

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3265
ANSWERED ON:16.03.2011
VISA TO NRIS
Punia Shri P.L.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has formulated a scheme to provide lifetime visa to the Non-Resident Indians;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether PIO and OCI cards are likely to be merged in this scheme; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

(a) & (b) Yes. The Government has formulated 'Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Card' which is issued to a foreign national (i) who was citizen of India any time after after 26th January, 1950 or (ii) who was eligible for citizenship of India on 26th January, 1950 or (iii) who is a citizen of another country, but belonged to a territory that became part of India after 15th August, 1947 or (iv) who is a child or grand child of such a citizen or (v) any person who is a minor child of a person mentioned in clauses (i) to (iv) above. No person who is or was a citizen of Pakistan, Bangladesh or such other country as the Central Government may specify shall be eligible for OCI card. The holder of an OCI card is entitled to multiple-entry, multi-purpose life long visa for visiting India and can take up studies, business, employment etc in India. The holder enjoys parity with Non-resident Indians in economic, financial and educational fields except for acquisition of agricultural land or plantation. The scheme is already in force.

(c) & (d) Yes. PIO and OCI cards will be merged with effect from 1st April, 2011. After merger, the holders of the two cards shall enjoy the same benefits and shall be subject to the same restrictions.