

## SPEECH

My Lords, Hon'ble Chief Justice of High Court of Delhi, Mr. Justice M.K. Sharma and his Hon'ble Companion Judges, Mr. A.S. Chandiok, 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] and counsels for various other bodies and statutory authorities and my esteemed colleagues, sister Kamla Ji, Dear Abhishek Singhvi, and Smt. Abhilasha Lalbhai, Ladies and Gentlemen.

2. Late Dr. L. M Singhvi was born in Jodhpur in 1931 and was educated at and associated with and honoured by different universities. In India (Rajasthan, Allahabad, Calcutta, Delhi, Osmania, Andhra, Tamil and Jabalpur Universities), USA, (Harvard, Cornell and Berkeley) and in UK (Cambridge, Oxford, Hull London, Edinburgh, De Montford, North London, Westminster, Buckingham and several other universities). After completing his law he came into the profession and became the Advocate General for the State of Rajasthan in 1972 and remained the Advocate General for a period of 5 years i.e., upto 1977.

3. He was a doyen of the Indian Bar, leading Constitutional expert, a gifted speaker, a distinguished jurist and a great Parliamentarian, He left a long trail of achievements in diverse fields. He was unparalleled in all fields be it art of advocacy, diplomacy, poetry, writing and human relationship, parliamentarianship. He had excelled in all fields. He was an angel and above all he was a real man of God. He was always polite and gentle. He was a really noble person. The words cannot describe his intelligence, integrity, brilliance,

understanding and human approach. He was a well-know writer and author, a legal luminary and expert recognized all over the world. He was associated with a number of institutions and initiatives, he was a gifted speaker, scholar and diplomat. He was a Member of the third Lok Sabha between 1962 to 1967 and was elected to the Rajya Sabha in 1999.

4. I personally knew Dr. Singhvi from the year 1977 onwards. It was a great pleasure and experience when I briefed him. He was very clear on the positive and negative aspects of the case. I had been in constant touch with him. I had the privilege of enjoying his Rajasthani Hospitality number of times.

5. As early as 1956, Dr. Singhvi attended the International Legal Science Conference under the auspices of UNESCO in Barcelona, Spain, as one of the four Indian delegates. That delegation was led by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Patanjali Sastri (formerly Chief Justice of India) and included Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vivian Bose, a well-known judge of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and later President of the International Commission of Jurists. During the following years Dr. Singhvi was associated with the initial organisation of the Indian Law Institute, which he directed and administered, in its formative phase. He also founded The Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies, Human Rights Rectangle, Centre for Human Rights Education and Training, Centre for the Study of Law and Society, the Federalism Centre, the Centre for the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, Centre for Unity of India (Rashtriya Ekta Dham) and many other organisations.

6. Dr. Singhvi was elected as President of the Supreme Court Bar Association, on more occasions than any other leader of the Bar except late Mr. M.C. Setalvad. He has been a leading Senior Advocate of the Supreme

Court of India and the Founder President of the Supreme Court Bar Association Trust. It was he who conceived and founded Law Day, which is widely observed by the Bench and the Bar in India on November 26<sup>th</sup> each year. He was regarded as one of the foremost constitutional experts in India.

7. Dr. Singhvi was elected Honorary Tagore Law Professor in 1973 at Calcutta University, one of the oldest and most highly regarded Chairs in the world in the field of Law, and was the Founder-President and Honorary Patron of the Commonwealth Legal Education Association, London. He had delivered the first series of Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Lectures on 'Secularism' in celebration of Diamond Jubilee of the Banaras Hindu University 1975-1976 from which University along with several other universities he has received the highest academic honours. His book Freedom on Trial has gone through several editions. He was elected as Mahatma Gandhi Professor at Leicester University and delivered a course of lectures on Jurisprudence of Non - Violence. He was also invited to plant a tree to mark the opening of the New Law Library in Cambridge University.

8. From 1979-1987 he was the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Impartiality and Independence of the Judiciary, Jurors and Assessors and the Independence of Lawyers. As U.N. Special Rapporteur Dr. Singhvi has been internationally a key figure on the issue of the independence of the judiciary and the legal profession. His Report on the Independence of Justice and his Draft Universal Declaration on the Independence of Justice (1987) received worldwide acclaim in the fora of the United Nations and in the world of law. As Chairman of the Working Group on The Independence of Justice at Varenna, 1984, he was instrumental in preparing Guidelines for the Independence of the Judiciary, which were adopted at Seventh U.N. Congress on Crime Prevention

and Treatment of Offenders at Milan (1985) and approved by the General Assembly of the U.N. later that year. Three years earlier he had been Chairman of the Asian Seminar on Asian Approaches to Human Rights organised by the U.N. University and UNESCO in New Delhi.

9. Dr. Singhvi was Leader of the Indian Delegation at the UN Human Rights Conference at Vienna in 1993. In February-March, 1998, he was the Leader of the Indian Delegation to the biggest ever inter-governmental conference on Culture and Development in Stockholm. Dr. Singhvi's pioneering and dedicated work for interfaith amity has been acknowledged throughout the world in many different ways including many major international awards.

10. Dr. Singhvi was elected to the Indian Parliament (Third Lok Sabha) as an Independent Member for 1962-1967 from the Jodhpur Parliamentary constituency and became known as an outstanding parliamentarian who held many prominent posts with considerable distinction. In his book, *Roses in December*, Mr. M. C. Chagla ranked him as one of the five most skilful, eloquent, persuasive and highly respected MPs in India. In 1986 Dr. Singhvi was Chairman of the Government of India Committee on Revitalization of Panchayati Raj Institutions and his recommendations and the draft amendments have been incorporated into the Constitution by a Constitutional Amendment. He crusaded for the ombudsman system in India and coined the words "Lokpal" and "Lokayuktya" which have become a part of the legislative vocabulary of India.

11. He was awarded Padma Bhushan in January 1988. He was elected to an Honorary Bencher, the Master of Middle Temple, one of the Highest honours in the gift of Judges and Lawyers in UK. In 1992 He was elected to the Rede,

Chair of Cambridge University which was founded in 1524 and was named after Sir Robert, Lord Chief Justice of England.

12. He was a Member of UNESCO Executive Board, Chairman, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, 2003, Life-trustee and former President of India International Centre.

13. I on behalf of the government of India, my 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 the bereaved family members, Sister Kamlaji, Abhishek Singhvi and Smt. Abhilasha Lalbhai and other relations. May his soul rest in peace and may God give courage to all bereaved members of the family to bear this irreparable loss.

( P. P.Malhotra )  
Additional Solicitor General of India

Dated : 11-10-2007