

## **Sikkim appoints Chief Information Commissioner**

Mr DK Gazmer was today appointed as the first chief information commissioner (CEC) of Sikkim since the Right to Information Act was implemented in the year 2005 all over the country, including Sikkim. In a solemn function at Raj Bhawan today, the acting governor Mr RK Gavai, administered the oath of office to Mr Gazmer in presence of various cabinet ministers, DGP and senior government officials.

Mr DK Gazmer, an IAS officer of the 1984 batch, had served in various capacities in the state government, including the secretary of social welfare department. He also has the credit of establishing the pay and accounts office. Mr Gazmer had and retired from his services in 2003. Speaking to reporters after assuming office as the state EC, Mr Gazmer said that although the Right to Information had been enacted in 2005, the ordinary people has not utilised it as comprehensively as desired. He cited that the reason of lack of awareness among the people for not using it more. He also expressed his desire to work diligently and in a transparent manner for providing information to the people as per the principles and provisions of the Act.

The lone opposition MLA, Mr Acharaya Tshering Lama, who was also the member of the selection committee to appoint the chief information officer, boycotted the oath taking ceremony. He alleged that Mr Gajmer's appointment violates important clauses of the Right to Information Act. Mr Acharaya has already filed a letter to the Governor where he has alleged that his reservations over the selection as a member of the selection committee were disregarded.

This makes Mr Gazmer's appointment purely on the "mythical rule of majority", a decision tainted by views of the party in power and thus one "actuated by political considerations and motive", he had written in the letter. Meanwhile, a regional political party, Sikkim Himali Rajya Parishad (SHRP), has also thrown its weight behind the lone opposition MLA.

In a letter addressed to the Governor, Mr AD Subba, the SHRP president has furnished some reasons on which they have relied on to express their opposition to the appointment and the consequent swearing-in ceremony today of Mr Gazmer as the chief information commissioner.

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