

SUGGESTED TEXT FOR TRAVEL ADVISORY

BEFORE TRAVELLING TO WESTERN COUNTRIES WITH THEIR CHILDREN,
PARENTS SHOULD INFORM THEMSELVES OF FOREIGN CHILD PROTECTION
LAWS UNDER WHICH CHILDREN CAN BE REMOVED FROM THEIR FAMILIES
NEVER TO RETURN

We would **request that a travel advisory be issued** warning young families of the following:

1. Western child protection authorities, including in the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and Norway, have **wide powers to confiscate babies and children from their parents**. These powers exist even where the children are Indian citizens, or the family is abroad only for short- to medium-term work assignments.
2. In the USA, **injuries, fractures or severe symptoms such as internal bleeding or seizures in babies/children are presumed to be caused by parental abuse**. This often results in the immediate confiscation of the baby/child and all siblings from the hospital itself where the parents take their baby/child for treatment.
3. In Norway and other European countries, **child protection authorities are empowered to confiscate children for reasons such as smacking a child, scolding a child loudly, feeding it by hand, sleeping with the child in the same bed, not using a nappy changing table safely**, and so on.
4. **Arranged marriage or a mother being young by Western standards** (in the West, women tend to have babies at a later age than many Indian women) is looked upon with suspicion by Western child protection officials who are unfamiliar with Indian culture, and **view these things as indicators of dysfunctional families**.
5. **Where the parents do not speak the local language with the local accent and idiom, or the children do not know the local language well, they are often misunderstood** by child protection officials, leading to misplaced suspicion of abuse or neglect in the family.
6. **Once confiscated, parental contact with the children is minimal** – as low as only one hour every six months, and rarely more than once a week.
7. **Each confiscated child is under risk of being placed for adoption to third parties**, even as their parents fight to prove their innocence in court. Once adopted, the child's name is changed and all contact with the birth family lost forever.