

Indians Abroad

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Thursday, July 13, 2006

NEWS

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Saral Beevi, who fled her sponsor's home, cannot leave the country without a no-objection document.

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Films featuring actors like Suneil Shetty are currently being shot at picturesque locations in north Staffordshire and north Wales.

INTERVIEWS

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Sarath Kumar was invited as the chief guest of the annual convention of the Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America.

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The Indian Premier fought hard to protect the interests of the people of Indian origin living in Ceylon, writes **PK Balachandran**.

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TV reporter catches Vayalar Ravi off guard

Indo-Asian News Service

Schaumburg (Illinois), July 13, 2006

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A television reporter caught India's Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs Vayalar Ravi off guard when she asked him what the Indian government had done to prevent NRI husbands from being harassed by their wives.

The question came when Ravi, on a visit to Chicago, was explaining to Indian Americans that the Indian government was considering a law to curb fraudulent marriages and the harassment and abandonment of brides by non-resident Indian grooms.

"What are you doing to protect the rights of husbands?" asked Vandana Jhingran, the Chicago reporter for Indian television channel TV Asia.

The aggressive questioning took the minister by surprise. He said most cases reported were of harassment by husbands.

"Are you telling me that there are no cases of wives abusing their NRI husbands?" asked Jhingran.

Ravi explained that the law was proposed following the recommendations of the National Commission on Women that favoured comprehensive legislation to protect brides in NRI marriages.

"Husbands have recourse to the judicial process," he said.

Jhingran's questions provoked applause from the male members of the audience, some of whom were later seen thanking her for "speaking on behalf of men".

She said she had been told of several cases of wives harassing Indian American men.

"In one recent case, the bride and her relatives got an NRI husband fraudulently arrested under Section 498 A of the Indian Penal Code (the harassment for dowry law).

He was in jail and could not even attend the last rites of his father. I am saying this as a woman - someone should stand up for victimised husbands too," Jhingran told the agency.

Earlier, the minister told Indian Americans that the question of voting rights for overseas Indians would have to be considered by a parliamentary standing committee.

"There is some precedent that if you have an Indian citizenship, you cannot become a US citizen at the same time," he said.

"But the overseas citizen of India (OCI) card could be considered the equivalent of Indian citizenship. It is more like the green card in the US."

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