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Getting Chinese visa made easy for Pakistanis

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Many visa applicants, especially the Urdu speakers, visiting the consular section of the Chinese embassy in Islamabad are pleasantly surprised to see two Pakistani woman employees at the office greeting them.

Yang Lianchun, director of the Consular Section, said that additional Pakistani staff has been hired in the visa section to facilitate the applicants and break the language barrier for Urdu-speaking applicants. "All of our consular officers speak English only.

Earlier, while interviewing the Urdu-speaking applicants who wanted to visit China for the first time, we will sometimes reject their applications for being not sure of their visit purpose due to language barriers. However, the hiring of Pakistani employees has solved this problem," he said.

"Hiring more Pakistani staff in the Consular Section is under the instructions of Ambassador Yao Jing. Since his arrival last year, the ambassador has taken several steps to facilitate Chinese visa applicants. His meetings with different chambers of commerce and industry won huge support from the local business community. He views promoting mutual understanding, regular exchanges and cooperation between the two peoples as the key point for developing an all-weather strategic partnership between China and Pakistan.

He has directed all the consular officers to greet visa applicants with warmth and friendliness, and make it easier for Pakistani people to get Chinese visas,"

local governments or big enterprises and are difficult to obtain.

According to the statistics, the visa issuance volume from

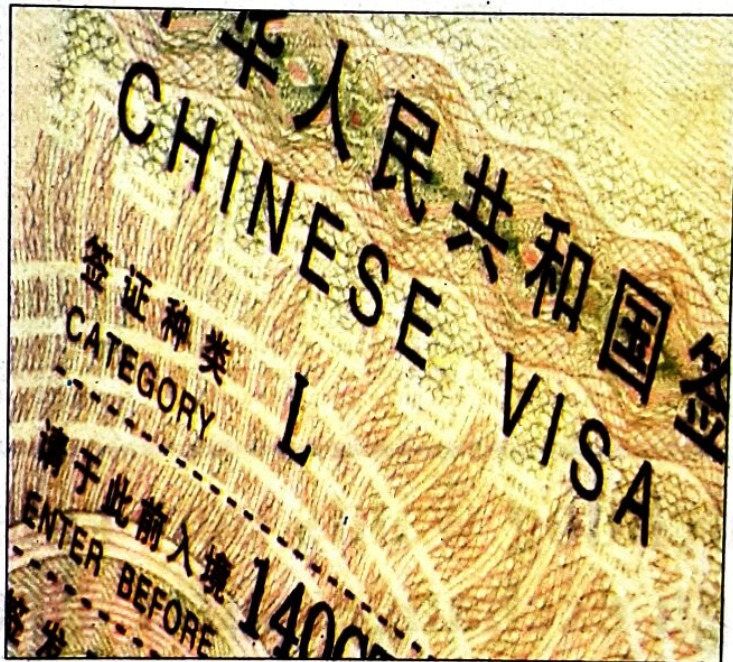
validity period of one year. It is because I have been to China many times and built up a very good visa record," he said.

According to Ambassador Yao Jing, the embassy processes visas for Pakistanis on the basis of international conventions and the principle of reciprocity. "As a major pilot project under Belt and Road Initiative, the CPEC is the most important and best performing project. We'll further ease our visa policy to contribute more to the development of the CPEC," he says, and believes that China's easing visa policy would facilitate bilateral trade and help address the problem of trade imbalance.

"We're planning to hire more Pakistani employees to serve visa applicants. Multiple visas with a longer period of validity are available to those businessmen who have good entry and exit records. We can also provide urgent visa service when required," Director Yang Lianchun said.

The trade chambers have highly appreciated the recent steps taken by the ambassador. "It has given my company a good chance to avail international exposure. Some clients are very interested in my products and have placed many orders with me.

I believe many businessmen like me have explored new markets in China," a corporate member of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Farhan Mughal, said. He has participated in the Canton Fair held recently.



Yang Lianchun said.

Since April 1 this year, the Chinese embassy has implemented new policy for 'F' and 'M' category visas. According to the new rules, those applicants who have visited China more than three times since January 1, 2016; those who work for companies registered in local chambers; or those who hold official passports are exempted from submitting barcode invitation letters.

These invitation letters are usually issued by the Chinese

April 1 to June 15 rose 11% against the same period of the previous year, and the business visa volume has reached around 15,000, a growth of 19%.

Faisal Saeed, a businessman from Faisalabad who just visited China International Carpet Exhibition in Qinghai, said that the new policy has made it easier for Pakistani businessmen to obtain Chinese visas and will yield more economic benefits. "To my delight, I was granted a multiple-entry visa with a