

# 'Don't be duped by NRI marriage offers'

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A two-day seminar on women empowerment hosted by the Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) began on Saturday at its Gandhinagar campus. Supreme Court judge, justice GS Mishra; state revenue minister, Anandi Patel; ambassador for Indonesia in India, Lt Gen (retd) Andi M Ghalib, among other dignitaries were present on the occasion. They spoke on 'Journey of Women Empowerment-miles to go'.

Justice Mishra insisted on providing protection to girls who were married to Non-Resident Indian (NRI) men but were duped later. "We sometimes come across criminal cases against NRI husbands lodged by girls. But the men don't appear in court despite being served notices. They only come after being cautioned of coercive actions against them. Law should provide protection to girls in such cases through collective efforts," said Mishra.

The Supreme Court judge also advised women to introspect on whether they were deserving or not prior to demanding any rights.

State revenue minister Anandi Patel said that she "needs advice from justice Mishra as the state has witnessed many incidents in which local girls were harassed by NRI boys".

Patel added, "The state government has taken robust steps to empower women and introduced many schemes for them. The state has started 35 Nari Adalats and will start 40 more for the protection of women's rights."

The seminar launched two important publications and research papers on surrogacy and live-in relationships, the first-ever book analysing the complicated and burning issues of India.

The varsity received more than 100 papers from across the nation and abroad and selected 47 of them for presenting at the seminar. The seminar will end on Sunday with the valedictory session to be presided over by Dr Najma Heptullah, former deputy chairperson, Rajya Sabha and Dr Vasuben Trivedi, minister for women and child welfare, Gujarat government.