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Top posts in BSNL, MTNL may be reserved for ITS officers

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KOLKATA: The telecom department will shortly move a Cabinet note to "encadre" or permanently reserve about 1,100 top managerial slots in state-run [BSNL](#) and [MTNL](#) for [Indian Telecom Service](#) (ITS) officers to stop their exodus.

At present, BSNL has medical officers and law enforcement executives in its seven telecom factories who are encadred officers of the Union health and labour ministries.

DoT now plans to ring in the concept of encadred officers in BSNL and MTNL's highest echelons by permanently placing Group A officers belonging to the ITS cadre in key management slots in the ranks of DGM and above. All encadred officers will remain in government service till retirement and will earn in line with central pay scales, which is higher than PSU compensation.

"The DoT is examining a proposal to encadre some 1,000-odd top managerial positions in BSNL and another 150-odd in MTNL for ITS officers to encourage them to stay back in these PSUs," said a member of a DoT panel looking into the ITS issue, adding that the government was hopeful since encadrement already existed in BSNL.

The move, however, requires Cabinet approval as BSNL and MTNL were spun off into corporate entities from DoT through cabinet decisions in 1986 and 2000, respectively.

There are nearly 1,800 ITS officers, of whom nearly 1,400 were deputed to BSNL 12 years ago when the telco was spun off into a separate corporate entity from DoT. The rest have been on deputation in MTNL since 1986.

Last November, when the communications ministry gave these officers an option to return to government service, virtually everyone opted to return to DoT since central pay is higher than PSU emoluments. Till date, BSNL and MTNL have released only 400 ITS officers but time is running out since a Delhi High Court order requires both telcos to release the remaining officers by September 30.

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