

## OBITUARY REFERENCE

My Lords, Hon'ble the Chief Justice of High Court of Delhi, Mr. Justice M. K. Sharma and his Hon'ble Companion Judges, Mr. K.C. Mittal, President of Delhi High Court Bar Association, Central Government Standing Counsels, Ms. Mukta Gupta, Standing Counsel for Delhi Administration [Criminal], Mr. J.R. Midha, Standing Counsel for Delhi Administration [Civil] Additional Standing Counsels and counsels for various other bodies and statutory authorities, other dignitaries, Hon'ble Mr. Justice A. K. Sikri, Mrs. Madhu Sikri, Mr. Ravi Sikri, Mr. H.B. Khurana, Mrs. Sunita Khurana, Mr. Saket Sikri, Mr. Tanuj Khurana, and other relations of Late Mr. N.C.Sikri, my esteemed colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen.

2. Late Mr. N. C. Sikri had risen to great heights by his mere dint of hard work. He was born in 1923 and joined service soon after passing his Intermediate. He completed his Law while being in service and joined the Bar in 1960. He was two years senior to me in Bar. I had seen him growing case by case. He was designated a Sr. Advocate by this Hon'ble Court. He firmly believed in hard work alone for success of his case and by dint of his hard work alone he was able to win cases. His life was full of honesty and integrity. It is often said that knowledge is a great power. He was full of knowledge on his subject which was mostly Labour Laws and with his hard work and ability to work hard and hard for any number of hours, he acquired immense knowledge and by that knowledge he could win any case.

3. I remember when I joined the Bar in my early days, I had gone to Jaipur to conduct a case and when I went to the Library, I found a writing in the library that "if you want to be a successful lawyer, you have to work like an ass". This saying absolutely applied to him. Whenever I saw him either in the corridors of the Court, outside the court room or in the Bar his appearance showed that his mind was fully occupied and loaded with work and confidence. This could only come because of his hard work and it was this hard work which was reflected in his arguments and vigour in his arguments.

4. He was an ideal human being, an ideal advocate, an ideal senior, an ideal father and his personality was ideal in all respects be it his honesty and integrity, be it his attitude, be it his behaviour towards his clients, be it his conduct towards colleagues and juniors, be his duty to the Hon'ble Courts. He was always clear and honest. He preferred to loose a client and not give a wrong advice.

5. He had a very humane approach. I remember an incident which was narrated to me by a close friend. The matter pertains to the year 1986 when MTNL was incorporated as a company, a Writ Petition under Article 32 of the Constitution was filed in the Hon'ble Supreme Court by the Adhoc and Daily Wage workers against the Department of Telecom for their regularization. MTNL was made a party in that petition and Late Mr. N. C. Sikri was engaged by the MTNL to defend the said Writ Petition. Even with his new prestigious client of prestige, he told the clients that it would be just and fair that these daily wagers should be given employment and by his fair approach he even though lost the case but won over the hearts of about 5,000 workers who were regularized. It was he at that time who had suggested the Department and prepared a scheme for their regularization and absorption.

6. I remember another incident when he was Legal Adviser of a Bank. The CMD of the Bank wanted him to render legal opinion as per his desire but Late Mr. N.C. Sikri even though at the risk of losing his position as a Legal Adviser did not oblige the CMD and when the CMD of the Bank expresses his displeasure, Late Mr. N.C.Sikri though he was soft but in a firm manner retorted and told the CMD "that he was not his General Manager to whom the CMD could dictate and he would give an opinion what he considers is right and he will not go against his conscience."

7. I can say with full confidence and certainty that he was not a senior who would run for money or interested mainly with money. He had commitment to the cause of his case and to the profession. He was a Counsel who was firmly committed to the case. He had a firm conviction in what he said in Courts. He had successfully handled a number of cases in the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

8. There are endless facts about him. Even a whole day's speech would be insufficient but I will be failing in my duty if I do not bring one more incident of his noble approach towards life. One day he had gone to a temple where he met a child outside the temple with an acquaintance. The acquaintance told him that the child was orphan and he had brought the boy to the temple for shelter. Late Mr. Sikri requested the temple priest to keep the child in the temple and persuaded the child to study. While staying in the temple, the child studied and studied ultimately he did his Ph.d in Sanskrit and presently he is a great Sanskrit Scholar. All expenses for his studies and food, etc. were provided by Late Mr. N.C. Sikri. Nobody in the family of Mr. NC Sikri knew about it. When Late Mr. Sikri was ailing, the Sanskrit Scholar came to see him and it is only then that the family came to know about it. Such a philanthropist man was late Mr. N.C. Sikri.

9. That he was well known and respected counsel in the Hon'ble Supreme Court and had appeared in important matters on behalf of the Workmen as well as Management. However, I am not giving the citations for the sake of brevity.

10. I firmly say that he has left permanent imprints on his family. I have been seeing Hon'ble Mr. Justice A. K. Sikri and his other family members earlier mentioned. Their cool conduct, hard work, integrity and patience are true reflections of late Mr. N. C. Sikri's life and conduct. I wish if we all can imbibe these qualities of a great man, we can make better ours and others lives better and happy. I am sure that if we resolve ourselves to imbibe the qualities of men like Late Mr. N. C. Sikri we will have a better life.

11. I, on behalf of the Government of India, my esteemed colleagues, Central Government Standing Counsels and other Government Counsels request the Hon'ble Chief Justice of the High Court of Delhi to convey our heartfelt condolences to Hon'ble Mr. Justice A. K. Sikri, Mrs. Madhu Sikri, Mr. Ravi Sikri, Mr. H.B. Khurana, Mrs. Sunita Khurana, Mr. Saket Sikri, Mr. Tanuj Khurana, and other relations of Late Mr. N. C. Sikri, and other members of the bereaved family. May his soul rest in peace.



( P. P. MALHOTRA )

Additional Solicitor General of India