

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2077
ANSWERED ON:10.03.2015
MERGING PIO AND OIC SCHEMES
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether the Government has amended the Indian Citizenship Act to merge the Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) and Overseas Indian Citizen (OIC) schemes;
- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) Whether these amendments have been made after receiving large representations from PIOs;
- (d) If so, the main benefits to PIOs and OIC after merging these two schemes;
- (e) The extent to which the NRIs are likely to be attracted to India and the facilities likely to be provided to them after merging these two schemes; and
- (f) Whether the Government is going to give them voting rights and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI KIREN RIJU)

- (a) & (b) Yes, Madam. The Central Government has promulgated the Citizenship (Amendment) Ordinance 2015 enabling the merger of OCI (Overseas Citizen of India) and PIO (Persons of Indian Origin) card. Subsequently, the Government has notified that on and from 9th January, 2015, all the existing Persons of Indian Origin cardholders registered as such under notification of the Government of India in the Ministry Home Affairs number 26011/4/98-F.I dated 19th August, 2002, shall be deemed to be Overseas Citizens of India cardholders.
- (c) Before finalizing the Amendments, suggestions and representations were invited from all Stakeholders including PIO Card holders
- (d) Besides the existing benefits available to OCI card holders, following additional facilities have been extended to merged OCI card holders:-
 - (i) All PIO card holders were eligible for 15 years visa, has now been deemed to be OCI card holders and enjoying life long visa.
 - (ii) All PIO card holders have been exempted from police reporting.
 - (iii) Earlier PIO cards were not allowed to the nationals of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Iran, Nepal and China, now after merging, it is available to the nationals of above countries except Pakistan and Bangladesh.
 - (iv) To enable for registration as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) by a minor, whose parents or either parents are Indian Citizens.
 - (v) To enable for registration as OCI by a child or a grand-child or a great grand-child of person who has been citizen of India or undivided India at any time.
 - (vi) To enable for registration as OCI by such spouse of a citizen of India or spouse of an OCI registered under section 7A and whose marriage has been registered and subsisted for a continuous period of not less than two years immediately preceding the presentation of the application under this section with prior security checks by Competent Authority.
- (e) This Scheme is not meant for NRIs.
- (f) No. Madam.