

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.575
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.02.2019

COMPLAINTS BY NRI BRIDES

†575. SHRI RAM KUMAR SHARMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is receiving complaints regarding crisis being faced by the women of Indian origin after their marital relations with non-resident Indians;
- (b) if so, the total number of complaints received by the Government from 2014-15 to 2018-19; and
- (c) the number of cases out of these complaints resolved in favour of the women by the Government.

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) to (c) This Ministry has been receiving petitions from Indian women deserted or harassed by their NRI spouses. Between January, 2014 and December, 2018 this Ministry (including the Indian Missions abroad) has addressed 5379 complaints of distressed Indian women deserted by their NRI spouses. Most complaints received from them pertain to:

- (i) Harassment and ill treatment by the husband and his family;
- (ii) Loss of communication with the spouse after he goes abroad;
- (iii) Request for assistance in serving judicial summons for court proceedings in India
- (iv) Assistance in obtaining maintenance and child support from the spouse;
- (v) Request for impounding or revoking passport of overseas Indian spouse;
- (vi) Request for extradition, deportation of spouse to India; and
- (vii) Child custody issues.

This Ministry (including the Indian Missions abroad) has addressed these complaints of distressed Indian women deserted by their NRI spouses by way of providing them counseling, guidance and information about procedures, mechanisms for serving judicial summons on the Overseas Indian husband, filing

a case in India, issuing Look Out Circulars, impounding and revocation of Indian passport of the husband, getting access to lawyers and NGOs empanelled with Indian Missions etc.

In addition, with an aim to provide financial and legal assistance to distressed women married to NRI spouses by all Missions and Posts, the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) Guidelines were revised in September, 2017. The amount of legal & financial assistance to distressed Indian women has also been increased to US\$ 4000 per case. The assistance is released to the empanelled legal counsel of the applicant or Indian Community Association / Women's Organisation/NGO concerned to enable it to take steps to assist the woman in documentation and preparatory work for filing the case.

An Expert Committee was set up to identify legal and regulatory challenges faced by Indian nationals married to overseas Indian nationals and to suggest amendments in existing Acts/legislations or new policies / laws / regulations. Some of the recommendations of the Expert Committee have been accepted including the constitution of an Integrated Nodal Agency.

The INA is headed by Secretary, Women & Child Development. The other members of the INA are a) Joint Secretary (Judicial) & Joint Secretary (Foreigners), Ministry of Home Affairs, b) Joint Secretary (OIA-II), Ministry of External Affairs, and c) Joint Secretary (Legal), Ministry of Law & Justice. The INA is functioning as an effective body and providing a single window timely solution to the problems of Indian women married to overseas Indian spouses. So far, the INA has had thirteen sittings and has issued eight Look Out Circulars against the erring spouses.

Besides, this Ministry has revoked/ impounded 24 passports and has suspended 21 passports of erring spouses based on the complaints received and issuance of Look Out Circulars by the Integrated Nodal Agency, Police and Courts.
