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## Indian grooms sign 'no dowry' clause on Web site

Tony Tharakan

Nearly 6,000 people have signed up to [www.idontwantdowry.com](http://www.idontwantdowry.com), aiming at eradicating dowry

Monday, October 15, 2007

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NEW DELHI, INDIA: Gifts of cash and gold may be essential to getting a husband in India, but hundreds of people are flocking to a matrimonial Web site which finds suitable partners averse to this traditional practice of dowry.

Nearly 6,000 people have signed up to [www.idontwantdowry.com](http://www.idontwantdowry.com), which aims at eradicating the custom outlawed in India more than four decades ago but still widely practised.

According to the tradition, brides must gift their future husbands with valuables -- usually money and gold, but which can range from washing machines to plots of land.

The website, founded by software professional Satya Naresh in April 2006, met with little response initially as people seemed wary of admitting they did not want dowry.

"There was this feeling that if a man didn't want dowry, there must be something wrong with him," said Naresh.

But things have improved since. At last count, around 3,800 men and 2,100 women had registered online.

"When we started, we had expected the number of women and poor people to be more. But it's educated people like doctors and IT professionals who are a majority," said Naresh, who lives in Hyderabad.

Members, however, still pay close attention to factors such as social caste and religion while choosing potential mates. But the Web site's founder says these are minor hurdles.

"The dowry system is the major challenge. Women kill their daughters-in-law for not bringing enough dowry, not for some other reason," said Naresh.

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