

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2061
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2009
HARASSMENT OF INDIANS AT U.S. AIRPORTS
Singh Shri Radha Mohan

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a number of instances involving harassment of Indians at the airports in foreign countries including USA, have come to the notice of the Government ;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken up the matter with these countries;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of these countries thereto; and
- (e) the other measures taken or being taken by the Government in this regards?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (DR. SHASHI THAROOR)

(a) to (e) A statement indicating harassment of Indian nationals in some of the foreign countries is annexed.

ANNEXURE

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (E) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2061 REGARDING "HARASSMENT OF INDIANS AT U.S. AIRPORTS" FOR ANSWER ON 02.12.2009

(a) & (b) Yes. A few cases of harassment of Indian nationals at the airports in foreign countries have come to the notice of the Indian Missions/Posts. These instances were mainly reported from Angola, France, Germany, Italy, Syria, UK, USA and Ukraine, brief details of which is given below:

Country Instances

Angola 7 instances of harassment and delay in clearance at the airport immigration were reported to our Mission. It may be mentioned that such harassment is common for all foreign visitors to Angola.

France A few incidents of harassment of Indian nationals have been reported to have happened at the Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris. The Indian nationals were scrutinized in terms of the Schengen visa rules and included those who were in transit or traveling to other Schengen countries.

Germany 3 instances of deportation of Indian nationals from Munich airport. All the three cases involved violation of the conditions of the Schengen Visa.

Italy There have been some cases that were reported to our Mission by members of the Sikh community that they were made to open their turbans in public during security checks at some Italian airports.

Syria 12 instances of harassment and delay in clearance at Damascus Airport were reported to our Mission.

The Indians included businessmen and pilgrims.

UK 1 instance of detention of an Indian doctor at the Glasgow Airport on suspicion of carrying traces of substance which appeared to be explosive. He was released the next day.

USA Due to US procedures related to customs and immigrations, sometimes Indian nationals do face inconvenience on arrival in/departures from the USA. Although routine checking and frisking of GOI dignitaries is exempted for dignitaries like Cabinet Ministers, following an evaluation by US Homeland Security & Customs Border Protection Authorities (CBP), some passengers are subjected to secondary scrutiny and inspection.

Ukraine 2 instances of detention of some Indian nationals were reported to the Mission for discrepancies in their visa/registration papers.

(c) to (e) In the above-mentioned cases, Our Missions/Posts abroad took up the matter strongly with the local government and were able to resolve the matter satisfactorily. It was reported by these Governments that the delay occurred mainly due to local immigration procedures. As far as US is concerned, our Mission/Consulates convey prior intimation to the US authorities about arrivals/departures of Indian dignitaries in the USA for facilitation of customs and immigration procedures. Whenever any incident of harassment of an Indian national comes to the notice of our Missions/Posts abroad, the Mission officials take immediate action by approaching the concerned officials in the local Foreign Office, immigration authorities, etc.