



Powerful by association

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Chief Economic Adviser Kaushik Basu was recalling his first brush with officialdom when he was trying to set up the Centre for Development Economics at the Delhi School of Economics. Fed up with the file being pushed from the finance ministry to the education one, and a lot of back and forth, Basu asked for a meeting with Manmohan Singh who was the finance minister at that time. Basu arrived early since he didn't want to keep the FM waiting, and Singh was a little late — the combination ensured Basu was in the waiting room for around 45 minutes. Several bureaucrats who would not give him the time of day, Basu said, saw him in the room and started chatting with him and even the files started moving faster. "I was planning to tell the finance minister," Basu said, "to please grant me an appointment every month ... I wouldn't disturb him; I'd just sit in the waiting room and then go away!"

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