

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Extension of deadline for registration as OCI Cardholder by erstwhile PIO cardholders

The Government of India vide Gazette Notification No.26011/01/2014-F.I dated 09.01.2015 had announced that all PIO cards issued till 09.01.2015 shall be deemed to be OCI cards. Subsequently instructions were issued by the Government of India on 26 February 2015 that submission of application for OCI card in lieu of PIO card may be voluntary and on gratis basis initially for 3 months. Since then this validity has been extended number of times and presently such conversion on gratis basis is valid till 31.12.2017.

2. It is pertinent to mention that erstwhile PIO cards are hand written whereas the new OCI cards are machine readable. It has been brought to the notice of Government of India that from October 2018, International Civil Aviation Organization will accept only machine readable travel documents. The existing PIO cards which are handwritten will, therefore, become invalid travel documents. Hence it will be necessary upon PIO card holders to obtain machine readable OCI cards in lieu of existing hand written PIO cards before October, 2018 to avoid any inconvenience.

3. As mentioned in para 1 above, the last date of conversion of handwritten PIO cardholders into machine readable OCI cards on **gratis basis (free of charge)** is 31.12.2017. Therefore, it will be advisable for all concerned to get such conversion done before 31.12.2017 to avail the conversion services on gratis basis.

27.9.2017