

Following statement has been made by Mr. E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs in Lok Sabha today (23.3.2011) on the incident at the Milan Airport yesterday involving Shri Amarinder Singh, Jeeva's Coach when Dr. Rattan Singh Ajnala, MP raised the issue during zero hour.

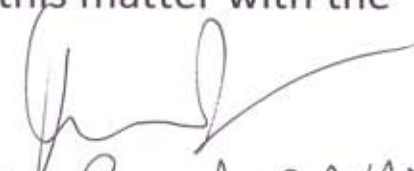
"Turban" is not a mere piece of cloth. It is a symbol of the nation. We attach the greatest respect to it. Whenever there is an insult to the 'Turban', it is a National insult.

I entirely share the sentiments expressed in the House about the incident at the Milan Airport yesterday. We will always uphold the "izzat", dignity and honour of our people abroad. The incident has been condemned by us. Today, the Ministry has summoned the Italian Envoy to India and has conveyed our great distress and unhappiness over the incident. Ambassador expressed his deep regret and informed MEA official that he will take up the issue with the higher authorities of Government of Italy.

Security measures are necessary but have to be implemented with care and respect. We had conveyed this to the Italian authorities earlier and they had expressed their regrets at the earlier incident. It is also my understanding that they have taken some steps but obviously they have not been enough.

I would also like to inform the House that our Ambassador in Italy has already taken up this matter with the Italian authorities.

.....


P.K. ANDAVAN
A K MOS (EA)
New Delhi, Teen Munti Marg
23017051