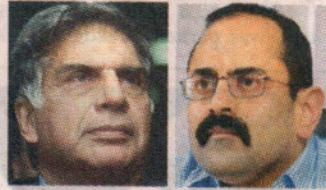


Corporate war breaks out

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The corporate dimension to the 2G scam saga has become murkier, with Tata Group chairman Ratan Tata and independent Rajya Sabha MP Rajeev Chandrasekhar, himself a former telecom entrepreneur and business tycoon, levelling charges and counter-charges about the scam's genesis and the beneficiaries of the spectrum loot in collusion with former Telecom Minister A Raja and his associates.



Chandrasekhar responds to Ratan Tata's letter

Dear Mr Tata,

I welcome your joining this debate. It is an important one and needs to be settled in full public view. Unfortunately, your response is a typical one that ducks the main issues and instead attempts to shoot the messenger!

I am only disappointed, but no longer surprised, that in sharp contrast to my efforts to go out of the way to keep this debate relating to facts and policy discussions, your letter is intensely personal, attributes feeble motives (including amusing political ones) and most unbecoming of the House of Tatas.

2G scam

Tata backed the 2G spectrum allocation policy, saying it broke the powerful cartel, and backed the probe covering the period since 2001, when NDA was in power.

Taking strong exception to Chandrasekhar's letter, Tata said it was "politically motivated" and aimed at "embarrassing" the Prime Minister and the ruling party.

Taking the powerful GSM operators head on for what he

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Corporate war...

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termed "holding of spectrum free of cost", Tata said, "(The) recent policy (allocation of licences in 2008) broke the powerful cartel, which has been

holding back competition and delaying the implementation of policies." He also said that former Telecom Minister A Raja or, for that matter, any Minister had "not extended any advantage" to group company Tata Teleservices.

Coming out in support of the Government's telecom policy, Tata said, "We should all note that many of the flip-flops in the telecom policies occurred during the BJP's regime." He told Chandrasekhar, "Your affiliation to a particular political party is well known... and it appears that political aspirations and their endeavour to embarrass the Prime Minister and the ruling party may well have been the motivation behind your letter."

Chandrasekhar responds...

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I can only think that this is a lapse in good judgement. I particularly find your self-appointed defence of the Prime Minister and Government very irrelevant. Nevertheless, I promise to keep my response dignified and steadfastly refuse to fall to your level of personal attacks.
On facts, your letter is not just exceptionally weak but, in fact, refuses to engage on the issues that I had raised — the yawning gap between what you say in public and what your companies do. While those remain unanswered, I will certainly reply shortly with my response. I promise to rebut your allegations, claims and innuendo — chapter and verse — in public domain.
Rajeev Chandrasekhar