

NOVEMBER VISA AVAILABILITY

The bulletin issued by the Visa Office of the Bureau of Consular Affairs of the U.S. Department of State gives the following availability position for issuance of immigrant visas during November 2004:

Persons Chargeable to India

Family-Sponsored Preferences

1st Preference	Nov 01, 2000
2nd Preference	
2A	Jun 01, 2000
2B	Jul 15, 1995
3rd Preference	Nov 08, 1997
4th Preference	Dec 22, 1991

Employment-Based Preferences

1st Preference	Current
2nd Preference	Current
3rd Preference	Current
Other Workers	Current
4th Preference	Current
Certain Religious	
Workers	Current
5th Preference	Current
Targeted Emp	
Areas	Current

Persons Chargeable to Other Countries

For other chargeability areas, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, and the nations of Africa, the cut-off dates for November 2004 are:

Family-Sponsored Preferences

1st Preference	Nov 01, 2000
2nd Preference	
2A	Jun 01, 2000
2B	Jul 15, 1995
3rd Preference	Nov 08, 1997
4th Preference	Sep 01, 1992

Employment-Based Preferences

1st Preference	Current
2nd Preference	Current
3rd Preference	Current
Other Workers	Current
4th Preference	Current
Certain Religious	
Workers	Current
5th Preference	Current
Targeted Emp	
Areas	Current

BUSINESS TRAVEL INITIATIVE

The Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has recently sent a cable to all diplomatic and consular posts providing guidance on a new initiative to facilitate business travel in support of U.S. commerce abroad. He begins by stating that the productive relationships that many posts already enjoy with local American Chambers of Commerce and similar organizations will serve as an important element in this initiative.

The Secretary cites therein the wide range of existing business liaison programs that posts have developed. Among others, the U.S. Consulate in Chennai is specifically mentioned thus:

Chennai's Business Executive Program, which enrolls about 220 companies with a demonstrated need for a high volume of visas (100+ annually). BEP applicants have separate lines for screening and interviews.

It seems that New Delhi, Mumbai, and Calcutta may not have such programs in place. But local Indo-US Chambers of Commerce and like organizations can play a vital role in encouraging the consular sections there in developing similar programs.