

TRAI The lovable and brilliant **Rahul Khullar** passes away



Rahul Khullar IAS 1975

BA Eco Hons 1972

MA Eco 1974

Former Chairman TRAI and Commerce Secretary
Secretary Govt of India

Passed away 23.02.2021

Rahul's first deputation as Deputy Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office was in 1985. In 2009, he was appointed the Commerce Secretary, a post which he held till 2012, when he was selected to head the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India TRAI .

When he took charge as TRAI Chief, the industry was undergoing severe regulatory scrutiny in the aftermath of the "2G spectrum scam" . According to telecom industry officials, he insisted on playing by the book.

Towards the end of his term, TRAI was responsible for sparking the debate on *net neutrality* for the first time in India through a Consultation Paper on regulating over-the-top services **OTT**, an exercise that saw record participation from stakeholders.

"Just heard very sad news of Rahul Khullar's passing away. Known him since 1969 when we were together in **St Stephen's**, then in MoF and again in ADB. ***One of the sharpest minds with impeccable integrity.*** Deepest condolences to **Sindhushree**. May his noble soul rest in eternal peace," NITI Aayog Vice Chairman **Rajiv Kumar** said in a tweet Tuesda 23.02.2021.

Former Chief Economic Adviser Kaushik Basu tweeted: "Sad news—the passing of Rahul Khullar. He was ***the topper of my batch at St Stephen's*** College. *Super brilliant*, Rahul joined the IAS. He was an asset to the government, knew every aspect of policy & most importantly was *fastidiously upright and principled*. And he was a dear friend".

Prior to joining IAS in 1975, Khullar he taught briefly at Delhi University's **Hansraj** College, after finishing his MA in Economics from D School in 1974. He also got a PhD in Economics from Boston University **USA** while serving in the IAS. Lately, Rahul had been teaching Mathematics at a Delhi school.

He is survived by his **wife Sindhushree** also an IAS officer of the 1975 batch, and a former CEO of NITI Aayog — and two daughters.