



**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INFORMATION COMMISSIONS IN INDIA**  
**Minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> Board of Governors Meeting held on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023**  
**at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**

**Participants:**

**Board of Governors:**

- Shri Y.K. Sinha, President, NFICI & Chief Information Commissioner, CIC New Delhi
- Shri Jalada Kumar Tripathy, Chief Information Commissioner, SIC Odisha
- Shri Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta, Chief Information Commissioner, SIC Assam
- Shri Md. Shakeel Akhter, Chief Information Commissioner, SIC Tamil Nadu
- Shri Oinam Sunil Singh, Information Commissioner (I/c), SIC Manipur
- Shri Sunil Porwal, Information Commissioner (I/c), SIC Maharashtra
- Shri Vivek Sharma, Information Commissioner, SIC Uttarakhand

**NFICI's officers:**

- Shri Sidh Kumar, Honorary Secretary, NFICI, New Delhi
- Shri Sarvottam Kumar, Executive Secretary, NFICI, New Delhi.

At the outset Shri Y.K. Sinha, President NFICI welcomed all the BOG members attending the meeting. The meeting started with the following agenda points:

1. **Welcome the new Chief Information Commissioners:** It was apprised by the President, NFICI that Shri Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta, Hon'ble CIC Assam and Shri Md. Shakeel Akhter, Hon'ble CIC Tamil Nadu are attending the meeting of the Federation for the first time after assuming the office of Chief Information Commissioner of their respective States. On behalf of all the members of Board of Governors, he welcomed both the members on board of the Federation.

**2. Confirmation of Minutes of last Meeting:** The 27<sup>th</sup> Board of Governors meeting was held on 03.02.2023 at Kevadia Colony, Gujarat. Minutes of the meeting were confirmed by the members of the Board of Governors.

**3. Approval of payment to Auditor for FY 2022-23:** It was apprised that the NFICI's Annual Accounts for the financial year 2022-23 have been audited by M/s Batra Deepak & Associates, Chartered Accountant. The audited Annual Accounts comprising the Income & Expenditure Statement, Receipts & Payments Statement, and the Balance Sheet were presented in the meeting for all the members of the Federation.

A brief summary of NFICI's audited accounts for the financial year 2022-23 was conveyed to all the members of the Federation. Summary of the same is produced below:-

• Opening balance as on 01.04.2022	:	Rs. 35,33,193/-
• Receipts	:	Rs. 71,75,262/-
• Expenditures	:	Rs. 89,25,385/-
• Closing balance, as on 01.04.2023	:	Rs. 17,83,070/-

It was also brought to the notice of the Governing Body that M/s Batra Deepak & Associates, Chartered Accountant had submitted an invoice for Rs. 29,500/- (25,000 + @4,500 for 18% GST) after the Audit of NFICI's Annual Accounts for the financial year 2022-23 for payment. The BOG approved payment to Auditor for FY 2022-23.

**4. Status of NFICI's Current Accounts and FDs:** The members of the Federation were apprised of the status of NFICI's current account and fixed deposits being maintained by State Bank of India, Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi. As on 05.09.2023 a sum of Rs. 1,55,875/- was held as balance in the current account and there were 14 Fixed Deposits amounting to Rs. 1,89,78,277/- (principal amount). The Members expressed their happiness on maintenance of accounts in a systematic manner.

The Members were also informed that a sum of Rs. 8.00 lakh has been released as an advance to State Information Commission, Andhra Pradesh for hosting the 28th BOG and 12th AGB meetings at Visakhapatnam on 8-10<sup>th</sup> Sep, 2023 at Visakhapatnam.

**5. Status of NFICI case for Tax Exemption pending at CIT (Exemptions):**

BOG members were apprised that the NFICI's case for Tax Exemption is pending with Commissioner Income Tax (Exemptions), Hyderabad for further adjudication. Advocate A.V. Raghu Ram from Hyderabad has been engaged to pursue the matter. He has been visiting the office of CIT (E) from time to time for further action. He has further informed that the matter is likely to come up for further examination by the Commissioner Income Tax (Exemptions), Hyderabad.

**6. Ratification of payment released to Advocate for proceedings at CIT**

**(Exemptions):** Advocate A.V. Raghu Ram has been engaged to represent the case in CIT (Exemptions) on behalf of NFICI for application filed under section 12AA & 80G of I.T. Act 1961. He had sent an Invoice for Rs. 50,000/- on account of his fee for appearance and pursuance of proceedings before Hon'ble CIT (Exemptions), Hyderabad. As agreed, Rs. 50,000/- would be the full fee for filing appeals / appearances till finalization of case with CIT (Exemptions), Hyderabad. He had requested that the payment should be paid to him in advance to take up the application. Hence the payment of Rs. 50,000/- has been made in advance to Advocate A.V. Raghu Ram after obtaining the approval of President, NFICI. The BOG ratified the payment made to the Advocate.

**7. Ratification of payment made to SIC Andhra Pradesh for organising 28<sup>th</sup>**

**BOG and 12<sup>th</sup> AGB meetings:** Members were informed that as per exiting policy, a grant of Rs. 8.00 lakh had been released as an advance to State Information Commission, Andhra Pradesh for hosting the 28th BOG and 12th AGB meetings at Visakhapatnam on September 8-10, 2023 at Visakhapatnam. The BOG ratified the payment.

