

Ministry biased against NRI husbands?

I would like to bring your attention towards the website of Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA). There is a section which talks about the issue of "Failed and Fraudulent" marriages with NRIs (<http://www.moia.gov.in/dfmain1.asp?tid=1>). It is ironical to see that the ministry which has the job of protecting NRI rights is itself trying to put all the blame for such failed marriages on NRIs. The website also publishes the letter sent by the Secretary of MOIA to all the Chief Secretaries of Indian States in this regard (<http://www.moia.gov.in/showinfo1.asp?linkid=214>). There is also a draft of a booklet "Information Booklet On Marriages to Overseas Indians" which the MOIA wants to publish (<http://www.moia.gov.in/shared/linkimages/46.%2003-251005>).

A cursory reading of this booklet reflects how outrageous the contents are. All the examples of 'typical incidents' the booklet cites suggests that the overseas Indian groom and his family members are cruel, arrogant and fraud. Further, it suggests that the Overseas Indian (OI, as termed in the booklet), and his family members are solely responsible for failed/failing overseas marriages.

Every 'overseas marriage' has similar problems as in an Indian marriage (Indian marriage here refers to couples married and living in India). 'Overseas Marriage' has additional caveats due to immigration/visa issues. Indian government, NCW and other women organizations cannot say that mostly 'husband's family' is responsible for "sufferings of women who are the victims of marriage to Overseas Indians". If any of the above organization has cited the statistics to support their findings, it must be present on MOIA's site (with it's source) for people to download and comment. Is the Indian government trying to suggest that OI's are female beaters, female abusers and do not have respect for their marriage and their wife? Is the government trying to prove that the NRIs who bring fame, glory and prestige for the nation are bunch of cruel people.

I have seen umpteen cases here in the United States where in a tensed relationship wife goes back to India and files a 'false dowry harassment charges' and 'misuses IPC 498a' on the husband's family. There are cases where a wife wants to support her family in India by sending them part of husband's earning and when husband objects to that, problems start in their marital life. There are cases where marriage turns sour when wife tries to control husband's life in various ways. The list of marital problems is endless and it is similar in 'overseas marriage' and 'regular Indian marriage'. Media both in the US and India has reported numerous cases in past few years where wife who married to OI male falsely accused her husband and his family of various crimes (including domestic violence). After long litigation, which drain time, money and energy, husband's family was proved innocent.

The booklet must provide details and directions for both men (including OI's) and women about how they can protect their own rights before, during and after marriage both in India as well as overseas. The MOIA should also publish the names of the NGOs, law agencies and addresses of the people who helped MOIA prepare this draft. The booklet should help all the Indian citizens irrespective of their gender and location. The MOIA should consider these views and facts before finalizing the contents.

Thanking you,

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