



Trump’s immigration war may focus on visas — media reports

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With just 17 days before he is sworn in as the next United States president, Donald Trump’s big immigration war to deport Caribbean and other immigrants may focus on visas, according to US media reports.

In announcing his priorities for the first 100 days in office, Trump, who will take the oath of Office on January 20, has vowed to direct the US Department of Labour to “investigate all abuses of visa programs that undercut the American worker”.

The McClatchyDCnews network reported that Trump’s investigation of the alleged abuse of the visa programmes was the first promise he made on immigration after the US Presidential Elections in November.

“While it doesn’t generate the same headlines as building a massive wall, the visa issue is almost as explosive,” said McClatchyDC, pointing to critics of off shoring as saying that a US visa programme that lets in foreign workers is often the first step to moving American jobs overseas.

The H-1B visa programme issues work permits to as many as 85,000 foreign workers a year with “highly specialized knowledge” to fill jobs when qualified Americans can’t be found, said the network.

Sara Blackwell, a lawyer for some of the employees hired by the Miami-based Caribbean cruise line, Carnival Corp, said time will tell if Trump follows through with his promises.

US media reports said that Trump’s ascent to the US presidency has “set off a wave of fear among millions of immigrants in the United States illegally,” who are apprehensive that he will “follow through with promises to deport those here illegally.

“And he will have at his finger tips the identities and legal status of hundreds of thousands of immigrants who submitted their personal information to President Barack Obama following his executive orders to block their deportation,” said McClatchyDCnews, referring to some experts, who claim that “Trump is politically obligated to deport them”.

The network noted that Trump never wavered from the hard line stance on immigration that he staked out when he first announced his candidacy for the US presidency.

Alex Nowrasteh, an immigration policy analyst at the Washington-based libertarian Cato Institute, said that information about the beneficiaries of the children's programme, known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, will soon be in the hands of the Trump administration.

“The DACA beneficiaries have been some of the most active and vocal advocates for immigration reform. So, politically, he'd have quite an incentive to use that information to target these people for deportation,” he added.