

NEW DELHI: According to Times of India on 14, 2011, China's policy of issuing stapled visas to Indian citizens keeps [India](#) off-balance. While [China](#) had been issuing stapled visas for residents of [Jammu & Kashmir](#), its recent decision to issue similar visas to people from Arunachal Pradesh is curious.

Chinese embassy officials, when questioned, said the visas were "correct". On Thursday, defence minister A K Antony termed it "unacceptable". "Stapled Chinese visas are unacceptable to India. It has been conveyed to China. We will not accept it," he told journalists.

Until recently, residents from Arunachal were denied visas by the Chinese government — on the grounds that China considered Arunachal Pradesh to be a part of its territory, so its residents did not need visas. Ganesh Koyu, an IAS officer from the state was refused a visa, prompting the Indian government to cancel a study tour by Indian bureaucrats to China.

Since 2009, China has been stapling visas on residents from Jammu & Kashmir, which India interpreted as a direct challenge to India's sovereignty over this state.

With China expanding the stapled visas issue to Arunachal Pradesh, government sources said, it was unclear whether that was a step forwards or not. "Does that mean China does not regard this state as Chinese territory anymore, but as a disputed territory?" asked an official.

In November, foreign minister [S M Krishna](#) had told his Chinese counterpart that J&K was as much of a "core" issue for India as [Tibet](#) and [Taiwan](#) were for China.