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Surrogacy succour for gay couples

[Alfiya Khan](#), Hindustan Times

[Email Author](#)

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Less Than a year ago, Omer and Yonathan Gher dropped a rose in to the Arabian Sea with a silent prayer, just as a fortune teller had told them to do.

The Israeli gay couple's prayers were answered on Monday as they boarded a flight home with a son in their arms – a month after he was born to a surrogate mother at Mumbai's Hiranandani Hospital.

"I couldn't believe my luck when the doctor called from India announcing that we were pregnant," said Yonathan, 30, a social activist.

The gay couple had been living together for seven years and desperately wanted a child, but the laws in Israel did not allow them to adopt or beget one through a surrogate mother. So they decided to come to India to find a surrogate mother.

"There are two options – India and the US," said Omer, 31, a psychiatrist. "We chose India because it was cheaper and our money would help a woman here much more than elsewhere."

The Ghers are among numerous gay couples coming India to look for surrogate mothers.

"Last year, India saw the first case of surrogacy to a gay couple from Israel," said Dr Gautam Allahbadia, IVF consultant who facilitated the procedure. "Since then, we've been flooded with similar requests, although we have to turn back some couples because of laws in their countries."

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