

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4193

ANSWERED ON:19.02.2014

HARASSMENT OF INDIAN DIPLOMATS

Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram;Mohan Shri P. C.;Nirupam Shri Sanjay Brijkishorilal ;Singh Shri Bhola

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the number of cases of objectionable and unacceptable treatment of Indian diplomats, officials and other citizens in the United States during last three years;
- (b) whether the Government had taken up these complaints with the US authorities concerned;
- (c) if so, whether the US had taken any corrective measures in this regard; and
- (d) if not, the response of Government thereto?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR)

(a) Dr. Devyani Khobragade, Acting Consul General of India in New York, was arrested by officers of the Diplomatic Security Service of the U.S. State Department on 12 December 2013. She was handcuffed, strip-searched, fingerprinted by U.S. law enforcement authorities, who claimed it was part of their normal procedures, before being released by a U.S. Court on bail. Apart from this incident, there have been instances of Indian diplomats, political leaders, and other eminent people being subjected to enhanced security screening at the port of entry in the U.S. Such incidents during last three years include Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, former President [John F. Kennedy International Airport, New York; September 2011]; Shri Praful Patel, Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises [Chicago O'Hare Airport; June 2013]; Shri Mohammed Azam Khan, Minister of Urban Development and Parliament Affairs, Government of UP [Logan International Airport, Boston; April 2013]; and Shri Shah Rukh Khan, Actor [White Plains Airport, New York; April 2012].

(b) to (d) The Government has conveyed to the U.S. Government its strong objection to both the arrest of Dr. Khobragade and the manner in which action was taken. The U.S. Government expressed regret at this incident. The two countries have since agreed to initiate an official dialogue to comprehensively address all aspects related to the case against Dr. Khobragade, including India's demand for dropping of all charges, and all issues arising from differing perspectives on diplomatic privileges and immunities.

The Government has consistently expressed its displeasure to the United States Government over incidents of enhanced screening of Indian officials at the U.S. airports. It has urged the U.S. Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security to ensure prevention of such occurrences in future. The U.S. Government has expressed regret at several of these incidents and conveyed that it would look at ways to prevent such incidents.