

Premarital checks on the rise

More and more people are hiring detectives to investigate their spouses-to-be, finds Rupa Chapalgaonkar

Sheela could not believe herself when her marriage was fixed with a wealthy man from Pune. Thankfully, her parents decided to go in for a detective check of their prospective son-in-law and found that he was a complete fake as far as his character was concerned. He was married too!

In another case, Sunita, who lived in Pune, was about to get married to a Solapur-based boy. To be completely sure about the man, Sunita opted to hire a detective agency. The detective agency found out that he was an HIV-positive person. The marriage was aborted.

Such cases and conclusions bear testimony to a phenomenal increase in pre-marital investigations of prospective brides and grooms by detective agencies in the city. Says Col (Retd) Vijay Kumar Bhalla of Globe Detective Agency, "Once upon a time there were hardly any such cases that we investigated. Since past two years there has been a steep rise in proposals for such investigations. Earlier marriages took place amongst friends and relatives. Today we have an expanded society. The main purpose of parents to take detective services is to counter-check the character of a girl or a boy due to a vast geographical periphery. Apart from character analysis, economic status of the boy is one of the primary concern of the girl parents."

Usually it is the girl's side opting for premarital investigation. But Narendra Kulkarni, director of Focus Detective Agency, thinks the number of boys who want detection of their to-be wife has drastically risen. Boys are more economically independent than girls, hence can afford to hire detectives, he feels. Moreover, how much ever highly placed the girls parents are, they want to marry their girls off hurriedly and with a boy from outside the country, the parents do not want to wait even for a day. "But, my experience says that 70 per cent of investigations come

when the initial talks on both sides have been done. In the other 25 per cent cases the engagement has already taken place. I just wish parents of prospective brides and grooms could hire our services before they got emotionally entangled," says Kulkarni.

Col (Retd) Yashpal Mittu, director, ACES India, feels that earlier parents dropped the plan of hiring detectives because of the money aspect. However, he recommends his clients that premarital investigations are a boon for their children. He cites the example of

NRI grooms who want to marry Indian girls. According to his observations 70 per cent of NRI grooms are fake and only 20 per cent genuine. Two years back when he got five enquiries a month, these have now gone up to five a week. The charges for investigations vary enormously. On one hand, a case may wind up in just Rs 5,000, on the other it may require more than Rs 30,000. "I always feel that premarital investigation is a potential investment. A life is at stake. So how does money matter?" concludes Mittu.

