

HR 1044

Prelims: International Policies & Schemes

Mains: GSII- Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

Why in News?

- ✚ The US lawmakers passed a Bill titled Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act (HR 1044). It is aimed at lifting the current seven per cent country-cap on issuing Green Cards, a development which would benefit thousands of highly-skilled Indian IT professionals.

HR 1044 to India:

- ✚ A change in the existing law can mean that immigrants from countries like India and China seeking permanent residency could expect shorter wait times.
- ✚ Indian IT professionals, who under the existing law would have to wait up to 70 years as some studies suggest, can now hope for a fairer system with lesser processing time.
- ✚ Apart from removing caps for employment-based Green Cards, caps for family-based categories have also been increased to 15%.
- ✚ A US based institute released a study in 2018 saying, that based on current law and backlog, Indian nationals holding advanced educational degrees may have to wait over 150 years in order to get a Green Card.

What is a Green Card?

- ✚ A Permanent Resident Card, also known as a 'Green Card', allows a non-US citizen to live and work permanently in America. Green Card holders can qualify for US citizenship generally after three to five years. Over 10 lakh migrants from around the world are known to receive Green Cards yearly.

Popular Green Card categories:

- ❖ Categories of employment-based visas under which Indian professionals are known to apply are the: 'EB-1', or priority workers with extraordinary ability
 - ❖ 'EB-2' or those holding advanced degrees, and
 - ❖ 'EB-3' or skilled workers.
- ✚ The EB-2 category generally sees the greatest number of applicants.