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SR Rao appointed as commerce secretary is a Padma Shri winner

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NEW DELHI: Newly appointed Union **commerce secretary** and Gujarat cadre **IAS officer SR Rao** is a Padma shri award winner. Rao, a 1978 batch IAS, is still known for his work as Surat municipal commissioner in mid-1990s.

He not only cleaned up the plague-hit city but undertook a number of bold initiatives to convert the diamond city into a model city. And that gave him the prestigious award Padma shri, a rarity for a serving administrative officer.

Rao will replace Rahul Khullar who had joined as chairman of telecom regulator TRAI.

Hailing from Andhra Pradesh, Rao is currently working as special secretary in the ministry of communication and IT.

Masters in social work and rural development, Rao has however never worked in commerce and industry ministries either in state or Centre. But he had earlier served as chairman of Vishakapatnam Port Trust for five years.

On a deputation, he also went to his home state Andhra Pradesh where he had served under urban development ministry. In early 1990s, Rao was a deputy secretary and then a director in the department of atomic energy.

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