

# Live-in-Relationship in India-Diverse Angles

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**Abstract:** *The thought of a live in relationship was once a exercise averted by way of Indian society for a lengthy time. Living collectively earlier than tying the knot is an offence or crime to the Indian subculture previously. Most importantly, the Hindu Dharma prefers 'One man, one wife' as the most sacred structure of matrimony. But as human beings begin to evolve mentally, the successive generations are prepared to be given a few refusing practices. For instance, let's take the case of decriminalization of gay cohabitation. The current judgements, like the decriminalizing Section 377 and 497 of the IPC, suggests how the Indian legal guidelines have additionally advanced alongside with society. A residing relationship couple is the ones, who cohabit, with no expectations being the backside line. However, there is no criminal definition to describe the thinking in Indian law. It is more of a westernized idea with very much less relevance with the Indian tradition. So the Supreme Court, at a number of instances, took the liberty to problematic on the notion thru their judgements. It is special from a marriage. (Marriage or wedlock or matrimony, is a socially/ritually educated union of a couple). Live in relationship companions don't pressure on obligations. When requested if a live-in relationship is right or bad, there is no suited clarification on if it is top or bad. It basically relies upon on the man or woman and one's persona on searching from a specific perspective.*

**Keywords:** *Live-in-relationship, Nata Pratha, Gandharva Vivah, Dapa, Garasia.*

## 1. Introduction-Concept of Live in relationship :

A live-in relationship is an association whereby two human beings figure out to stay collectively on a long-term or everlasting groundwork in an emotionally and sexually intimate relationship. The felony definition of a live-in relationship is "an association of dwelling beneath which the couple, that is unmarried, lives collectively to behavior a long-term relationship which resembles a marriage." The strategy and mindset in the direction of live-in relationships in extraordinary societies are diverse, however its definition is nearly everywhere. It is a type of relationship the place a couple lives collectively except marrying every different and except felony or social commitment.

This association is like a marriage between two humans dwelling together, however there are no rights and tasks on both of the partners. Live-in relationships are additionally acknowledged as de facto Marriage and have received recognition and acceptance amongst youthful generations. It is considered as an choice to Marriage. Youngsters normally choose for such relationships over marriage both to take a look at the partner's compatibility or without a doubt due to the fact such relationships do no longer contain a formal marriage's hassles. People concerned in such relationships pick out to remain collectively both "by choice" or "by circumstance." For example, when two humans "voluntarily" determine to stay collectively beneath the identical roof, such relationships fall in the former category. In contrast, humans may also additionally locate themselves in such relationships below the circumstances, such as when one or each companions are divorced and continue to be collectively however can't have enough money to marry once more due to monetary reasons. This would fall in the latter category. To apprehend the proper which means of the idea of live-in relationships, female and concubine/keep/mistress have to now not be differentiated.

This structure of relationship has emerge as an alternate to marriage in metropolitan cities in which man or woman freedom is the pinnacle precedence amongst the formative years and no person wishes to get entangled into the common amongst the childhood and no one desires to get entangled into the usual obligations Live-in-relationships are now not new in our society. The solely distinction is how humans have come to be open about it. Formally they are regarded as "Maitray Kararas" or "Maitray Sambandh."

It is stated that, it is higher to have live-in-relationship as a substitute than having divorced life. The prison definition of live-in-relationship is, “an association of residing underneath which the couple which is married stay collectively to habits a lengthy going relationship in a similar way in marriage”.

