

# **NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INFORMATION COMMISSIONS IN INDIA**

Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> Annual General Body Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2015

Venue: Civil Services Officers Institute,  
Vinay Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi.

Time: 12:00 noon

## **Participants:**

### **Members:**

- Shri H.Sekhar Das, IAS (Rtd.), SCIC, Assam Information Commission
- Shri Serjius Minj, IAS (Rtd.), SCIC, Chattisgarh Information Commission
- Shri Bhim Sen, IAS (Rtd.), SCIC, Himachal Pradesh Information Commission.
- Shri G R Sufi, IRS (Retd.) SCIC, Jammu & Kashmir Information Commission
- Shri P.R. Dash, SCIC, Jharkhand Information Commission
- Shri Shankar. R. Pati, SIC, Karnataka Information Commission
- Shri Lal Dingliana, IFS (Retd.) SCIC, Mizoram Information Commission
- Shri Bukchem Phom ,SIC, Nagaland Information Commission
- Shri K.T. Chankapa, IAS (Retd.) SCIC, Sikkim Information Commission
- Thiru K.S. Sripathi, IAS (Retd.) SCIC, Tamil Nadu Information Commission
- Shri Dr. G.D. Gautama , SCIC, West Bengal Information Commission

### **Special Invitees:**

- Shri Balwant Singh, IAS (Retd.) SCIC, Gujarat Information Commission
- Mrs. T.Y. Das, Secretary Central Information Commission New Delhi.

### **Board of Governors:**

- Shri Jannat Husain, IAS (Rtd.) SCIC, Andhra Pradesh Information Commission  
Vice President & (I/c President)
- Dr. A.K. Sinha, IAS (Rtd.), SCIC, Bihar Information Commission.
- Shri P.K. Mohanty, IAS (Rtd.), SCIC, Odisha Information Commission.

### **Also present:**

- Shri S.P. Beck, Joint Secretary Central Information Commission New Delhi.
- Shri A. Vijaya Prakash, Executive Secretary, NFICI., Hyderabad

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The meeting commenced with the warm welcome by Shri Jannat Husain, IAS (Rtd.) SCIC, Andhra Pradesh Information Commission and I/c President, NFICI who presided over the meeting and requested the Executive Secretary to read out the Action taken report of previous Meetings.

The Executive Secretary read out the Action Taken Report on last General Body Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2014 at New Delhi and last Board of Governors Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at New Delhi. The report reads as follows;

**d) Printing of RTI Act in Braille**

The RTI Act books in Braille are got printed which includes G.Os and circulars issued by Govt. of India (DoPT) and rules made there under. It is informed that as per the earlier decision taken 50 (Fifty) RTI Act Books in Braille (English Version) are got printed and ready to supply 2 (One Set) copies to each Member Commissions the Executive Secretary requested the Hon'ble Members to inform whether the books got printed can be sent directly to the Commissions or to the Schools for blind or to any other deserving Institutions directly named by them.

Sri K.S. Sripathi, I.A.S (Retd). Chief Information Commissioner, Tamil Nadu Information Commission remarked that supply of (2) Copies may not be sufficient, and requested to get print & supply (10) copies each RTI Act Books in Braille(English Version) among all the Information Commissions including Non- member Commissions. It is further suggested by the Hon'ble CIC to send the RTI Booklet copies directly to the respective Commissions.

The above suggestion was accepted by the General Body.

**2. Defending the Government interest in the cases filed before the NCDRC, New Delhi**

The Executive Secretary informed the Hon'ble Members that in the 4<sup>th</sup> General Body meeting held at New Delhi on 19.04.2014 the Punjab State Chief Information Commissioner proposed to defend the Government interest in the cases filed before a Full Bench of National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC), New Delhi.

The very issue is that some RTI Activists of different states filed cases before NCDRC to bring the designated Public Information Officers under the RTI Act into the ambit of Consumer Protection Act, who failed to provide information within (30) days with reference to Section 7(1) of the RTI Act, treating failure of service on the part of PIO when sought information by paying requisite application fee.

