transfers are frozen because of

the political impasse, therefore pushing many of these students into financial distress. There are about 400 students in three categories –

- a. ICCR Scholarships: Those who have a full free scholarship and receive a monthly amount from the ICCR.
 - b. SII: Those whose university fees, dormitories, and food are free but a bit of the money their families have to send on a monthly basis and are enrolled under the Study In India scheme of the Ministry for Education, Government of India.
 - c. Self-financed: They are the most affected who are completely on their own and studying with the support from their families.
2. **Housing Concerns:** Students from Afghanistan are facing housing crisis in India, with landlords forcing them to vacate their rented accommodation or are extorting more rent and deposits.
 3. **Visa-related Concerns:** Many students are graduating from Indian Universities in the coming weeks and are gravely concerned about being deported upon the expiry of their student visas. Many of these Afghan students, presently studying in India, are women and belong to other persecuted communities in Afghanistan and face the risk of persecution if they go back to their homeland.
 4. **Refugee Status:** Afghan students face a very difficult situation since there is now no Embassy or official diplomatic representative of Afghanistan in India, and require the assistance of the UN to seek refuge in various countries, including India.
 5. **Students in Indian Universities Residing at Afghanistan:** Many students are at present located in Afghanistan. Due to the second wave of coronavirus, several students returned to Afghanistan and are stuck there now. This requires serious efforts and cooperation to facilitate the granting of visas as soon as possible so that they can return to India. Since flights are suspended

for now and the Government of India must assist them with special flights to bring students left behind in Afghanistan.

6. **Safety Concerns:** Students are greatly concerned about their safety as well as that of their families whose lives are at stake which has induced emotional trauma and duress. It is unimaginable the kind of pain and suffering they are going through.

We have annexed a list of students who are currently enrolled under the SII and another list of students who are availing education through self-finance. Many students who were enrolled in ICCR and have some back-log papers have lost their scholarships and are also in dire financial constraints. A list of those students who have back-logs has also been annexed with this letter.

These students are in urgent need for financial help. Many of these students are also on the verge of their graduation, which means that their students visas will expire. Therefore, we require the assistance and support from the State Government to ensure refugee status is granted to these students given the risk they face if they return to their homeland.

Moreover, there are several issues at the University-level which needs your attention and intervention. One, due to their financial constraints, students are unable to pay examination fees to appear for exams. Two, several of them have been unable to pay college fees, due to which they are being prevented from appearing for online classes, thus they are losing out on education. Three, college hostels are not providing a conducive atmosphere for these students who are facing a lot of harassment at the hands of the wardens and hostel management.

Taking all into consideration Afghan Students' Association in Karnataka makes the following requests on an urgent basis which requires your immediate intervention:

1. The State Government must extend ICCR scholarships to all students who are enrolled under the SII scheme, as well as to those who are self-financed. Those who are under ICCR scholarships must be extended their scholarships until the completion of their education
2. The State Government must call for a meeting with the Department of Education to ensure cooperation with students from Afghanistan and to resolve University-level issues
3. The State Government must assist the students with applying for asylum and refugee status with the UNHCR

Thanking you

Yours Sincerely,

Sayed Hasan Anwary & Ali Aka Rasikh

On behalf of Aghanistation Students' Association - Karnataka

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