

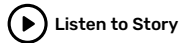


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M.S. Gill has come a long way

He learnt mountaineering from a man who conquered Everest 55 years back. Now, former Chief Election Commissioner M S Gill has climbed up from being a bureaucrat to a minister at the Centre.



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He learnt mountaineering from a man who conquered Everest 55 years back. Now, former Chief Election Commissioner M S Gill has climbed up from being a bureaucrat to a minister at the Centre.

An avid mountaineer, a sports enthusiast and an expert on agriculture, 72-year-old Gill became an Election Commissioner in 1992 when the government decided to expand the one-man panel, then headed by T N Seshan, to a three-member body.

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Gill, a former IAS officer, rose to become the CEC in 1995 and supervised and conducted the 1998 and 1999 polls which had brought BJP-led governments to power at the Centre.

A recipient of Padma Vibhushan, he was elected to the Rajya Sabha from Punjab

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in 2004 on a Congress ticket.

Gill is also the first IAS officer to be trained in mountaineering. He was coached by famous Tenzing Norgay who had conquered Everest along with Edmund Hillary in 1953. He was also the President of the Mountaineering Foundation.

Gill, who served in the Rajiv Gandhi Government as Secretary, was actively involved in the green revolution in Punjab.

He has held the post of Secretary in the ministries of Agriculture, Petrochemicals and Chemicals, and Pharmaceuticals at the Centre.

Gill has authored a book 'An Indian Success Story: Agriculture and Cooperatives in Punjab' and served on a World Bank project on agriculture and infrastructure in Nigeria between 1981 and 1984.

A keen follower of sporting events including boxing, he was part of the team of officials accompanying the Indian team to the 1969 Mexico Olympics.


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