The NFICI engaged the services of a Supreme Court Lawyer viz., Smt. A. Subhashini and got filed impleading petitions in all the (5) cases pending before the NCDRC. The Advocate engaged appeared before the NCDRC and argued the matter successfully. The Hon'ble NCDRC pronounced its judgment on 08-01-2015, which is in favour of the Government. It is informed that the copy of the judgment can be viewed on the NFICI website ([www.nfici.org](http://www.nfici.org)).

**3. Imparting Training to newly appointed Information Commissioners:**

In this regard it is submitted to the Hon'ble Members that three centres were selected for imparting Training to the newly appointed Commissioners. One at Hyderabad

(Dr.MCR HRD Instt./Centre for Good Governance), 2<sup>nd</sup> at Pune, Maharashtra (YASHADA), and 3<sup>rd</sup> at New Delhi (Civil Services Officers' Institute).

For the purpose, the President (I/c) informed that the State Information Commissions are at liberty to propose the names of the intending Commissioners who wish to undergo the Training. That the services of Senior Chief Information Commissioners in service or retired, and other eminent personalities who are well versed with the subject will be requisitioned.

The Members welcomed the decision, but expressed their view that instead of saying Imparting Training, it will be more appropriate if it is called INTER ACTION SESSION. It is further suggested by the members to consult the DoPT (GoI) also in this regard, as earlier some initiative was taken by the DoPT.

The suggestions made were well taken by the General Body.

#### 4. Taking out Short Film on RTI

It is informed that the NFICI entered into correspondence with YASHADA, Pune who have selected M/s. S.B.PRODUCTIONS PVT LTD out of the panel of names formulated by the Maharashtra Government for assigning the job. That the firm quoted Rs.6.00 (Rupees Six Lakhs) expenditure for the purpose which includes all taxes. That if the NFICI needs film dubbing in other language, 30% amount will be charged for the purpose. The NFICI requested to produce a Film in Hindi and followed by English .

That the YASHADA, Pune requested to provide 20% additional budget towards their administrative charges in this regard. It is informed that a budget of Rs.6.00 (Rupees Six Lakhs) was released, and kept the same at the disposal YASHADA, Pune to take up the initiative, and sought approval of the administrative charges claimed and ratification of the funds released.

The General Body approved the same.

#### 5. Extending Financial assistance to the Committee constituted by Central Information Commission for developing detailed guidelines and methodology for implementing Sec.4 of the RTI Act by various Public Authorities:

It is informed that the Central Information Commission constituted a Committee with the Approval of the DoPT for a period of three months to work inline with DoPT guidelines No.1/6/2011-IR dated 15.04.2013. That the Committee will interalia, prepare guidelines for Public Authorities to the frame work for the third party audit. The Committee has started functioning, and felt need of some Research Assistants to be engaged to collect data and interact with other key Public Authorities

to help prepare the report. In order to take up the project work the Central Information Commission requested to release a sum of Rs.5.00 Lakhs (Rupees Five Lakh) Budget. In the last Board of Governors meeting held at New Delhi on 13.12.2014, the Board took a decision to release a budget of Rs.4.00 Lakhs (Rupees Four Lakhs only) for the purpose.

It is further informed by the Executive Secretary that the Central Information Commission has subsequently withdrawn their request.

The Secretary, Central Information Commission present in the meeting put forth that the project work was completed, and necessity did not arise to receive the funds sanctioned, hence withdrawn their request. The Secretary, CIC further informed that the report of the Committee has already been submitted to DoPT and that after its approval by the DoPT the same will be uploaded in the Website of the Commission.

The members appreciated for the good task taken up by the CIC.

#### Financial Report for the Year 2013-14:

The Executive Secretary reiterated that as per the earlier decision taken all the funds received by the NFICI towards admission Fee and Annual Membership fee including the interest derived on F.Ds are being remitted to corpus fund. Excluding some funds essentially required for payment of salaries, honorarium, payments for printing and stationary. website charges and other essentialities etc. by maintaining a minimum balance of Rs. 2.00 lakhs (Rupees two lakhs) with NFICI current account.

