

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA**  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.688  
TO BE ANSWERED ON **20.11.2019**

**COMPLAINTS OF NRI BRIDES**

**688. DR. SHASHI THAROOR :**

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) Whether the Government is aware that the number of complaints received from distressed NRI Indian Women, who get deserted by their NRI husbands, has been on the rise in the last five years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the number of complaints received, resolved and pending during the above time-period;
- (c) whether the Government has online consular services for Indian women nationals who are in distress abroad and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether there is any future proposals for introducing such a system that can look after their interests and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether there is legislation in place for their protection and the existing mechanism to serve judicial summons to the accused NRI husbands and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) if not, the reasons thereof ?

**ANSWER**  
**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**  
**[SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN]**

**(a) & (b)** Between January 2015 and October, 2019, this Ministry (including the Indian Missions abroad) has received and addressed **6094** complaints of distressed Indian women deserted by their NRI spouses. The year-wise data of the complaints addressed are as below:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Complaints received</b>	<b>Number of Complaints addressed</b>	<b>Pendency</b>
2015	796	796	0
2016	1510	1510	0
2017	1498	1498	0
2018	1299	1299	0
2019 (up to 31 <sup>st</sup> October, 2019)	991	991	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6094</b>	<b>6094</b>	<b>0</b>

**(c)** Ministry of External Affairs launched MADAD Portal in February 2015. It provides for online registration, tracking and resolution of grievances of Indians including the distressed Indian brides, who are in distress, in a transparent, time bound, and accountable manner. Tracking and monitoring through MADAD has significantly strengthened the mechanism for addressing and resolving the grievances of overseas Indians.

MADAD is one of the flagship initiatives of the Ministry of External Affairs under Digital India and is an integrated digital platform which is seamlessly spread across websites, mobile based platforms including IOS and Android as well as emails and text messages providing users with end-to-end digital tracking and monitoring with a view to have timely resolution of their grievances.

**(d)** The Government has adopted multipronged approach to give respite to the wives deserted by their NRI husbands. Ministry of External Affairs provides counseling, guidance and information about legal procedures, mechanisms for serving judicial summons on the Overseas Indian husband; filing a judicial case in India, issuing Look Out Circulars; impounding and revocation of Indian passport of the husband to such aggrieved women.

The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) Guidelines were revised in September, 2017 with an aim to provide financial and legal assistance to distressed women married to NRI spouses by all Indian Missions and Posts abroad. 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 them to take necessary and appropriate 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. Upon recommendations of the Expert Committee, an Integrated Nodal Agency (INA) was constituted.

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 effectively and providing a single window timely solution to the problems of Indian women married to Overseas Indian spouses. So far, the INA has had sixteen sittings and has issued eight Look Out Circulars against the erring spouses.

**(e) & (f)** It may be noted that the service of judicial processes (summons, notices, orders, etc.) outside India is regulated by reciprocal arrangements finalized and notified by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in Criminal matters and Ministry of Law & Justice (MoL&J) in civil and commercial matters. Accordingly, any court documents for service is routed through the Central Authority in India i.e. Ministry of Home Affairs in Criminal matters and Ministry of Law & Justice in Civil and Commercial matters.

Despite the measures taken by the Government of India to ameliorate the problems faced by Indian citizens married to NRI spouses, it was felt that these measures are not sufficient and the existing laws need to be amended to provide a more effective solution to the problem. Therefore, a bill titled “The Registration of Marriage of Non-Resident Indian Bill, 2019” was introduced in Rajya Sabha on February 11, 2019. The Bill envisages (i) Registration of Marriages by Non-Resident Indians; (ii) Amendment to the Passports Act 1967 and (iii) Amendment to the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973.

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