## 2. History of Live-in-Relationship and its Origin :

Live-in-relationship is now not new in our society. In India, humans who stigmatize such a relationship or reflect on consideration on it a social taboo are frequently beneath the presumption that such relationships are a exercise of western tradition and have been observed by using humans of our country. People in our society have step by step shifted from organized marriages to love marriages and now to 'live-in relationships.' Joel D Block, a main Psychologist in New York, has differentiated between three sorts of relationships based totally on assumed commitments. "Going collectively implies sexual individuality; residing collectively provides to this an settlement to merge residing routines and Marriage the implication of permanence. Living preparations are the mid-point between the very least restrictive (going with someone) and the most tricky (the Marriage). The very nature of proximity approves a couple to supply remarks to apprehend and regulate relationship defeating behaviors. It includes an thing of convenience."<sup>1</sup>

Maitray-Karars One comparable form of such relationship is recognised as "Maitray karars" or the “companionship contract” in which human beings of two contrary intercourse (heterogeneous) would enter into a written settlement to be friends, live together, and appear after every other. This used to be an modern alternate to bigamy and used to be originated in Gujarat and practiced in few components of Maharashtra in the '60s and '70s till the Government formally banned it. These agreements have been registered in District Collector Office and have been later acknowledged as live-in relationships.<sup>2</sup> The Maitray-karar regularly took the structure of a pact between a married Hindu man and his 'other woman' to stay clear of the provisions of the Hindu Marriage Act, which prohibits the remarriage of such a man if the spouse is alive and now not divorced from him. Thus, the settlement was once actually a technique to pass the stringent provisions of the stated Act and enter an undeclared 2nd marriage. Though no longer legally enforceable, the file was once intended to supply solace and a experience of safety to such 'other woman.'<sup>3</sup>

Thus, a Maitray Karar is a contract between a married man and an single lady via formalizing the phrases and stipulations of maintenance, food, clothing, shelter, and all different requirements of existence between them for dwelling collectively and normally by using the man all the fees are maintained for his companion. However, ladies reduced in size in Maitray Karar had a greater sturdy repute than girls in a live-in relationship.<sup>4</sup> However, in Minaxi Zaverbhai Jethva v. the State of Gujarat, the Gujarat High court docket held that “Maitray Karar is unlawful as it is hostile to public fitness and morality.”<sup>5</sup> The contents of the Maitray karar settlement are like, "If in the direction of our companionship, we would make love together, and if of this love-making an offspring is born, then we shall be at the same time accountable for that child." Later it was once formally banned through the Government in each Gujarat and Maharashtra as the offspring born out of such relationship have been no longer regarded legitimate. It used to be additionally viewed violative towards the provision of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, in particular area 5(i), which compulsorily mandates monogamy for a legitimate marriage.

Gandharva Vivah/Marriage

Proof of the existence of live-in relationships can additionally be located in Gandharva Vivah the place man and female collectively consent to get married, and neither entails the household of the couple nor a unique ritual to solemnize the Marriage. "A Gandharva Marriage is regarded to be one of the eight classical sorts of Hindu Marriage. This traditional & historic marriage subculture from the Indian sub-continent used to be based totally on mutual fascination between a man and a woman, with no rituals tied, witnesses, or household participation"<sup>6</sup> The Marriage of Dushyanta and Shakuntala was once a traditionally celebrated instance of this classification of Marriage.<sup>7</sup>

Non-marital Cohabitation or “Dapa” amongst Garasia Community – Rajasthan

As cited earlier, live-in relationships may also be a presumption of most Indians as a exercise of western tradition observed through humans in India. However, for indigenous Garasia neighborhood in Rajasthan, this exercise has been a way of life when you consider that time immemorial. This association in the northwestern nation of Rajasthan is additionally referred to as “Dapa” by way of some experts.<sup>8</sup> The tribals of Garasia neighborhood have been following this customized for thousand years which has validated evident in low rape and dowry demise instances as female hold a excessive popularity in such arrangement. The important motive of now not marrying and getting into such a relationship is broadly speaking due to the fact of economic issues. The Tribals are particularly established on farming,

agriculture, and labor, so they pick to marry their live-in companions when they have ample money, which occurs later in their lives. In the absence of money, they proceed to stay collectively and even grow to be mother and father besides the concern of bearing a toddler besides getting formally married. Thus, Live-in relationship are the coronary heart and lifestyle of Garasia neighborhood some thing which most Indians are but to accept.

