

# Parent trap: Detectives now play matchmakers

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New Delhi, May 26

ARE YOU getting married soon? Chances are, you are being spied on at the behest of your prospective in-laws. Private detective agencies claim about 40 to 50 per cent of cases are pre-matrimonial investigations. Most families want a low-down on the character of the bride or the groom. If it is a love marriage, parents do not inform their children.

"Earlier, we had spouses coming to us for spying on each other and parents who wanted us to keep an eye on their children. Now, pre-matrimonial investigations top our list," says Bhawana Paliwal, Delhi's most famous lady detective, who runs Tejas.

Agencies charge Rs 10,000 to 15,000 for such investigations and normally give their report in a week's time. "Recently a Kolkata-based family of an air force officer wanted us to probe the background of a girl living in Kirti Nagar in Delhi who he wanted to marry. The two had met at an airport. On investigation, we found the girl was a call girl," says Rakesh Upadhyay of Raksha Detective Service, Noida.

An increasing number of people are also approaching detective agencies from smaller towns such as Agra, Bareilly and Ranchi. All one needs to do is call up agencies and deposit the advance fees in their bank accounts; reports are emailed



ARYA PRAHARAJ

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This trend, started by Non Resident Indians, is now widespread in the metros because of the growing number of Internet marriages. "Also, with the growing MNC culture, parents are a worried lot," points out Paliwal.

Most detective agencies also provide their reports in writing. "What matters most in our profession is confidentiality and professionalism because most parents take their decision regarding marriage on the basis of our investigations," says Pradeep Sharma of Times Detectives Agency, Delhi.

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