

**Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the Executive Committee of
the 'National Federation of Information Commissions of India' (NFICI)**

Date: 14.10.2009, Venue: Gurajada Hall, Andhra Pradesh Bhawan, New Delhi

Attended by:

Executive Committee Members of NFICI

1. *Shri Wajahat Habibullah*, Chief Information Commissioner (CIC), Central Information Commission & President;
2. *Shri C. D. Arha*, State Chief Information Commissioner (SCIC), Andhra Pradesh & Vice President;
3. *Prof. M. M. Ansari*, IC, Central Information Commission;
4. *Shri K. K. Mishra*, SCIC, Karnataka;
5. *Dr. S. V. Joshi*, SCIC, Maharashtra;
6. *Dr. Mohd. Shakeel Ahmad*, IC, Bihar.

Special Invitees:

1. *Shri A. N. Tiwari*, IC, Central Information Commission;
2. *Shri Shailesh Gandhi*, IC, Central Information Commission;
3. *Shri Satyanand Mishra*, IC, Central Information Commission;
4. *Shri M. L. Sharma*, IC, Central Information Commission;
5. *Smt. Annapurna Dixit*, IC, Central Information Commission;
6. *Smt. Deepak Sandhu*, IC, Central Information Commission;
7. *Shri D. N. Padhi*, SCIC, Orissa;
8. *Shri Talitemjen Ao*, SCIC, Nagaland;
9. *Shri Dileep Reddy*, IC, Andhra Pradesh;
10. *Shri Habung Payeng*, IC, Arunachal Pradesh;
11. *Smt. Anita Gupta*, Additional Secretary, Central Information Commission & Nodal Officer, Sub-Committee of the CIC, Central Information Commission.

Observers:

1. *Mr. Mohamed Latheef*, Government of Maldives;
2. *Mr. Rukshana Nanayakkara*, Dy. Exec. Dir. Transparency International, Sri Lanka.

Shri C. D. Arha, SCIC, Andhra Pradesh welcomed the President *Shri Wajahat Habibullah*, (the Chair) and the other participants. He mentioned that NFICI was the outcome of the efforts of *Shri K. K. Mishra*, SCIC, Karnataka and *Shri P. S. Rana*, SCIC, Himachal Pradesh, who provided their able guidance for this particular ToR of the Sub-Committee. He then called upon *Shri K. K. Mishra* to present his remarks.

Shri K. K. Mishra mentioned – in brief – the manner in which NFICI came to be registered as a Society and expressed his pleasure that the 1st meeting of the Executive Committee (Board of Governors) had been organised and, both, the 1st President and the 1st Vice President are present. He mentioned that it was a privilege to have *Shri Wajahat Habibullah* as the 1st President of NFICI.

He clarified that NFICI has been envisaged as a democratic institution and that though the 1st Executive Committee was drawn mostly from the members of the Sub-Committee, elections for a new Executive Committee would be held at the expiry of one year. He added that the Executive Committee to be so constituted would have a good geographical representation as per the zoning and the rotation system (within zones) suggested in NFICI's rules. He thanked *Shri C. D. Arha* for his contribution to the Sub-Committee's work and for his initiative toward expediting NFICI's registration.

Further, he stated that, essentially, NFICI would be a clearing house for all the common problems faced by ICs / Information Commissioners. It would facilitate mutual consultation and coordination among ICs, carry out research and dissemination activities, encourage initiatives related to transparency / accountability, establish collaborations with research institutions and undertake studies, seminars & conferences on relevant themes.

Thereupon, *Shri C. D. Arha* took up the agenda items, which were discussed/adopted as follows:

1. To adopt the Memorandum of Association and Rules and Regulations for the functioning of NFICI

The MoA of Rules & Regulations of NFICI as circulated were adopted.

2. To enroll other Commissions as members of the NFICI

It was suggested by the Vice President that a letter would be drafted for the President, NFICI, who would send it to all the SCICs with a request for the enrolment of their Commission as a member of NFICI. This was accepted.

The President, NFICI mentioned that representatives from SAARC countries may be suitably associated with NFICI. *Shri Satyanand Mishra* IC, CIC seconded this suggestion and added that they could be associated either as Associate Members or as Special Invitees or as Observers. Finally, it was agreed that representatives from SAARC countries could be invited to join NFICI as Associate Members. On behalf of the SAARC group of countries, the representatives from Maldives and Sri Lanka – attending the meeting, welcomed this decision and thanked the Commission for its gesture.

3. To discuss and prepare a brief outline plan for identification of the major policy interventions for promotion of financial and administrative autonomy of the Commissions for effective implementation of RTI Act

It was agreed that, in this regard, *Prof. M. M. Ansari*, IC, CIC and *Shri K. K. Mishra* would prepare a detailed note for the perusal and approval of the Executive Committee. Upon receiving approval of the Executive Committee, this note shall be caused, by the President, to be circulated to all NFICI members.

4. To explore the ways and measures for mobilizing adequate resources for financing various activities of the NFICI and

5. To discuss the feasibility of formation of various Working Committees, namely, Programme Committee, Finance Committee, Civil Society and Media Committee etc. for effective coordination and internal functioning.

It was suggested that the Agenda Items 4 & 5 could be clubbed together. This was agreed to. After detailed discussions, the proposed Working Committees were constituted as follows: -

Programme Committee:

- a. *Prof. M.M. Ansari, IC, CIC*
- b. *Smt. Annpurna Dixit, IC, CIC; and*
- c. *Shri K. K. Mishra as*

The Programme Committee would work on determining the modalities of constituting the other Committees as also on determining next steps for NFICI.

Finance Committee: The members are:

- a. *Shri A. N. Tiwari, IC, CIC,*
- b. *Smt. Deepak Sandhu, IC, CIC and*
- c. *Shri Suresh Joshi*

The Finance Committee would work on exploring the ways / measures for mobilising adequate resources for various activities of NFICI. It may also offer its inputs for the preparation of the detailed not as per Agenda Item No. 3. *Shri Habung Payeng, IC, Arunachal Pradesh* pointed out that all ICs may not be able to contribute a membership fee of Rs. 5 lakh. *Shri Wajahat Habibullah* suggested that this matter may be considered by the Finance Committee.

Further, it was agreed that *Shri C. D. Arha* would open a bank account in Hyderabad in the name of NFICI, for depositing the membership contributions. It would be jointly operated by the Vice-President and the Executive Secretary.

Shri C. D. Arha thanked *Dr. Rajiv Sharma*, Director General, CGG for his support for the work of the Sub-Committee and mentioned that CGG would continue to offer secretarial assistance to NFICI. He suggested that till such time as the General Body of NFICI meets and takes a final decision regarding appointment of staff for NFICI, *Shri Vardhaman Vaidya* from CGG, Hyderabad, could be the Executive Secretary ad-interim. This was agreed.

6. Any other issue with the permission of the Chair

Toward the end, the participants, informally, discussed the stand they would take during the meeting called by DoPT later in the day.

The meeting ended with the Vice President thanking the Chair and all the participants for giving their valuable time & presence.

C.D.Arha
Vice-President, NFICI