



MP flays attempt to 'hamper' Lokpal Bill

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Member of Parliament Rajeev Chandrasekhar has flayed attempts to mire in controversies of the civil society's participation in drafting the Lokpal Bill. He said "side shows" of taped conversations involving certain people of the drafting panel and other such distractions must not be allowed to hamper the work of framing an effective anti-corruption law.

Demanding that the panel meetings should be telecast live on *Lok Sabha TV* to further the cause of transparency and increase citizen participation, Chandrasekhar added, "The side show on CDs and allegations should not be allowed to distract from the cause of writing a historic Lokpal anti-corruption legislation."

He said the ongoing controversy about CDs and alleged discussions by Shanti Bhushan and some others "is distracting and diverting our attention (either deliberately or inadvertently) from the main issue of fighting corruption and building a new framework to ensure better governance".

He, however, added that the issues raised by the release

of the taped conversation in the public domain "are important and need to be examined thoroughly".

Chandrasekhar called for an end to the current and seemingly "motivated smear campaign" against some of the panel members. He suggested that the Supreme Court could admit the contempt petition in connection with the offensive CD and, if it finds it appropriate, ask both the laboratories that have given contradictory versions on the veracity of the tape, to file their findings under affidavit. "This will once and for all establish the truth. There cannot be any double standards", he said.

To address the issues about possible pressures and compromises on the part of members of the committee, the solution is simple: live telecast the negotiations and discussions of the meetings between the civil society and Ministers with regard to the Lokpal bill on Lok Sabha television.

The telecast of the panel proceedings, he stated, will "de-link the public chatter and allegations from the actual performance of the participants during the negotiations."