

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4174
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2010
INTERCEPTION OF MOBILE CALLS
Singh Shri Dushyant;Yadav Shri Dharmendra

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the parallel system of recording calls through off-the-air GSM technology has been working as a form of illegal and passive mode of interception in the country;
- (b) if so, the facts in this regard;
- (c) whether the users of cell phones have the risk of calls illegally tapped through off-the-air GSM technology;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT)

- (a) & (b) Madam, technical equipments are available in the international market to intercept the GSM communication off-the-air passively.
- (c) & (d) The above equipment could be used illegally to tap the communication through this technology.
- (e) Considering the danger of illegal tapping of communication off-the-air, Government has taken the following steps:-
 - (i) The equipments which could be used to tap the communication off-the-air have been moved to 'Restrictive List' from the 'Open General License (OGL)' list.
 - (ii) The Government is considering to increase financial penalty upto Rs. 2 Crore for unlawful interception by amending Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.
 - (iii) A Public Notice is also being issued to create awareness that keeping such equipment is against the provision of Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 and is liable to be punished with imprisonment for the term which may extend to three years or with fine, or with both.