



**“Men may come and men may go;
But I go on forever.”**

- From ‘The brook’ by Alfred Tennyson

Relieving of hundreds of ITS Group A officers on repatriation back to DoT on Wednesday the 9th November 2011 seems to mark the beginning of End to ITS Raj in BSNL.

When options were called for again on 22.9.2011 with the same terms and conditions which were offered during the year 2005 for absorption of ITS Group A officers in BSNL, **the writing on the wall was abundantly clear.**

The base, in fact, had been laid by **Hon’ble CAT, Principal Bench, New Delhi orders dated 1.6.2011** directing BSNL “not to give any further opportunity to the officers of the Department of Telecommunications, who continue on deemed deputation to BSNL and **to repatriate them to the parent Department.**”[emphasis provided]

The Tribunal had also observed that, “In majority of OAs under consideration here, the ITS Association or its officers have filed series of petitions/applications before various High Courts and different Benches of this Tribunal on the same cause of action. **This indeed is a flagrant abuse of the process of law and casts a serious doubt on intellectual integrity of the concerned association or its members.** We cannot approve such a tendency on their part.”[emphasis provided]

But the ITS dominated BSNL Management kept dilly dallying over implementation of the orders of PCAT New Delhi, by referring the orders for advice to the DoP&T, unmindful of the fact the PCAT New Delhi order relied largely on DoP&T orders dated 8th October 2010 conveying its decision that, “in such cases where there is a conversion of a Government Department into PSUs/autonomous/statutory body, there must be a time frame within which a new body shall frame its rules and regulations. At the end of this period, all employees on deemed deputation should have opted either to get permanently absorbed in the new organization or revert to the Government. **A maximum period of 5 years for framing of rules and another 2 years for phasing out repatriation to those opting to come back to Government has been prescribed.** All the Ministries/Departments are accordingly advised to adhere to the time frame whenever a proposal for transfer of employees is considered as above.”



Finally, the political will in the form of directive from Minister of Communications, put an end to the dilly dallying by BSNL. The fact that DoT showed its seriousness on the matter at least this time, in bringing the absorption process to an end, was confirmed when DoT snubbed BSNL's proposals for contingency plan suggesting "deputation/foreign service of ITS officers in BSNL after obtaining exemption from the rule of immediate absorption or by fresh recruitment on selective basis involving technical resignation under Rule 37 of CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 to run their services and operations efficiently before the actual absorption takes place."

DoT dismissed BSNL's proposals without any hesitation stating that these proposals "would be against the spirit of rule 37-A and would also run counter to the Cabinet decision under which Group A officers were sent on deemed deputation to BSNL/MTNL pending completion of the absorption process." It directed BSNL to "rework out the contingency plan with a view to ensuring that their services are not disrupted and their organizational needs do not suffer. Besides the option of direct recruitment of officers as proposed needs to be pursued vigorously to ensure that at least some candidates are in position at the earliest."

Therefore, DoT's firm resolve duly backed by the Minister to put an end to all doubts regarding completion of the process without any hitch need to be given strong support. Any prudent man capable of reading through the happenings would just sit and watch unfolding of series of actions for completion of the process, without making any fuss.

But now at this crucial moment some Associations, which were part of the delegation which appealed to the Minister to end so-called harassment of ITS officers, when a similar process for repatriation was evolved and put in place for implementation in the year 2005 and successfully foiled the repatriation in favour of ITS officers at that time, have again started flexing their muscles and whirling the sword against a non-existent situation, when they themselves have reported that "*Government is very firm and means business in real terms*" and that "*CMD has given commitment to DoT about definite time frame in which the process will be concluded.*" Our concern is that, the **past records show that whenever these association raised the issue of ITS absorption, it ended with an agreement providing fresh lease**



of life to the ITS officers. We cannot forget the fact that these associations were hand-in-glove with the ITS Management in many decisions which caused adverse affect on BSNL and its Executives. They are once again making their best efforts to prove that they are the only saviors of ITS.

Raising the issue of delay in finalization of contingency plan by these people is only a bogey to create panic that the services would be affected after repatriation of the ITS officers. **The truth is that Heavens will not fall after repatriation of these ITS officers.** Various routine functions will go on without any hitch, as is being witnessed, wherein many SSAs are functioning even today without a regular GM. In many other SSAs the Head of SSA is just overseeing the functions. It is also a fact that many SSA and Circle Heads never take any decision at the appropriate time and leave things to happen on their own. **The show is actually run by the absorbed officers everywhere.** Running the services without the SSA Head for a short period is not going to affect the daily routines. AIBSNLOA will shortly take up with the Hon'ble Minister, the issue of installing professional Managers in decision making and policy making posts at the earliest.

As far as the alleged unceremonious and sudden relief of some ITS officers, in the first batch on 9.11.2011, they could not harbor any grievance, since it was their own decision to go back to DoT. But, it is really unfortunate that a few ITS officers who really cared for the welfare of BSNL and honestly worked for it, also took a decision to leave BSNL, perhaps with a view to adhere to collective decision. **That collective decision is based on the premise that BSNL will die out sooner than later. But they will witness sooner or later, BSNL surviving the present crisis and emerging as a major force in the Telecom sector. At this important juncture, let every one of us too resolve and work to see it so.**

(10.11.2011)
