

BIODATA OF ANAND SHARMA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Anand Sharma was born in Shimla in the State of Himachal Pradesh on January 5, 1953. He has been a prominent leader of the student and youth movement in India. He was one of the founders of NSUI, the student wing of the Indian National Congress. After serving as the state President for Himachal Pradesh and National General Secretary, he rose to become the President of the Indian Youth Congress in 1985. He has worked closely with late Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. He was educated at Shimla and was first elected to Parliament in 1984 at the age of 31.

Anand Sharma has been a prominent public face of the Indian National Congress and was Chief Spokesman of the party for six years. He was elevated to the Union Council of Ministers with responsibility for Foreign Affairs in January, 2006. He also assumed the additional charge of Union Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting in October 2008.

In addition to his considerable experience in dealing with the media, Anand Sharma brings to his Ministerial assignment a vast reservoir of knowledge in international affairs. He has considerable experience in representing his party and India at diplomatic interactions at all levels and has either led or been a member of delegations to over fifty countries. He has been a key organizer of several major international conferences, including the First Non-Aligned Youth Conference in 1985 in New Delhi which was attended by delegates from 82 countries, and has been sent by the Prime Minister of India as Special Envoy for various sensitive assignments.

Mr Sharma is recognized for his personal commitment to the struggle against Apartheid in South Africa. As President of the Indian Youth Congress, he was instrumental in convening an International Youth Conference against Apartheid in New Delhi to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the African National Congress in January 1987. In addition to being Chairman of the Indian Anti-Apartheid Movement, he also chaired the World Youth Action Against Apartheid. He was appointed to observe the South African Transition Process and Elections in 1994 by the Commonwealth Secretary-General.

Anand Sharma was proactively associated with the convening of the International Conference, as its Secretary General, to mark the centenary of the Satyagraha organized by the Indian National Congress in New Delhi in January, 2007. The Conference was attended by representative leadership delegations from 91 countries and 122 organisations. In pursuance of the Conference declaration, he moved India's Resolution, co-sponsored by 142 member-states, at the UN General Assembly on 15 June 2007, to observe Mahatma Gandhi's birthday on 2nd October as the International Day of Non-Violence. The resolution was adopted unanimously by the UNGA.

Anand Sharma is a lawyer by education and is well-versed with parliamentary and legislative procedures and as a member of the panel of chairpersons for Rajya Sabha has presided over sittings of the House.

He is deeply involved in work relating to autism and disabilities.

Mr Sharma has keen interest in sports and has been a member of the Sports Authority of India.

Anand Sharma is married to Dr. Zenobia Sharma. They have two children.

His other interests include cricket, hiking, travelling, reading books on philosophy and history; listening to Indian and western classical music.

He was conferred “The Order of the Companion of Volta”, top Ghanaian civilian award by President J A Koufour on 10 November 2008 in recognition of his commitment to South-South Cooperation. He was also honoured with the “Commander of the National Order of Merit”, highest civilian award by the President of Ivory Coast on 14 January 2009.

He has been given the responsibility in the Union Cabinet of India as Minister for Commerce and Industry. He assumed the charge as Minister on 29th May 2009.