The Executive Secretary read out the receipts and payments (expenditure) incurred during the last financial years 2013-14 and 2014-15 which reads as under

#### Receipts and payments for the financial year 2013-14

Receipts:		Payments	
Opening Balance	Rs.0.51 lakhs	By Bank Charges	Rs. 0.00 lakhs
Admission Fee	Rs.20.00 lakhs	By Meeting Expenditure	Rs. 0.28 lakhs
Annual Membership fee	Rs.18.00 lakhs	By Audit Fees	Rs. 0.10 lakhs
Interest on Fixed Deposits	Rs.18.04 lakhs	By Honorarium	Rs. 1.35 lakhs
		By Salaries & Wages	Rs. 1.33 lakhs
		By Website Expenses	Rs. 1.77 lakhs
		Fixed Deposit	Rs.32.29 lakhs
		By Cash & Bank Balances	Rs.19.43 lakhs
	Rs.56.55 lakhs		Rs.56.55 lakhs

Receipts and payments for the financial year 2014-15

Receipts:		Payments	
Opening Balance	Rs.19.42 lakhs	By Capital Expenditure Office Equipment	Rs. 0.20 lakhs
Annual Membership fee	Rs.17.00 lakhs	By Bank Charges	Rs. 0.01 lakhs
Interest on Fixed Deposits	Rs.4.54 lakhs	By Meeting Expenditure	Rs. 0.36 lakhs
Fixed Deposit	Rs.12.00 lakhs	By Audit Fees	Rs. 0.10 lakhs
		By Honorarium	Rs. 0.75 lakhs
		By Salaries & Wages	Rs. 2.92lakhs
		By Printing & Stationery	Rs. 0.15 lakhs
		By Professional fees	Rs. 1.18 lakhs
		Fixed Deposit	Rs.39.36 lakhs
		By Advance	Rs. 6.85 lakhs
		By Cash & Bank Balances	Rs. 1.08 lakhs
	Rs.52.96 lakhs		Rs.52.96 lakhs

The Executive Secretary put forth that as on 10-04-2015, the funds available with NFICI are as under:

1. with Fixed Deposits Rs. 1,88,01,698
2. Cash in Current Account Rs. 7,46,208

Sri Jannat Husain, President (I/c) took up the Agenda and informed the members that, so far (25) Commissions enrolled as members to the NFICI except the State of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Tripura.

The Gujarat CIC Shri Balwant Singh present in the meeting informed the members that their Commission is enrolling as a Member to NFICI very soon. The members hailed the decision of CIC Gujarat and suggested to pursue the leftover Information Commissions to enroll themselves as members to NFICI. This was agreed to.

The President (I/c) put forth before the General Body for approval of earlier decisions taken in the previous Annual General Body/ Board of Governors Meetings and also requested for ratification of expenditure incurred during the financial year 2013-14 and 2014-15.

The General Body while ratifying the expenditure incurred for the above Financial Years, approved the decisions taken in the previous meetings of the General Body/ Board of Governors Meetings, except the zonal system.

The Tamil Nadu Chief Information Commissioner suggested to scrap the zonal system in electing the Board of Governors from now onwards, pointing out that some State Commissioners are not getting their turn to become as a Board Member. The suggestion was accepted by the General Body.

Formation of committees to implement the future action plan:

The General Body declined for formation of any committees now to implement any future action plan as the proposed issues for future action plan will be studied and will suggest their views in the next Board of Governors meeting.

Election of new Board of Governors

The General Body after discussing in length, after scrapping down the zonal system elected the following Commissions as 6<sup>th</sup> Board of Governors to NFICI represented by their Chief Information Commissioners.

6<sup>th</sup> Board of Governors elected:

1. Central CIC, New Delhi
2. Andhra Pradesh
3. Karnataka
4. Punjab
5. Sikkim
6. Nagaland
7. Assam
8. Jammu & Kashmir

The members greeted the new Board of Governors elected.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.

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Sd/-

JANNAT HUSAIN  
SCIC, A.P. Information Commission &  
President (i/c), NFICI



Executive Secretary