#### Nata Pratha

“Nata Pratha” is a century historic customized which is nonetheless alive in a number of states like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. The customized approves a male character to stay with as many girls which consequences in teenagers being deserted by way of their parents.

Nata Pratha is practiced by using the Bhil tribe, which is one of the greatest tribes in South Asia. Traditionally, each the people i.e., man and the lady are supposed to be married or widowed, however the customized has advanced to encompass single human beings as well. This Nata relationship except Marriage approves guys and girls to have non-marital cohabitation for variety of instances as lots as they want. However, this customized has made it obligatory for a man to pay some quantity of cash to the lady with whom he wishes to stay in besides a felony marriage, and the dad and mom and contributors of the neighborhood will determine the amount. However, she will now not obtain the money, now and again nor her consent will be taken for this relationship. So, this is some thing depressing. Nata relationship is a comparable notion of re-marriage, which is broadly practiced and socially typical amongst Bhil tribe however now not legal.<sup>9</sup>

Like a marriage in each sense, the female in Nata relationship interact in cohabitation, childbearing, family works, caretaking, nurturing of child, fieldwork in farms, any work of imperative and sexual relationship etc.<sup>10</sup> In the Bhil community, there is a common understanding of ladies in ‘good’ Nata and girls in ‘bad’ Nata relationship. The ‘good’ Nata relationship is based totally on mutual consent; through way of dissolution of a prior marriage both with the aid of demise or through desertion, and it have to be appropriate by way of the household and the community. However, a ‘bad’ Nata relationship is described as the relationship is pressured to adopt, secretly engaged, with the aid of way of abduction, and entered with an unlawful reason. Man with any lady additionally practices nata relationship at some stage in marital cohabitation with his spouse is continue, however Nata for a lady is permissible as monogamy.<sup>11</sup>

#### Non-Marital Cohabitation amongst Tribes of Jharkhand

The guys and girls have equal rights in nearly all tribal societies, such as the proper to pick out a lifestyles partner. So, a tribal woman from Oraon, Munda and Ho tribes of Jharkhand can pick out a non-marital relationship with her male companion except getting married to every different in the shape of ‘Dhuku’ marriage and the ladies in such relationships are known as ‘Dhukua’ or ‘Dhukni’ besides having criminal rights on property and any different property due to the fact of non-social focus of the relationship. For social recognition, the couple have to organize a wedding ceremony feast in the village and invite all villagers to participate, which is very pricey to bear. So, they choose live-in relationship repute in the shape of ‘Dhuku’ Marriage. Many couples in livein relationship for greater than 20 years as they should now not arrange a wedding ceremony feast, so they definitely go in collectively and begin a family.<sup>12</sup>

These couples have bad backgrounds and doing brutal war to pay for a grand feast for the whole village. However, they may want to no longer make it feasible for many years, consequently this leads to a criminal problem. The female do no longer have any prison or social rights to get ancestral property, and in some situations, if the guys die early and young, ladies and teenagers are left “emptyhanded”. Sometimes this ready duration turns into so lengthy that many of these live-in couples having their grandchildren barring a getting married. Dhukni or Dhukua relationship in the structure of live-in relationships barring Marriage is a frequent exercise amongst the impoverished tribal human beings in Jharkhand, who are unable to organize their wedding ceremony observed via a feast for the complete village to make the wedding ceremony socio-legal recognition.<sup>13</sup>

