

Hillary Clinton email saga turns murkier

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Washington: Hillary Clinton's email problem is getting worse even as frontrunner Democratic presidential contender sought to downplay the controversy surrounding her use of a private server for official work as "political."

Intelligence officials assigned to review emails from Clinton's time as Secretary of State have so far recommended that 305 documents be referred to agencies for further consultation, according to a report filed with a federal judge Monday. The 305 documents for review were picked "out of a sample of approximately 20 percent of the Clinton emails," the State Department said in court papers filed with US District Court Judge Rudolph Contreras.

After inspectors general for the State Department and for the Intelligence Community raised concerns about the content of the emails, the State Department added intelligence staff to assist in the process, according to CNN.

Meanwhile, Senate Judiciary Committee's Republican Chairman Chuck Grassley asked Clinton attorney David Kendall to explain how he secured three thumb drives containing back up copies of roughly 30,000 emails that Clinton gave to the State Department in printed form last year, Politico reported.

Clinton has said that she and her attorney reviewed all of her emails and destroyed ones that they deemed personal.

"It appears the FBI has determined that your clearance is not sufficient to allow you to maintain custody of the emails," Grassley wrote in a letter sent to Kendall on Friday and cited by Politico.

Grassley suggested it was unlikely that a safe - reportedly in Kendall's law office - would by itself be deemed adequate to hold data classified at the "TOP SECRET/Sensitive Compartmented Information" level.

"It appears that in addition to not having an adequate security clearance, you did not have the appropriate tools in place to secure the thumb drives," the senator wrote.

Kendall and spokespeople for Clinton's presidential campaign did not respond to questions about Grassley's letter, the influential news site said.

Commenting on her predicament, an opinion piece in the Washington Post suggested: "In trying too hard to control events, Clinton has lost control of events. Her political future may lie, once again, in the hands of investigators and prosecutors."

Comparing her actions to that of President Richard Nixon during the Watergate scandal, it said: "Clinton stands accused of poor judgment, playing close to ethical lines and showing a streak of paranoia.

"Her actions raise comparisons to Richard Nixon - and not the skilful diplomacy part," the Post said.

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