

When the beneficiary wants to play victim

I read Indrajit Hazra's *Another Open Letter (Red Herring, December 12)* with great interest. I welcome the intervention. This is exactly the kind of debate we need so that more people are engaged in this discussion. But here are some facts about the exchange of open letters between Ratan Tata and myself. The "flip flop" was mentioned by Tata in his interview. I only agreed with him and pointed to the fact that among others, his company, was also a beneficiary of this flip flop. Period. Second, the cellular industry's legitimate litigation, which I led as president of the Cellular Operators

Association of India (COAI) — which is not a lobby — in the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) and the Supreme Court, is a statutory right that was available to us under the licence and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) Act, 1997. This litigation was against the illegal backdoor entry of fixed line service providers into limited mobility and then converting that into a Unified Access Service Licence (UASL), a glorified version of mobile licence, by circumventing the transparent auction process. There was no objection to Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA), except to point out that the price advantage of limited mobility was a conse-

quence of regulatory arbitrage (lower entry fees, preferential interconnection terms etc.) and not because of technology as pointed out by Tata. I agree with everything he says; just not the fact that he was a victim rather than a beneficiary.

Rajeev Chandrasekhar, MP,
Rajya Sabha, via email