### 3. Live-In-Relationship, Malimath Committee and The PWDVA 2005 :

There exist no regulation which immediately acknowledges the live-in’ relationship; then again two criminal strikes have introduced such relationship (i.e. the non-marital heterosexual relations) into sharp center of attention in India in the course of the remaining decade. First, in 2008, the Maharashtra Government’s try to amend Section one hundred twenty five of the Criminal Procedure Code (hereinafter referred as Cr.P.C.) introduced this difficulty to the fore.<sup>14</sup> The

change sought to increase the definition of the time period “wife” in Section one hundred twenty five Cr.P.C. with the aid of consisting of a female who used to be residing with a man “like his wife” for a fairly lengthy period.<sup>15</sup> This cross accompanied the suggestions of the Malimath Committee (2003).<sup>16</sup> Second, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (hereinafter referred as PWDVA) 2005, is viewed to be the first piece of regulation that, is having blanketed family members ‘in the nature of marriage’, supplied a criminal cognizance to members of the family outdoor marriage.<sup>17</sup>

In the following discussion, an try has been made to have a look at the context and implications of these two criminal strikes on one-of-a-kind varieties of non-marital cohabitation. The Malimath Committee, i.e., the Committee of Reforms of Criminal Justice System, set up in November 2000 underneath the Chairmanship of V.S. Malimath, Former Chief Justice of the Karnataka and Kerala High Courts submitted its record in 2003 (Government of India 2003, hereinafter GOI 2003), wherein, it made various pointers beneath the head “offences towards women”<sup>18</sup> first being to amend Section a hundred twenty five of the Cr.P.C. which is involved with renovation rights of the “neglected wife, young people and parents”. This Section seeks “to stop hunger and vagrancy by means of compelling the individual to operate the responsibility which he owes in appreciate of his wife, child, father or mom who are unable to aid themselves”.<sup>19</sup>

The Committee sought to lengthen the definition of ‘wife’ in Section a hundred twenty five Cr.P.C. via recommending ‘to consist of a lady who used to be residing with the man as his spouse for a fairly lengthy period, all through the subsistence of the first marriage’.<sup>20</sup> The prolonged definition of ‘wife’ is as a result genuinely set in opposition to the backdrop of secondary relationships of already married guys and is no longer directed at taking consciousness of what may also be considered as emergent types of non-marital cohabitation. Providing an rationalization for its recommendation, the file underlines: A girl in a 2d marriage (of a man) is now not entitled to declare upkeep as in regulation a 2d marriage in the course of the subsistence of the first marriage is now not prison and valid.

Such a female although she is de facto the spouse of the man in law, she is no longer his wife. Quite regularly the man marries the 2d spouse suppressing the beforehand marriage. In such a situation, the 2d spouse cannot declare the advantage of Section one hundred twenty five Cr.P.C. for no fault of hers. The husband is absolved of his duty of keeping his 2d wife. This is obviously unfair and unreasonable. The man have to no longer be allowed to take gain of his personal unlawful acts. Law need to no longer be insensitive to the struggling of such women.<sup>21</sup> It is pretty evident from above that focal point used to be now not on ‘non-marital’ person heterosexual relationship however between a married man and his 2nd wife; especially the one who has been cheated into believing that she is marrying an single man. By including the clause ‘during the subsistence of the first marriage’, the record left little room for any hypothesis involving the goal of the recommendations. Following tips of the Malimath Committee,

Maharashtra Government initiated an aborted try in 2008 to amend Section one hundred twenty five Cr.P.C which delivered the problem of prison popularity of ‘live-in’ members of the family into the public gaze. The go used to be construed as an try to confer criminal repute on secondary unions of guys as nicely as legalize the ‘live-in’ relations, in which the younger guys and girls pick to enter ‘non-marital’ heterosexual members of the family prior to coming into a long-term dedicated nuptial ties.<sup>22</sup> The PWDVA 2005, has been broadly hailed as the first regulation to apprehend the existence of non-marital person heterosexual relations.<sup>23</sup> This Act defines an “aggrieved person” who will be included underneath this Act as “any lady who is, or has been, in a home relationship with the respondent and who alleges to have been subjected to any act of domestic violence with the aid of the respondent”.<sup>24</sup>

Further, the Act defines a ‘domestic relationship’ as ‘a relationship between two humans who stay or have, at any factor of time, lived collectively in a shared household, when they are associated with the aid of consanguinity, marriage, or via a relationship in the nature of marriage, adoption or are household contributors dwelling collectively as a joint family’.<sup>25</sup> This does now not suggest that the Act offers with all types of home family members in a complete manner. It excludes the home relationship between a male company and a live-in home worker. The Act additionally truly has no house for grownup ‘same-sex’ relationships. Nevertheless, it can be construed that, not like the tips of the Malimath Committee, the PWDVA, 2005 has implications for a broader terrain of non-marital relations, as it does now not explicitly restrict itself to the secondary members of the family of men.

