

Chatterji, Digvijaya's 'good friend', caught in cross-fire

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NEW DELHI: Pulok Chatterji, principal secretary to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, on Monday got dragged in the crossfire between [India Against Corruption](#) (IAC) activists and Congress general secretary Digvijaya Singh.

The IAC hit back at Digvijaya Singh for asking how Arvind Kejriwal managed to stay put in Delhi through his entire 20 year- career with the Indian Revenue Service (IRS), and said that the Congress leader needed to share with public the details of the career of Chatterji, his "good friend".

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In a sharp riposte, the IAC claimed that Kejriwal's presence in Delhi through his career was consistent with rules and because of the I-T department's imperative to keep "honest officers in the national Capital, and asked Digvijaya to make public the information on Chatterji. The anti-corruption outfit pointed out that before his appointment as principal secretary to the PM, Chatterji was associated with NGOs associated with Congress president Sonia Gandhi.

IAC defended Kejriwal and refuted Digvijaya's claim that the anti-corruption activist had launched an NGO while he was "actively" serving as an IRS officer. Rebutting the criticism implied in Digvijaya's questions, IAC claimed that Kejriwal did not violate any norms of All India Service Rules.

On the question of Kejriwal's entire 20 years' service in IRS in Delhi, the organization said the facts and reasons of this are "well known" to both the PM and the finance minister. "Posting within Delhi is not unique to Arvind. He has information of at least 376 other such instances where IRS officers have been posted continuously at New Delhi for more than 10 years. Due to the severe shortage of honest and competent officers with technical skills, Arvind's tenure/ postings were repeatedly extended wherever he was posted, approvals followed in due course," IAC claimed.

On Kejriwal's wife Sunita being posted only in Delhi during her service, IAC reasoned that since she is honest and competent she is deputed in "sensitive postings like the Serious Frauds Investigation Office" under the ministry of corporate affairs. It said that SFIO had on its own repeatedly requested her tenure to be extended.

Earlier, Kejriwal in a statement said that answers to most of Singh's queries are with various arms of the government like home ministry, finance ministry and all other investigating agencies. "Because of these people, corruption, unemployment and crime are increasing. These same people who are responsible for all this to divert attention from these issues again and again tell you — I want to indulge in politics," it said.

Kejriwal also snubbed Digvijaya Singh, saying he would send his close aide Kumar Vishwas to debate with the Congress general secretary, if Gandhi and the PM don't join him for a public discussion on corruption. After Kejriwal had dared the PM and Gandhi for a debate, the Congress leader had responded saying he should first debate with him.

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postscript (Char-Dham)
23 Oct, 2012 07:51 PM

According to some senior politicians in power Mr Kejriwal is a non-entity. But Arvind Kejriwal is a still small voice of the people'. He has managed to raise a lot of 'dust' or is it smoke irritating the high and mighty. The government should take heed lest this smoke turns into a raging fire.

ramesh (delhi)
23 Oct, 2012 04:51 PM

WHEN WILL YOU DEBATE DIGGI SINGH? BETTER DO IT ON DUSSEHRA ,SO THAT AT LEAST ONE RAVAN WILL BE KILLED.

K.V.Nagarajan (Chennai)
23 Oct, 2012 12:35 PM

Now congress does not have any respect as a party after the recent exposures.They may cry from the roof top that all other parties are no good but that does not change the view of the voters. They are all waiting for the next available opportunity to vote out the party once and for all.Hope the day is not far off.

vicki (Wellington NZ)
23 Oct, 2012 12:34 PM

Did not I say only yesterday that this cunning and slippery character will find some vague and untenable excuses to avoid a face to face debate. How can any one else can be deputed for answering questions pertaining to him, Kejriwal? As far as Pulok Chatterjee is concerned, he did not start a NGO. was only assisting the Chair person of NAC. That too with proper permission from the authorities. But what about this kji? Did he take any permission to start a NGO?

akshay (pune)
23 Oct, 2012 10:46 AM

mora INDIA to khoob hi kamaat hai , Soni@ daayan khaye jaat hai

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