



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)  
LEGAL AID BOARD

## **India - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 6 August 2009**

**Are there legal or social impediments to people of the Arora and Jatt casts marrying each other;  
Is police protection available if threats ensue due to such a relationship;  
Is it possible for a couple (one Arora one Jatt,) to move freely within India;  
Are there organisations to support people in inter-caste relationships**

Section 5 of the *US Department of State* report published in February 2009 on events of 2008 considering 'National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities' says "In 2006 the Supreme Court ordered the police and government to help intercaste couples and prevent social ostracism, and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment directed state governments to increase incentives for intercaste marriages to 46,000 rupees (approximately \$1,050). The central government pays 50 percent." (US Department of State (25 February 2009) *2008 Human Rights Reports: India*)

Under the heading 'Societal Attitudes' a paper by the *IRB* in January 2006 on inter-religious and inter-caste marriage, says for the latter that "Despite this societal hostility, some members of society have a positive attitude towards inter-caste marriage, including the political party 'Lovers' Green-Globalist God-Free Humanist Party of India,' the leader of which is in an inter-caste marriage himself, and advocates and solemnizes inter-caste marriage (The Tribune 31 Aug. 2003)." (IRB (9 January 2006) *India: The situation of couples in inter-caste and inter-religious marriages, including societal attitudes, treatment by government authorities and the situation of children resulting from such marriages (2000 - 2005)*). This paper also says under the heading 'Treatment by Government Authorities' that "In the case of mistreatment, inter-caste couples may apply to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC); the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), a non-governmental human rights organization based in Delhi, assists inter-caste couples in lodging and defending cases at the NHRC (PUCL 30 Oct. 2005; see also The Tribune 14 Feb. 2005)" (ibid).

In June 2007 page 1 of bulletin published by the *People's Union for Civil Liberties* says "...there is an increasing intolerance of inter-caste and inter religion marriages" (People's Union for Civil Liberties (June 2007) *Bulletin, Vol. XXVII, No. 6*).

Page 73 of a report by the *Asian Centre for Human Rights* issued in May 2009 covering events of 2008 says commenting on Haryana state and referring the Jat that "Inter-caste marriages were often resisted in the form of threats, forcible separations and even killing, normally called as 'honour killing' in the State. In January 2008, 21-year-old Poonam was pushed into a canal for marrying a Dalit

boy in Sirsa district. A dalit boy identified as Hoshiar Singh was murdered for marrying a girl belonging to Jat community, which is considered higher in social status than Dalits.” (Asian Centre for Human Rights (29 May 2009) *2009, India, Human Rights Report*)

A news story in July 2009 from *The Statesman* says without mentioning specific castes that

“The state may yet be a stranger to honour killings in connection with inter-caste marriages, but a young couple who belonged to different castes found themselves harassed by the girl's father and some members of the upper caste and hounded out of Bhatkunda village in Burdwan district in supposedly liberal Bongland. It took the Calcutta High Court's nudge to set things right after caste differences threatened the marriage of Mr Barun Bagdi and Mrs Mandira Bagdi Roy. Justice Mr Sanjib Banerjee of Calcutta High Court today directed the district police of Burdwan to provide protection to the newly married couple so that they can reside peacefully without any threat of violence from the girl's father and other villagers. The couple who had a inter-caste marriage and was living in an unknown place for fear of reprisal had filed a writ petition seeking police protection to let them live peacefully in their village.” (Tirthankar Mitra (22 July 2009) “Court Orders Protection For Inter-Caste Couple”, *The Statesman*)

No further information on any of these issues could be found among sources available to the RDC.

## References

Asian Centre for Human Rights (29 May 2009) *2009, India, Human Rights Report*  
[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/NSPR-7SHJ6W-full\\_report.pdf/\\$File/full\\_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/NSPR-7SHJ6W-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf)  
(Accessed 6 August 2009)

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (9 January 2006) *India: The situation of couples in inter-caste and inter-religious marriages, including societal attitudes, treatment by government authorities and the situation of children resulting from such marriages (2000 - 2005)*  
[http://www2.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/research/ndp/ref/index\\_e.htm?docid=294&cid=0](http://www2.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/research/ndp/ref/index_e.htm?docid=294&cid=0)  
(Accessed 6 August 2009)

People's Union for Civil Liberties (June 2007) *Bulletin, Vol. XXVII, No. 6*  
<http://www.pucl.org/bulletins/2007/PUCLjun07.pdf>  
(Accessed 6 August 2009)

Tirthankar Mitra (22 July 2009) “Court Orders Protection For Inter-Caste Couple”, *The Statesman*  
[www.lexisnexis.com](http://www.lexisnexis.com)  
(Accessed 6 August 2009)

US Department of State (25 February 2009) *2008 Human Rights Reports: India*  
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/sca/119134.htm>  
(Accessed 6 August 2009)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

### **Sources Consulted**

Amnesty International  
BBC News  
BBC Monitoring  
ECOI  
EIN  
Freedom House  
Google  
IRIN News  
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada  
Lexis Nexis  
Minority Rights Group International  
Norwegian Refugee Council  
Online Newspapers  
Refugee Documentation Centre Library  
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database  
Regional surveys of the world  
Reliefweb  
UK Home Office  
University Of Maryland Minorities At Risk