In having used the concept of “relations in the nature of marriage”, the Act appears to have widened the scope of legally identified home relationships between guys and women. While this provision invited a good deal criticism and controversy, it is vital to be aware that it neither made an invalid marriage as legitimate nor supplied criminal consciousness to bigamous marriages. But this provision in simple terms seeks to denounce the home violence in any

quarter, thus, no longer a judgment name on the morality of the preference to cohabit outdoor of marriage.<sup>26</sup> It can, therefore, be argued that it would be sheer mistake to see this Act as conferring some kind of criminal reputation upon non-marital relations.

#### 4. Live-In-Relationship- Judicial Approach :

Live-in relationship between consenting adults is now not viewed unlawful beneath the Indian Law, in 2006.

In the case of **Lata Singh vs State of UP**<sup>27</sup> - It used to be held that a livein relationship between two consenting adults of contrary intercourse although perceived as immoral, does now not quantity to any offence underneath the law.

**S. Khushboo vs Kanaimmal and any other**<sup>28</sup> - The Supreme Court observed although the thinking of live-in relationship is regarded immoral by way of the society however is virtually now not unlawful in the eye of the law. Living collectively is a proper to existence and consequently if can't be held illegal.

**Badri Prasad vs Deputy Director Consolidation**<sup>29</sup> - If man and lady who stay as husband and spouse in society are compelled to prove, after 1/2 a century of wedlock by means of eye witness proof that they have been vaidly married fifty years beforehand few will succeed. A robust presumption arises in favour of wedlock the place the companions have lived collectively for a lengthy spell as husband and wife. Although the presumption is rebuttable a heavy burden lies on him who seeks to deprive the relationship of its criminal origin. Law leans in favour of legitimacy and frowns upon bastardy.

**SPS Balasubrahmanian vs Suruttayan**<sup>30</sup> - It was once discovered that the place a man and a female stay collectively as husband and spouse for lengthy time, presumption below the regulation would be in favour of their being legally married to every different until proved to the opposite and youth born out of such live-in relationship would be entitled for inheritacne in the property of the parents.

**Indra Sarma vs VKV Sarma**<sup>31</sup> - It was once every other landmark case on the count of live-in relationship in which implications of unique sorts of relationship view mat all live-in relationship are no longer relationships in the nature of marriage. In this unique case, it used to be discovered that the appellant, having being thoroughly conscious of the reality that the respondent was once a married person, should no longer have entered into a live-in relationship in the nature of marriage, due to the fact it has no inherent or crucial attribute of a marriage, however a relationship different than in the nature of marriage.

The courtroom in addition made following commentary in this case. Relationship in the nature of marriage is the thinking of live-in relationship. Section 2(f) "Domestic Relationship" capacity a relationship between two folks who stay or have, at any factor of time, lived collectively in a shared household, when they are associated through consanguinity, marriage, or thru a relationship in the nature of marriage, adoption or are household participants residing collectively as a joint family." Live-in relationships are now very famous in India.

#### 5. Types of Cohabitation or Live-In-Relationship :

The most frequent sorts are:

1. Dating Cohabitation
2. Premarital Cohabitation
3. Trial marriage
4. Substitute for felony Marriage

Dating Cohabitation takes place when a couple spend a grate deal of time collectively subsequently determined to go in collectively for convenience, finances, companionship and sexual accessibility. Such couples are not sure of the fantastic of their relationship and there is no lengthy time period commitment. (Manning and Smock, 2005)

Trial marriage is a kind of residing collectively comparable to Premarital Cohabitation the place the companions favor to see what marriage may be like and it's beautiful to companions who are dubious about problems like ethnicity, religion, price range and personalities etc.

