

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.397
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.02.2021

**SPECIAL SCHEME FOR LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO INDIAN
WOMEN MARRIED TO OVERSEAS INDIANS**

397. SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Indian women married to overseas Indians that have requested assistance under the scheme since 2015;
- (b) the number of Indian women who received financial assistance under the scheme;
- (c) the expenditure the Ministry has incurred for providing such assistance;
- (d) whether any passports were revoked/impounded in such cases;
- (e) details of the lawyers and NGOs empanelled with Missions abroad under this scheme;
- (f) the steps the Ministry has taken to advertise/popularize this scheme; and
- (g) whether the Ministry plans to include more countries under this scheme?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN]

(a) to (c) The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) was set up in all Indian Missions & Posts abroad to assist Indian nationals in times of distress overseas. The extant ICWF guidelines, revised in September 2017, included provision for financial assistance to needy Indian women in distress (including those who had been deserted by their overseas Indian / foreigner spouse) for counseling and legal services. Counseling and legal services would be provided through Indian Women's Organizations/ Indian Community Associations / NGOs identified for providing such services and empanelled with the Indian Missions. Since 2015, over 216 requests for legal and financial assistance have been received. Total expenditure of around INR 63.71 lakh (approx.) have been incurred so far as assistance to 175 women.

(d) Since 2015, a total of 382 passports were revoked/impounded by Regional Passport Offices in India and Indian Missions and Posts abroad, in such cases.

(e) The details of the lawyers & NGOs empanelled with Missions abroad under ICWF scheme are available at <http://mea.gov.in/images/organization-25042018.pdf>

(f) All welfare measure for Indians abroad, including for NRI women, are publicized by Indian missions and in Ministry's media campaign.

(g) Prior to September 2017, the Ministry's scheme for providing legal and financial assistance to distressed Indian women, deserted by their NRI spouses, was in operation in 13 countries. The scheme was revised in 2017 and was extended to all Missions and Posts.
