

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTAREED QUESTION NO.2091
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.05.2016

LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO WOMEN DESERTED BY NRI SPOUSES

2091. SHRI C.M. RAMESH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of countries for which the scheme for providing legal assistance to Indian women deserted by overseas spouses is in operation;
- (b) whether there have been demands to extend this scheme to other countries;
- (c) if so, the step taken in this regard;
- (d) what are the reasons that only 80 beneficiaries have got legal/financial assistance under this scheme between 2012 and 2016; and
- (e) how the Ministry is planning to make this scheme more friendly to deserted women?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

- (a) The scheme for providing legal/financial assistance to Indian women cheated/abandoned by overseas Indian spouses is in operation in 13 countries namely USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq, Singapore, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.
- (b) There have been requests from some Indian Embassies to extend the scheme to their countries.
- (c) Ministry is presently reviewing the scheme and will take these suggestions into consideration.
- (d) Applications received in the Ministry are approved if they meet eligibility criteria and beneficiaries are found to deserve on financial grounds. Many of the deserted Indian women are based in India and do not have visa to travel to the country where the overseas Indian spouse is residing. Therefore they are unable to avail assistance under this scheme, which enables them to undertake legal action in a foreign court or avail assistance to address related issues in the foreign country.
- (e) Ministry is considering a review of the scheme including the amount of financial assistance given; the number of countries covered by the scheme and enabling Indian Missions to provide such assistance directly to the beneficiaries.
