

Ministry of Public Administration,  
Provincial Councils & Home Affairs,  
Independence Square,  
Colombo 7.

24th May, 1989.

To: All Secretaries to Ministries,  
Heads of Departments, Chairmen of  
Public Corporations and Chief  
Secretaries of Provincial Councils.

GRANT OF CITIZENSHIP TO STATELESS PERSONS  
(SPECIAL PROVISIONS) ACT NO: 39 OF 1988.

I have to draw your attention to the provisions contained in the Grant of Citizenship to Stateless Persons (Special Provisions) Act No. 39 of 1988.

02. According to Section 2 of this Act, "Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law every person who -

- (a) is of Indian origin lawfully resident in Sri Lanka ;
- (b) is stateless ; and
- (c) is not within the 506,000 persons referred to in the Grant of Citizenship to Stateless Persons Act, No. 5 of 1986, who have applied to the Indian High Commission for the Grant of Indian Citizenship, and the children born to them after October 30, 1964,

shall have the status of Citizen of Sri Lanka with effect from the date of commencement of this Act.

This Act came into force on 11-11-1988, Every person who is a citizen of Sri Lanka by operation of this Act is entitled to all rights and the privileges to which other citizens of Sri Lanka are entitled by law.

03. With the promulgation of Act No. 39 of 1988, the Government of Sri Lanka has solved the problem of statelessness of persons of Indian origin by the grant of Sri Lanka Citizenship to such persons except to the 506,000 persons of Indian Origin to whom the Government of India has agreed to grant Indian Citizenship. The Government of India has already granted Indian Citizenship to 422,000 persons and will be granting Indian Citizenship to the balance 84,000 persons and accepting their repatriation to India.

04. It is likely that some Ministries, Departments and Corporations may not be still aware of the provisions of this Act. This circular is therefore intended to make all officers aware of the provisions of the above Act, as citizens covered by this Act should not suffer any disabilities, particularly in relation to matters such as the following:

- (a) Elections, voting rights, registration as Voters.
- (b) Admission to schools and Universities and obtaining scholarships.
- (c) Acquiring land, house and properties, land alienation, and other matters relating to lands.
- (d) Employment, both in Government Sector and Private Sector.
- (e) Business registration, imports and export, agricultural and industrial ventures.
- (f) Obtaining Identity Cards, Passports, etc.

05. Any person who is a citizen of Sri Lanka by reasons of the provisions of this Act, may if he so desires, obtain a Certificate of Citizenship from the Commissioner of Registration of Persons of Indian Origin under Section 4(1) of the Act. However, in terms of Section 4(4) of the Act no person shall require the production of a Certificate referred to for any purpose and an affidavit shall be accepted as prima facie evidence of the facts stated therein.

06. You are directed to draw the attention of all officers of your Ministry/Department/Corporation/Council to the provisions of the above mentioned Act, so that they will in all matters, recognise those who are citizens by this Act, as citizens of Sri Lanka.

Sgd:Cyril Gamage  
Secretary,  
Ministry of Public Administration,  
Provincial Councils & Home Affairs.