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Title: Regarding the heavy revenue loss to BSNL due to passing of STD and ISD calls as local calls by private service providers.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : Sir, I seek the indulgence of the entire House to be acquainted with the latest scam in the country, the telecom scam. When the telecom sector was being liberalised, some of us raised an apprehension that the infrastructure built by the country under Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited will be misused and abused by the private service providers. We were told that we were not all fools. Now the cat is out of the bag. One minute long distance domestic call costs Rs. 50 to be paid to Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and one minute international call, both incoming and outgoing, costs Rs. 4.25 to be paid to Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited. That is how the infrastructure is to be when the calls are to be made.

In our country, normally 70 billion minutes are taken for domestic long distance calls, the cost of which is Rs. 3,000 crore, and six to seven billion minutes are taken for international calls. The charge is to be paid to BSNL. According to our normal estimate, nearly Rs. 5,000 crore should have been paid by the private service providers to Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. on this account. Unfortunately, the situation is that till 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2004 Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd., has received only Rs. 375 crore, which is not even ten per cent of what it should have got. What is the reason for it? The reason for it is that private service providers -- I can name them -- Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd, Reliance Industries, Tata and others -- four private service providers -- are meticulously using the infrastructure \* converting the long distance domestic and international calls into private calls. As a result, the country is losing Rs. 5,000 crore. ...*(Interruptions)*

\* Not Recorded

MR. SPEAKER: That word will not go on record.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : I can always name the companies. I am not naming any person. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is an allegation in nature. Using such a word is a serious charge. You can say they have avoided payment illegally.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : I am substituting it with "meticulously". They are using the infrastructure but are avoiding necessary payment. Why do I raise it? When this Bill was passed, the then hon. Minister of Communications, at that point of time had said that there will be an all-powerful telecom regulatory agency. Today, we have an agency. This agency has not done anything to find out how many calls have been made by the private service providers.

Secondly, the DoT, the Department of Telecom, has a statutory responsibility of even threatening the private service providers with cancellation of licence if they do not pay the money. Nobody has done the job. Neither the TRAI nor the DoT has done its job. Thirdly, we have an elaborate infrastructure. Most unfortunately, this infrastructure does not record the number of calls the Reliance had sent out of India or brought into India. In this age of advanced technology, we do not have any recording system. We have to depend on the record of the private service providers.

**श्री सुशील कुमार मोदी** : अध्यक्ष महोदय, इस पर आधे घंटे की डिबेट कराई जानी चाहिए, यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण मामला है, इसकी जांच कराई जानी चाहिए।

MR. SPEAKER: Let notice come for that. Without a notice I cannot allow it.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Modi, why are you interrupting?

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Gurudas Dasgupta is more than enough to look after this subject.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : My point is that the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, as it exists today, should be dismantled. A new regulatory authority should be set up. I do not ask for the resignation of its Chairman only. That will not bring any solution. It should be re-constituted. The DoT must be asked by the Prime Minister as to why they are sitting over the loss of Rs. 5,000 crore to the country. Then, I demand that the DoT must have a recording system whoever is making the calls....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a debate. You cannot go on.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : I am raising it in all seriousness because the country is losing Rs. 5,000 crore.

MR. SPEAKER: I take it that every matter raised here is serious one. Therefore, I have given you full opportunity. It is because of the seriousness of the issue.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA :Therefore, I call upon the Government to take note of it and take remedial measures. It is for the hon. Members and the hon. Speaker to react to it.

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not interrupt your own Member.

**श्री सुशील कुमार मोदी** : यह बहुत गम्भीर मामला है।

...(Interruptions)

**अध्यक्ष महोदय** : हम अभी नहीं बोल सकते, अगर नोटिस आयेगा तो एलाऊ करने की कोशिश करेंगे।