

For NRI's and PIO's --- "Opposition to Retroactive Enforcement of New Rules for Surrender of Indian Passport".

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In future those Indian citizens who acquire foreign citizenship on or after 01 June 2010 will have to submit declaration of renunciation of their Indian citizenship forms as given on website and fees of USD 175.00."

More details below in GOPIO newsletter:



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All previous issues of GOPIO News are available at GOPIO News Archives at www.gopio.net.

GOVT. OF INDIA RELENTS DUE TO OVERWHELMING SUPPORT AGAINST THE NEW RULES FOR SURRENDER OF INDIAN PASSPORT - FEE REDUCED \$20

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FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION OF NRI AND PIOS

We at GOPIO International are pleased to inform the members of the Indian Diaspora that due to the overwhelming opposition to the retroactive enforcement of the new rules, Government of India has relented in retroactive enforcement of the new rules.

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In future those Indian citizens who acquire foreign citizenship on or after 01 June 2010 will have to submit declaration of renunciation of their Indian citizenship forms as given on website and fees of USD 175.00."

On May 23, 2010, the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO International) initiated an on-line petition addressed to the Prime Minister of India, titled "*Opposition to Retroactive Enforcement of New Rules for Surrender of Indian Passport*". As of this date, close to 29,000 people have signed this online petition to the Prime Minister of India against the retroactive enforcement of the new rules for surrender of Indian passports by naturalized citizens of other countries. By signing the petition, the former Indian citizens have expressed their strong opposition to the new rules and have vented their anger and frustration with their comments.

On May 28, 2010 GOPIO International sent a letter to Prime Minister of India, Hon. Dr Manmohan Singh, together with the first batch of over 19,000 signatures of people supporting the petition (the pdf file was about 1000 pages with signee names and comments), with the following requests:

1. To reconsider the retroactive enforcement of the new rules as many thousands of people could suffer undue and unnecessary hardship for no fault of their own. Indians who have been naturalized for years should be given the same 90 days window to obtain "surrender certificate" as being allowed to those Indians who become citizens of other countries now, without payment of fee or penalty.

2. To reduce the service fee from \$175 to a reasonable amount of \$25 (USD) after the first 90 days

GOPIO International congratulates community activists, organization heads, individual volunteers, Indian American media (special mention of PTI, TV Asia, ITV, Asianet, Kairali, India Abroad, News India Times, Indian Express, India West, Indian Express, India Journal, Indian Panorama, Voice of Asia, and several other regional language community newspapers) and media supporters in India, who all banded together and unanimously condemned the retroactive enforcement of the new rules for obtaining "surrender certificate." Their individual and collective efforts created quick and informative awareness against the retroactive enforcement of the new rules. In one week, close to 29,000 people went on line and signed GOPIO initiated on-line petition which was addressed to the Prime Minister of India. There were many people, who in addition to signing the on-line petition, also vented their feelings in their emails directly to the secretary of Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) and Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

We at GOPIO International acknowledge and appreciate the overwhelming support from the global Indian community from all corners of the world. We believe that this massive level of support made a tremendous difference in the outcome of our appeal - retraction of the enforcement of the new rules. We also acknowledge the efforts of Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) and Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to respond to our concerns promptly and take remedial action.

We do not as yet have the complete details of the announcement by the Government of India, but it appears that the latest posting on the Consulate website shows reduction of fee to \$20 for "surrender certificate" for majority of people who are naturalized citizens outside India.

Support for GOPIO's Petitiononline was much beyond our expectation. After people received GOPIO Special News Bulletin on May. 23rd, everyone took upon themselves to forward to their relatives and friends. It was heartening to note that we received overwhelming support. Therefore, it was a people's campaign, GOPIO just acted as the conduit and provided the platform. We thank you for your support and we hope you will join us in our future endeavors. As this campaign is over, we are also discontinuing the current Petitiononline drive. If there are still any major issue which has not been resolved, we will take it with the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs to resolve them. We will also continue to work closely with our Indian missions around the world to promote interests of the overseas Indian community and India.

For more information, please contact Inder Singh, Chairman, GOPIO International at +1-818-708-3885, Email: GOPIO-Intl@sbcglobal.net.

GOPIO LIFE MEMBERSHIP AND CHAPTER FORMATION

GOPIO is a non-partisan, non-sectarian global organization with chapters in several countries, actively promoting the interests of people of Indian origin worldwide by monitoring and addressing current critical issues of concern, and by enhancing cooperation and communication between groups of Indians living in various countries.

GOPIO Individual Life membership is open to all who believe in the mission of GOPIO. The one-time fee is \$5,000 for Platinum Life Membership, \$2,500 for Gold Life Membership and \$1,500 Silver Life Membership and half the amount for each category for those from developing countries and India.

GOPIO is looking forward to opening chapters in all major cities of the world so as to network people of Indian origin all over the world. If you do not have chapter in your city, please visit GOPIO website (www.gopio.net)

and get details of chapter initiation (visit http://www.gopio.net/chapter_initiative.htm). Process involves sending a letter of intent to start a chapter by a committee of five people or more. For more information, contact:

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To become a Life member of GOPIO, one can sign up online at http://gopio.net/online_membership.htm or fill up the form and send it with a check to: **GOPIO International, PO Box 560117, New York NY 11356, USA.**

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GOPIO NEWS welcomes NRI/PIO related stories from all over the world. Be a volunteer correspondent or reporter. Contact Dr. Thomas Abraham, Tel: 203-329-8010, E-mail: gopio@optonline.net.

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