

Introduction of a bill on NRI marriages in Rajya Sabha by External Affairs Minister

February 11, 2019

External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj introduced a path breaking Bill on Registration of Marriage of non-Resident of India in Rajya Sabha today. The Bill is an outcome of a joint initiative of the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Law and Justice. The objective of the Bill is to create more accountability and offer more protection against exploitation of Indian women by their NRI spouses. It envisages (i) Registration of Marriages by Non-Resident Indians; (ii) Amendment of the Passports Act 1967 and (iii) Amendment to the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973.

According to the provisions of the Bill, the compulsory registration of marriage within thirty days of marriage in India or abroad would provide better enforcement of rights of the deserted spouse under various family laws. Similarly, the Amendment to the Passport Act would empower the Passport Authority to impound or revoke the passport of NRI, if it is brought to his notice that the NRI has not registered his marriage within 30 days from the date of marriage. The Amendments to CrPC, 1973 would empower the Courts for issuance of summons, warrants through the specially designated website of the Ministry of External Affairs. It also provides provisions for attachment of properties belonging to the NRI, if he does not appear before the Court and is declared as Proclaimed Offender by the Court.

The introduction of the Bill was necessitated by the Ministry of External Affairs due to numerous complaints received from Indian nationals mostly women deserted or harassed by their Non-Resident Indian Spouses. The Bill proposes to offer greater protection to Indian women married to NRIs and serve as a deterrent to NRIs against harassment of their spouses. This would provide much needed relief to all Indian women married to NRIs worldwide.

- **THE REGISTRATION OF MARRIAGE OF NON-RESIDENT INDIAN BILL, 2019**
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