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Title:Regarding proposed privatization of Kolkata, Chennai, Ahmedabad and Jaipur Airports.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY (DUM DUM): Madam, the Netaji Subhas International Airport, Kolkata happens to be in my constituency, Dum Dum. I have, on the floor of this House, repeatedly opposed the proposal for privatization of four airports, namely, Kolkata, Chennai, Ahmedabad and Jaipur. The proposal was opposed on the ground that this would mean handing over assets built at public cost to private parties. It would also jeopardize the service security of the employees who worked under the Airports Authority of India. I had mentioned that Kolkata and Chennai Airports were modernized at Government cost, at a cost of Rs.2,300 crore and Rs.2,100 crore respectively only recently in 2013.

The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General had also mentioned a big scam in the privatization of the Indira Gandhi International Airport at Delhi by GMR. This proposal which was first originated during the later part of the UPA-II Government was dropped in March. 2014 (*Interruptions* छां, मुगवई में भी उसके बारे में रेकैम दुआ, सी.ए.जी. ने रिपोर्ट दी। This is in the public domain. So, all these privatizations lead to big scam. Now the present Government has again initiated the process of privatization of four airports. I have personally represented to the Civil Aviation Minister and the Prime Minister against this move. But the Government is going ahead with formalizing the terms for the Request for Qualification (RFQ) under pressure from GMR, GVK and other big infrastructure companies. This will be the first step towards privatization.

The workers of the Airports Authority of India led by the recognized Airports Authority Employees' Union and the Joint Forum of Airport Employees had already started agitating against privatization and will ultimately go for a strike. I would urge the Government not to go ahead in the matter of privatization. This will harm the employees. It will also mean more cost for the passengers and harm national interest. I would again demand in this House that this privatization and corporatisation which seems to be a panacea to the new Government should be given up. This would be bad for the national interest.

HON. SPEAKER:

Shri P.K. Biju,

Shri M.B. Rajesh and

Shri N.K. Premachandran are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Prof. Saugata Roy.