

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1952

ANSWERED ON - 02/08/2024

OVERSEAS CITIZENS OF INDIA

1952. SMT. PRATIMA MONDAL

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) the details of initiatives of the Government for promoting and safeguarding the rights of Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs);**
- (b) whether there has been an increase in the revocation of visas of such OCIs, if so, the details thereof; and**
- (c) the number of OCI cardholders re-categorised as foreign nationals?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) OCI cardholders are foreign nationals who enjoy certain benefits when they visit India. The benefits/rights of OCI cardholders in India are subject to Para 7B of the Citizenship Act 1955. The rights of OCI cardholders in their home country are a sovereign matter of the concerned foreign State.

The benefits/rights of an OCI cardholder are available in public domain and are also enclosed herewith as Annexure – I. These benefits are widely publicized on the website of MHA and Indian Missions/Posts abroad. Government of India ensures that they avail/enjoy these benefits without any hindrance while in India.

(b) OCI card is in itself a lifelong visa and therefore no separate Indian visa is required to be issued to OCI cardholders. During the last 3 years, 105 OCI cards have been revoked under Section 7D of the Citizenship Act 1955.

(c) Since OCI cards are life-long visas that are issued to foreign nationals, their nationality need not be re-categorized by the Indian authorities.

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Benefits to an OCI Cardholder :

(i) Multiple entry lifelong visa for visiting India for any purpose (However OCI Cardholders will require a special permission to undertake research work in India for which they may submit the application to the Indian Mission/ Post/ FRRO concerned).

(ii) Exemption from registration with Foreigners Regional Registration Officer (FRRO) or Foreigners Registration Officer (FRO) for any length of stay in India.

(iii) Parity with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in respect of all facilities available to them in economic, financial, and educational fields except in matters relating to the acquisition of agricultural or plantation properties.

(iv) Registered Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder shall be treated at par with Non-Resident-Indians in the matter of inter-country adoption of Indian children.

(v) Registered Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder shall be treated at par with resident Indian nationals in the matter of tariffs in air fares in domestic sectors in India.

(vi) Registered Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder shall be charged the same entry fee as domestic Indian visitors to visit national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in India.

(vii) Parity with Non-Resident Indians(NRI) in respect of:-

(A) Entry fees to be charged for visiting the national monuments, historical sites and museums in India;

(B) Pursuing the following professions in India, in pursuance of the provisions contained in the relevant Acts, namely:-

(a) doctors, dentists, nurses and pharmacists;

(b) advocates;

(c) architects;

(d) chartered accountants;

(C)to appear for the All India Pre-Medical Test or such other tests to make them eligible for admission in pursuance of the provisions contained in the relevant Acts.

(viii) State Governments should ensure that the OCI Cardholder registration booklets of OCI Cardholders are treated as their identification for any services rendered to them. In case proof of residence is required, Overseas Citizens of India Cardholder may give

an affidavit attested by a notary public stating that a particular/specific address may be treated as their place of residence in India and may also in their affidavit give their overseas residential address as well as e-mail address, if any.
