

UP Couple approaches MEA claiming Gita as their daughter

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Pratapgarh: The couple from Uttar Pradesh, which has claimed that Gita - a hearing and speech-impaired Indian woman stranded in Pakistan - is their daughter, has approached the Ministry of External Affairs in this regard.

"An application by Anara Devi, claiming to be the mother of the girl, is being sent to the MEA," District Magistrate Amrit Tripathi said.

The couple has also attached some documents along with their application, claiming that Gita, who is in Karachi, is their daughter, the DM said.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj today said in last few days four families from Punjab, Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh have claimed Gita to be their daughter.

"We are completing the necessary formalities to bring Gita back to India," Swaraj said in a tweet adding "I am requesting the Chief Ministers of these states to verify and report."

Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan TCA Raghavan and his wife on Tuesday had met Gita following direction from Swaraj and assured her to locate her family as soon as possible.

According to Anara Devi and her husband Ramraj Gautam of Thammohan village under Maheshganj police station here, the girl is their daughter Savita who went missing since 2004, IG Law and order A Satish Ganesh said.

Devi claimed she had left the then four-year-old daughter with her brother Narain Das in Chhapra district of Bihar in 2004, the IG said.

She said that a few days later, Savita went missing and a report was also lodged with the police station concerned, Ganesh said.

The girl, who is now 23-year-old, started living in Karachi after all efforts to trace her family in India remained unsuccessful. The Punjab Rangers brought her to the Edhi Foundation some 14 years ago.

Devi claimed that she first recognised the girl on news channels, which showed her being looked after by a social welfare group in Pakistan, and approached the Maheshganj police station. She also informed the Pratapgarh DM and SP about it, he said.

Devi claimed that Gita strayed into Pakistan probably by a train.

The news channels have been showing the story of Gita drawing a similarity with the reel life character 'Munni' of the Bollywood blockbuster 'Bajrangji Bhaijaan'.

- PTI