



## NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

National Seminar on “NRI Marriage Related Issues in Punjab”

### Press Note

**Jalandhar, 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2018:** The National Commission for Women (NCW) organized a national seminar on “NRI Marriage Related Issues in Punjab” on 20.07.2018 at Lovely Professional University in Phagwara, Punjab. Shri Gobind Singh Longowal, President of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) graced the programme as Chief Guest.

The objectives of the seminar were to discuss the factors that play a crucial role in NRI marriage alliances in the backdrop of socio-economic and cultural context of Punjabi society, to recommend measures for creating awareness among local population towards the factors leading to ill-fated NRI marriages, leading to violation of women, to initiate deliberations on the effectiveness of legal remedies available for the women affected on account of various issues involved in NRI marriages, to brainstorm on possible measures in terms of law review or introduction of new legislations to bridge the existing gaps, to deliberate upon the role of possible ways in which religious leaders, local body representatives and the Punjab State Commission for Women can play role in disseminating information and generating awareness on the given issue and to deliberate on possible ways to economically empower violated women out of these NRI marriages.

The NCW was nominated in 2009 as the National Coordinating Agency by the Government of India to coordinate efforts by different stakeholders in dealing with issues arising out of NRI Marriages.

Smt. Rekha Sharma said, “Since 2009, the NRI Cell of the NCW has received a total of 3569 complaints. A total of 355 complaints were received from Punjab during this period. The number of complaints from Punjab received by NRI Cell of the NCW peaked in 2017, constituting the highest proportion among all the states. An analysis of data reveals harassment and ill treatment in many ways, including abandonment, loss of communication with spouse upon leaving India, brief holiday-marriages, cheating, etc. The NCW will push for stringent punitive measures against NRI husbands who desert their Indian wives. Deliberations today will lead to suggestions on possible measures to make the legal system more responsive to the needs of affected women of NRI marriages.”

In her key-note address she emphasized on the need for background verification of NRI grooms, “Matrimonial advertisements by parents often highlight their daughters’ qualifications and background when seeking NRI grooms. They don’t conduct detailed verification or cross-check background for grooms.”

A team of experts on the issue including Justice (Retd.) Rakesh Kumar Garg, Chairperson, Punjab State Commission for NRI; Shri Ishwar Singh, ADGP, NRI Wing, Punjab Police; and Dr. Pam Rajput deliberated on the “Legal Complexities Involved in NRI Marriages and Possible Solutions” and the “Socio- cultural Context of NRI Marriages in Punjab” in the breakaway sessions.

Over 20 women deserted by their NRI husbands participated in the seminar and presented recommendations to stakeholders.

Officials from the SGPC, Punjab NRI Commission, Police, District and State administration, local body representatives, civil society organisations, and over 1200 students also participated in seminar held on Monday.

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