

MHA guidelines regarding OCI card holders

i. MHA vide their circular No. 26011/06/2015-OCI dated 29.01.2015 dispensed with the requirement of 'U' Visa OCI sticker and made OCI card in the form of booklet valid for travel to India. Since longtime back this provision was promulgated, but the guidelines published by CGI, San Francisco, still exists, on the basis of which the passengers arrive from foreign countries on the basis of 'U' Visa sticker and not with OCI Card. They also carry the copy of guidelines along with them. In view of this, MEA is requested to issue an advisory to our Missions/Posts abroad to update the guidelines in their website, so that passengers do not face any difficulty while getting immigration clearance.

ii. Further, some passengers also carry copy of guidelines of our Missions/Posts, wherein it is published that after September 30, 2018, PIO Card will be considered as an invalid travel document, therefore, all applicants, who have not yet converted their PIO Card to OCI Card, are requested to apply for OCI in lieu of PIO before September 30, 2018.

iii. In this regard, MHA vide para 2 of their circular No. 26011/06/2015-OCI(Vol.III) dated 22.09.2017 mentioned that from October, 2018, ICAO will accept only machine readable travel documents, hence, existing PIO Cards, which are handwritten will therefore, become invalid. Thus, it will be necessary upon PIO Cardholders to obtain machine readable OCI Cards in lieu of existing hand written PIO Cards before October, 2018 to avoid any inconvenience.