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flash Alert

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India – Government Starts Issuing OCI Cards to Replace PIO Cards
by KPMG, India (a KPMG International member firm)

India's government has merged the Person of Indian ('PIO') card and Overseas Citizen of India ('OCI') card programs by means of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2015.[1]

Why This Matters

Immigration professionals and global mobility managers with immigration responsibilities vis-à-vis their globally mobile employees should be aware of these changes, as should individuals who are currently registered under the PIO scheme. In due course, PIO cards will no longer be recognized as valid. Further, going forward, eligible applicants can only apply for an OCI card, as the PIO card scheme has been withdrawn.

Under the new regime,[2] PIO card holders are deemed to be OCI card holders and are entitled to benefits such as life-long visas and exemption from police registration.

The government has now mandated[3] all PIO cardholders to apply for OCI cards in lieu of their existing PIO cards.

- The application for an OCI card in lieu of a PIO card needs to be submitted with the Indian Embassy / Foreigners' Regional Registration Office ("FRRO"), which originally issued the PIO card to the applicant.

- The OCI card in lieu of the PIO card would be granted if the PIO card was valid on 9 January 2015.

- The OCI card will be issued free of cost to all existing PIO cardholders.

Footnotes:

1 The text of the Act, as published in the *Gazette of India* (10 March 2015), can be found at: http://indiancitizenshiponline.nic.in/UserGuide/E-gazette.pdf .

2 For prior coverage, see GMS *Flash Alert* 2015-036 (6 March 2015).

3 See: http://passport.gov.in/oci/capchaActionPIO .

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Please note KPMG LLP (U.S.) does not offer immigration services.

6 – 8 October 2015: Save The Date! KPMG's Global Mobility Forum in Rome!

Deploying Talent in the Borderless Economy

If you think it has become easier to deploy talent in the global economy, it is time to reconsider. The trend toward stricter immigration regulation defies the borderless economy. Taxes present significant hurdles to the free movement of employees across geographies. The diversity of labor laws complicates decisions with respect to benefit plan offerings and participation in the cross-border environment. The cost of compliance has never been higher.

Please 'Save the Date' in your calendar today and join us in Rome at KPMG's Global Mobility Forum to discuss and better understand the challenges of deploying talent in the borderless economy.

Venue: Rome Cavalieri Hotel, Rome Italy

For further information please contact your local KPMG People Services or Global Mobility Services representative.

The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in India. The information contained herein is of a general nature and based on authorities that are subject to change. Applicability of the information to specific situations should be determined through consultation with your tax adviser.

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