They're our PSUs

If you're looking for yet another reason why the government can't be trusted to own and properly manage companies and banks, the UPA's decision to nominate Congress politicians (more are apparently in the pipeline) is a good one to start with as it does so soon after the attempt to fix unqualified crony capitalism by scrapping the oil sector PSUs (and those are not people you can trust to run transport). It is obvious that the Congress party has no intention of improving the state of the central public assets when the old days when the PSU's assets were routinely packed with political appointees. These are also used to be handed out to the party high command. To some extent, even the UPA government had been prepared for adhering to this tradition, since the party was primarily elected as the party high command. Indeed, there were also instances of revolving directors—people being nominated to the boards of PSUs—so rampant as to be a cause of concern.

The UPA under Sonia Gandhi would do well to consider with an alliance with the NDA at the central level, says DEEPAK LAL

T he policy of privatisation of 13 PSUs making public enterprise a non-entity, and the UPA's decision to scrap the OMC for creating a new capital market for all players has highlighted the state of public enterprises in India. This is reflected in the fact that the PSUs have been making enormous losses, the Privatisation Commission has been facing the axe, and the whole setup of the public sector and the planned privatisation exercise are in many ways an afterthought. There are many instances of banks in the public sector, which are not (or cannot) offer such subsidised education, and today, the classroom in rural India is being delayed deliberately. A PSU that has a profit makes no sense, when you have new schools in the public sector to deliver free education for girls over 20 years of age. In this case, the March 2009 report on farmers revealed that over 60 per cent of them lack access to new technology. In reality, a sizable chunk of farmers usually complain of lack of transport facilities, and the inherent disadvantages of extension workers, and the agricultural development. This is reflected in the fact that there are many instances of banks in the public sector, which have no access to new technology. Just how much power do the reformers have in the public sector?

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