**8. Status of released of 3<sup>rd</sup> Grant of Rs. 4.00 Lakhs to member information**

**Commissions:** Members of BOG were apprised about the status of release of 3<sup>rd</sup> grant of Rs. 4.00 lakhs to following member Commissions:-

S.No.	State Information Commission	Favoring	Amt. Released (in Lakhs)	Cheque No. & Date
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	Secretary, Arunachal Pradesh State Information Commission	4.00	507220 08.09.2022
2.	Assam	Secretary, Assam State Information Commission	4.00	507221 08.09.2022
3.	Chhattisgarh	Secretary, Chhattisgarh State Information Commission	4.00	507222 08.09.2022
4.	Manipur	Secretary, Manipur State Information Commission	4.00	507223 08.09.2022
5.	Meghalaya	Secretary, Meghalaya State Information Commission	4.00	507224 08.09.2022
6.	Mizoram	Secretary, Mizoram State Information Commission	4.00	507225 08.09.2022
7.	Nagaland	Secretary, Nagaland State Information Commission	4.00	507226 08.09.2022
8.	Punjab	Secretary, Punjab State Information Commission	4.00	507227 08.09.2022
9.	Tamil Nadu	Secretary, Tamil Nadu State Information Commission	4.00	507228 08.09.2022
10.	Karnataka	Secretary, Karnataka State Information Commission	4.00	507240 09.12.2022
11.	Uttarakhand	Secretary, Uttarakhand State Information Commission	4.00	507239 09.12.2022
12.	Odisha	Secretary, Odisha State Information Commission	4.00	038059 14.03.2023
13.	Kerala	Secretary, Kerala State Information Commission	4.00	038055 20.02.2023

14.	Gujarat	Secretary, Gujarat State Information Commission	4.00	038056 20.02.2023
15.	Rajasthan	Secretary, Rajasthan State Information Commission	4.00	038063 20.02.2023
16.	Himachal Pradesh	Secretary, State Information Commission, Himachal Pradesh	4.00	038074 24.07.2023
17.	Goa	Goa State Information Commission	4.00	038075 24.07.2023

**9. Status of outstanding UCs and Vouchers from members Information Commissions:** The status of outstanding utilization certificates and supporting vouchers against the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> grants was conveyed to the BOG. It was decided that the concerned members are once again conveyed the same and requested to submit their outstanding Utilization Certificates and Supporting Vouchers in respect of the grants released by NFICI at the earliest.

**10. Discussion on bank account for avail NFICI grants:** The BOG was apprised that the Federation issues grants to its member Information Commissions from time to time. Telangana State Information Commission has raised an issue regarding opening a separate Bank Account to avail NFICI's grants.

**11. Agenda points received from SIC Sikkim:** Sikkim State Information Commission had submitted the following two agenda points for discussion and consideration by the members:

*Point 1 (Verbatim) - That in section 8 of sub-section (j) it has been reflected that "information which relates to personal information, the disclosure of which has no relationship to any Public Authority or interest, or which would cause unwarranted invasion of the privacy of the individual unless the Central Public Information officer or State Public Information officer or the Appellate Authority, as the case -*


may be is satisfied that the larger Public Interest justifies the disclosure of such information.”

a) *Provided that the information which cannot be denied to the parliament or state legislature shall not be denied to any person.*

**Suggestions:** *In the RTI Act/ rules, the definition of larger Public Interest, Personal document and Public document are not defined, it would be appropriate if, the definitions are incorporated in the rule for easy disposal of such cases.*

Discussion – This was discussed by the BOG and it was decided that since section 8 (1) (j) of the RTI Act has been amended vide section 44 (3) of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, no further intervention is warranted.

**Point 2 (Verbatim) - Payment of Annual Membership Fee of NFICI and release of grants:** *The state Information Commission of Sikkim was not able to pay the annual membership bill for the financial year 19-20, 20-21 and 21-22 because of non-availability of resources during the COVID period. After the COVID period, the Commission paid the membership bill for the financial year 2022-23 at the amount of Rs 1,00,000, with a request to deposit this amount against the dues of the Financial Year 2022-23, but the same has been adjusted against the outstanding payment for the financial year 2019-20. The bill for the outstanding membership fee of Rs. 3.00 lakhs (from 2020-2023) is under process and will be deposited to the Central Information Commissions NFICI by the 1st week of September 2023. Utilization certificates for the previous grants have already been submitted through mail and Registered post (if it is not received, we can submit a Xerox copy of the same now).*

 **Suggestions:** *In this regard it is to submit that the 3rd grant under “improving transparency and accountability in Government through effective implementation of RTI Act” may kindly be released to all the member states under NFICI without waiting for their annual membership contribution for timely implementation of this scheme please.*

Discussion – Matter was discussed and the Executive Secretary apprised the members that outstanding annual membership fee in respect of State Information Commission, Sikkim has been received till 2023-24. Hence, SIC, Sikkim has now become eligible for the third grant. Members agreed to release the third grant to State Information Commission, Sikkim at the earliest.

The Members also decided to put up these agenda points raised by SIC Sikkim before the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual General Body.

**12. Any other item with the permission of the Chair:** There being no other point, the meeting was concluded with a vote of thanks.



**(Y.K. Sinha)**

**President, NFICI**