

Speaker needs 'protection' from Mamata

Trinamool Congress leader Mamata Banerjee is not a regular in the Lok Sabha. But when she comes to the house, she makes her presence felt. On Monday, Banerjee gave a new twist to the acronym for state-owned telephony provider BSNL, calling it 'Bhai Saab Nahin Lenge'.

According to Banerjee, the services of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd are useless as many telephone lines are tapped. 'You cannot speak a single line. Everything has been tapped,' she said, asking the home ministry to give an explanation.

'It is a matter of privilege. Are you tapping the telephones of all the MPs? Are you treating them as criminals?' a furious Banerjee asked during question hour.

Although Communication Minister A. Raja denied the charges, Speaker Somnath Chatterjee assured the MP that he would compel the government to make an inquiry if she writes to him. 'It is my duty,' Chatterjee said.

When Banerjee, who has had many a verbal duel with the speaker in the past, sought the 'chair's protection', Chatterjee quipped, 'Vice versa also!'

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