Dear Seafarer

Following up with the Budget 2020-2021 declared in Parliament on Saturday, 01 February, 2020, The Maritime Union of India would like to place on record its deep concern and apprehension about implications of the same for the Seafarers of India.

Till, date, to qualify as an Non Resident Indian (NRI), an Indian citizen has to be present outside India for a period of 183 days to qualify as one.

From what has been announced, we understand that henceforth, this period has been raised from 183 days to 240 days in a financial year.

It is concurrently announced that if any such NRI does not pay tax in any other country, they will have to pay income tax in India. (However, we await further clarification / elaboration from the Government for this aspect).

Therefore, it would follow that all seafarers will have to be outside India for more than 240 days, and since they do not pay income tax in any other country, all of them will be deemed to be taxed in India.

Needless to say, this is a development, which is bound to have direct, serious and permanent implications for seafarers and the worldwide merchant shipping industry which employs them.

The Maritime Union of India and National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) had taken up a solid stand against a judgement of the Kolkata Tribunal in the year 2016 when certain Seafarers were singled as liable to pay tax even though they qualified as NRIs.

At that time, we had asked for petitions and consequently received support from a large number of seafarers. This valuable support and co-operation was appreciated by us, and we would like to thank you once again. We would like to appeal to these seafarers to realize that all efforts that we put in, are to ensure justice for the seafarers and the results would benefit each and everyone of them.

Results of our efforts were evident when we approached the Ministry of Shipping, Ministry of Finance – Government of India. The unions were successful in getting the matter clarified by Circular No. 13/2017 from the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT). Without action by MUI and NUSI, income of seafarers would have been taxable at the rate of 30%.

Today, we find ourselves again at a crucial juncture, which demands that all seafarers come together as one to co-operate and fight against the unfair deprivation of tax free status for seafarers who qualify as NRIs in a financial year.

Therefore we would like to request your proactive action because, if Officers do not wake up and protest then the consequences will be severe and far reaching

**Officers have to register their protest through the attached petition and send email to Prime Ministers Office at :**[**connect@mygov.nic.in**](mailto:connect@mygov.nic.in)**;** [**narendramodi1234@gmail.com**](mailto:narendramodi1234@gmail.com)

**and also a copy to :**

[**mansukh.mandaviya@sansad.nic.in**](mailto:mansukh.mandaviya@sansad.nic.in) **[Honorable Minister of State (Shipping)]**

[**petition@maritimeunionofindia.com**](mailto:petition@maritimeunionofindia.com)

immediately as a word document or scanned attachment. MUI team will also approach you when vessels visit Indian ports.

We look forward to receiving atleast one lakh petitions, which will provide the requisite strength to move forward and approach the Government.

Yours sincerely,

 Sd/-

 Amar Singh Thakur  
General Secretary