

## Geetha only MP with dual citizenship

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The Immigration and Emigration Department had confirmed that Galle District MP Geetha Kumarasinghe is the only MP holding dual citizenship, People's Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL) said yesterday.

The department, on a request made by PAFFREL under the Right to Information (RIT) Act, has revealed that MP Kumarasinghe was granted No 17096 A dual citizenship certificate. The balance 224 MPs had not been granted such dual citizenship certificates, PAFFREL, Executive Director Rohana Hettiarachchi told The Island. He said that their organisation had been informed by the Controller of Immigration and Emigration that he checked all the Identity Card numbers of the MPs with the information on the people who had obtained dual citizenship on their computer system as well as the manual records where the information had been recorded before the computer system was established.

The dual citizenship issue arose when five voters of the Galle District filed a petition in the Court of Appeal requesting the Court to declare MP Kumarasinghe ineligible to remain as a Parliamentarian while holding dual citizenship. The Court held that under the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, a dual citizen, was not eligible to contest parliamentary elections and therefore Kumarasinghe could no longer function as a parliamentarian.

Consequent to the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka, no person can be elected to Parliament if they hold dual citizenship.

The unseated MP however has appealed the Court of Appeal decision to the Supreme court.

MP Kumarasinghe was elected to parliament for the first time in Aug 2015; she polled 63,955 preferential votes.