

TAX FLASH NEWS

7 June 2021



Visas of foreign nationals stranded in India due to Covid extended till 31 August

Background

Government of India (GOI) has regularly come out with travel advisories and orders relating to visa on account of the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic.

As per one of the orders issued on 29 June 2020, the Indian Visa or stay stipulation period of foreign nationals expiring post 30 June 2020 shall be deemed to be valid until 30 more days from the date of resumption of normal international flight operations, on gratis basis.

The above order led to a situation where foreign nationals had been applying for extension of their visas or stay stipulation period on a monthly basis. Keeping in view the difficulties being faced by such foreign nationals in getting their visas extended in India due to the lockdown, GoI has issued a Press Release¹ on 4 June 2021.

Extension of Visa of stranded foreign nationals in India

- As per the Press Release¹, Indian visa or stay stipulation period of foreign nationals stranded in India will be considered as deemed to be valid till 31 August 2021 on gratis basis without levy of any overstay penalty.
- These foreign nationals will not be required to submit any application to the FRRO/FRO concerned for extension of their visas.
- Such foreign nationals may apply for an exit permission to the FRRO/FRO concerned before exiting the country, which would be granted on gratis basis without levy of any overstay penalty.

Our comments

Extension of visa of foreign nationals stranded in India due to Covid pandemic is a respite. This will reduce the compliance burden on foreign nationals.

It is imperative to note that the press release provides only for extension in stay and a foreign national should apply for exit permission to the FRRO/FRO concerned in case he/she wishes to exit the country during the period.



¹ For details, refer:

Indian visa or stay stipulation period of foreign nationals stranded in India due to COVID-19 pandemic to be considered as deemed to be valid till 31.08.2021, PIB Delhi, June 2021

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