

Beware runaway spouses! That ticket to Canada may be signed off soon

GURMUKH SINGH

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RUNAWAY spouses beware! The newly-formed Canadian Marriage Fraud Society is all set to mount a nationwide signature campaign in the Indo-Canadian community for tougher laws to punish those immigrant brides or grooms who abandon their spouses on their entry into this country.

"Canadian laws are very lenient. Under them, it is not mandatory for you to live with your spouse once you come here after marriage. What is happening these days is that more and more Indian girls are doing the disap-

pearing act. The moment these newly married girls land here, they just disappear. They abandon their spouses and go to live with their relatives. Why? Because they want to bring in their boyfriends," says Palwinder Singh Gill, one of the eight founders of the Canadian Marriage Fraud Society.

The Surrey-based society has prepared a petition to be submitted to Immigration office, Canada, and political leaders to plug loopholes in laws to punish those who use marriage with Canadians to enter this country and then disappear.

According to Gill, the petition



Signature campaign in Canada to demand law to deport such women

and men

seeks that laws should be amended to make it mandatory for all spouses to live together for three years after arrival in this country. If they don't live together for three years, the immigrant spouse should be deported back to India.

Citing the example of Australia, New Zealand and the UK which first give a two-year temporary visa to immigrant spouses, Gill says, "In those countries if

you want to get a divorce, you need to wait for two years. And you cannot get a divorce for five years. In Scandinavian countries, you have to even wait for seven

years to get divorce. Canada should have stricter laws to deal with this marriage industry spawned by its lax laws."

The petition will also demand that once stricter laws are enacted, they should come into force retrospectively. "Like those immigrant spouses who cheated during the last five years should also be deported," says Gill. Further, it has also been demanded in the petition that the investigation staff of the Cross Border Service Agency be beefed up to speed up investigation and deportation in such cases.

According to the organisers of the society, NRI marriage frauds are assuming alarming proportions. Citing the figures, they say

there are more than 30,000 abandoned brides in India. "Out of these, half are in Punjab alone. But not all are abandoned brides. These brides (through their families) entered into so-called trade marriages with NRI boys. But it didn't happen, so they said their girls have been abandoned."

Explaining how these marriages are entered into, Gill says, "The going rate for an NRI boy or girl seeking a partner in Punjab is Rs 20 to 25 lakh. In fact, NRI girls are even demanding that the boy's land be transferred to their name to ensure that he does not abandon them on landing in Canada. Further, the rate depends on the number of people

from the spouse's family seeking to come to Canada. You must have read how people are adopting unscrupulous methods like father marrying (on paper) his own daughter, or sister marrying brother to get passage into Canada or elsewhere."

To drum up support for its cause, the society organised a gathering in Surrey where the local Conservative MP, Neena Grewal, promised to raise the issue in the House of Commons and meet the immigration minister to enact the law. According to Gill, they will participate in the Baiskahi Nagar Kirtans in Vancouver and Toronto also to seek support for the petition.

It is the mistake by the news paper.
Society always talks about both men & women.