

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1212
ANSWERED ON:12.12.2013
TAMPERING OF DIPLOMATIC BAGS AND MAILS
Kumar Shri P.

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that there has been mishandling and tampering of diplomatic bags and mails sent to Indian embassies and high commissions in the past;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Air India has been ordered to follow certain procedures which include handling over of these official couriers to Indian officials in foreign countries; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL)

- (a): No, Madam. There is no mishandling or tampering reported for diplomatic bags and mail booked with Air India through Air India Air Waybills. However, recently, Ministry of External Affairs has adopted, a system of booking diplomatic mail directly with India Post, which is carried in postal mailbags and may not be reported to Air India.
- (b): Does not arise in view of (a) above.
- (c): . No, Madam. Air India has its own Standard Operating Procedure for handling `Diplomatic Bags & Mails` laid down in the Air India Cargo Operations Manual. Category `A` diplomatic mail is handed over by Air India officials directly to the Embassy representative in the foreign country. Category `B` and `C` diplomatic mail is handed over via the same procedures as for general cargo. However, this applies only to diplomatic mail booked with Air India and not to diplomatic mail handled by India Post in postal mail bags.
- (d): Does not arise in view of (c) above.