## 6. Reasons behind live-in-relation :

- Couples cohabit, alternatively than marry, for a range of reasons.
- They may also favor to take a look at their compatibility earlier than they commit to a criminal union.
- They may also choose to hold their single fame for monetary reasons.
- In some cases, such as these involving homosexual or lesbian couples, or people already married to some other person, the regulation does no longer permit them to marry.
- In different cases, the companions may additionally experience that marriage is unnecessary.
- Most of couples go for live-in-family members due to the fact they hate to be divorced.
- Existed marriage is unsuccessful or felony and social difficulties arose in separation.
- Marriage can also no longer be supported or no longer allowed through household due to inter religion, age distinction etc.
- Sometimes they scared from obligations arose as a married partner, thereafter as a parents.
- Couple offers precedence to the profession as an alternative than marriage. Therefore live-in -relationship is first-rate choice for them the place there is no dedication and no time for partner.
- To break out the loneliness in their lives senior residents have commenced preferring stay in relationships.

A crew of senior residents beneath the banner of 'Jyeshtha Nagrik Live-In Relationship Mandal' Nagpur, led through a former banker Arvind Godbole has shaped an agency for assisting these searching for a associate at the fag give up of their lives.<sup>32</sup> Vina Mulya Amulya Seva (VMAS) Ahemedabad, the charitable have faith which had organised this 'Senior Citizen Live-in Relationship Samellan', seven couples who met at this alliance meet have determined to enter into a live-in relationship.<sup>33</sup>

The thought had created a buzz in the social and media circles for the openness with which a number of components of taking up a stay in companion by means of these who are on my own in their twilight years.

## 7. Conclusion :

Cohabitation or live in relationship regularly tends to be a human rightist and individualistic approach. Despite being quite usual in majority of the western countries, the truth with regard to the social cloth of India is appreciably different. This can be comprehended from the truth that in India, marriage continues to be the group that is desired to any different structure of union. But that does no longer imply that person single couples who desire to stay collectively below the equal roof, need to be prohibited or frowned upon for any cause whatsoever. The judiciary's efforts to defend the pastimes of human beings dwelling in such preparations are genuinely a welcome step for the higher advantages of the society.

After inspecting a number of judgments, execs and cons of live-in relationships in India, it is pretty evident that such relationships no longer solely have an effect on solely one birthday celebration however additionally without delay or in a roundabout way influences different events concerned in it.

To summarize, there is a critical want for felony provisions on live-in relationships that furnish a clear photograph whilst taking into account the cutting-edge Indian social environment, which is established on the advent of lifestyle and tradition.

India's social texture is very astonishing. This may additionally be viewed due to the fact marriage is nevertheless the most favored variety of relationship in India. In any event, this is no longer to say that mature single companions who choose to stay with every different in the equal residence have to be shunned or despised. The felony executive's tries to shield the rights of human beings dwelling underneath such protective schemes are certainly a welcome step ahead for the greater large advantage of the well-known public.

The Supreme Court and a number of excessive courts have study the legitimacy of live-in relationships inside the scope of statutes such as the Domestic Violence Act, Cr.P.C., Evidence Act. Thus, as per the modern-day prison position, female in live-in relationships are entitled to renovation and property.

While these judicial precedents lay a framework for regulating and guiding criminal affairs from live-in relationships, they are no longer enough. Recent activities have verified that the lack of specific law and corresponding ambiguity has

led to differing and deviating judgements amongst the judiciary. Thus, the Legislature ought to think about the occurrence of live-in relationships and enact a complete regulation delineating the rights and obligations of parties.

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