

## FAREWELL SPEECH

Hon'ble Chief Justice G.Rohini, my esteemed brother and sister judges, Mr. Sanjay Jain, Ld. Additional Solicitor General, Mr. Rajeev Khosla, the President of the DHC Bar Association, Mr. Raman Duggal, Mr. Rahul Mehra, Sr. Standing Counsel for NCT, Mr. Abhijat, Secretary, DHC Bar Association, Mr. Puneet Mittal, Executive Member and senior and junior Members of the Bar, ladies and gentlemen.

I am truly humbled and moved by the generous words spoken about me. Words fail me to address this august gathering. However, I consider myself privileged and lucky to be associated with one of the most prestigious institutions in the country.

I firmly believe that there is something beyond human control which charts one's course. This may be called destiny, luck, coincidence or chance. My joining the profession of law is the product of the same. I come from a community where education is given utmost importance. Both my parents were in the profession of teaching. They always wanted me to follow the footsteps of my elder brother and pursue engineering. However, my lack of interest in science and math gave me the courage to explore a different path.

After completing my Graduation from University of Delhi, I joined Campus Law Centre and completed LLB in 1976. I enrolled myself with the Bar Council of Delhi on 29<sup>th</sup> September, 1976 and joined District Court Bar at

Tis Hazari. Being a first generation lawyer, things didn't come easy. I realised in a matter of few days that practising in the District Court was not my cup of tea.

The very same year (in 1976) judicial vacancies were advertised by the High Court. As destiny would have it, even though I had filled up the form, I could not take the exam since I got selected as Assistant Legal Officer in DCM, Chemical, Zakhira. Having served in this role for three and a half months, I decided to leave the job due to lack of job satisfaction and my desire to pursue LLM.

In March 1977, I quit my job and re-joined the bar though practically without any brief. Simultaneously, I decided to study further in order to follow my aspiration to teach law. While I was in my 4<sup>th</sup> term of LLM, in April 1979, I got another opportunity to appear in the Delhi Judicial Services and as destiny would have it, I qualified the written exam.

As the next step, my interview was scheduled before a committee headed by HMI V.S. Deshpande (the then Chief Justice) of this court. Justice Deshpande was essentially an academician. He found keen interest in the topic of my dissertation and hence, major part of the interview comprised of questions around my dissertation. With the grace of almighty, I secured a 1<sup>st</sup> position and joined Delhi Judicial Service as a Metropolitan Magistrate in the year 1979.

I worked in District Court in different capacities for almost 11½ years, a fairly long period. My stint as a judge of the district court lay the foundation of understanding practical application of law. While my job was gratifying, I had the urge to take up a more challenging assignment. I decided to resign in Feb 1991 and join the bar again. *It is often said that difficult roads lead to beautiful destinations.* In hindsight, the struggle back then lead to where I stand today and I am truly grateful for that. I owe a lot to my parents and wife for their moral support and encouragement.

Having spent almost four decades in the legal profession, I have had a chance to interact and work with some of the finest legal minds. These interactions have not only made me admire their infallible knowledge but also made me realise that greatness comes from humility and willingness to learn and evolve.

In retrospect, it has indeed been a long and eventful journey with its share of ups and downs. *We all have to fight through some bad days to earn the better days of our life.* I feel this holds true for each one of us. But, nonetheless, this rewarding career has given me exposure to profound thoughts and worthy experiences which I will cherish for the rest of my life.

During my tenure as a judge of this court, I have witnessed the joy and felt the pain of litigants, who throng the courtrooms in their quest for justice. I sincerely hope I have been able to conduct my duties and responsibilities as a Judge with utmost sincerity and fairness. Today, as I reflect upon the years spent by me on the bench, my feelings range from nostalgia to gratitude. If my humble efforts have in any degree contributed to advancing the cause of justice, I believe, that I too have been rewarded by the respect/confidence instilled in me by all of you.

Towards the end, I would like to firstly thank the Almighty, for giving me an opportunity to perform this divine function. I am thankful to all my colleagues on the Bench of this court for giving me the privilege of being in their company.

I wish to place on record my appreciation, about the staff/particularly my PS Mr. Shankar, Registry and Law Researchers over the years, who all have rendered unflinching support and assistance in my endeavours. I am also grateful to the staff Protocol and medical branch who have provided all possible help to me and my family even at odd hours and short notice.

Last but not the least, I am indebted to my parents for their blessings, my wife, Rashmi who has tirelessly worked towards the needs of the family. I thank my daughters, Parul and Pallavi, for their unparalleled love and care.

I express my heartfelt gratitude, for your kindness, support and good wishes. I bid you all an affectionate good bye and hope to see you soon.

As I say goodbye, I am reminded that farewells are not forever, nor are they the end. They are simply words to say that we will cross paths again.

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