

**FAREWELL SPEECH OF HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE RAJENDRA
MENON, THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF DELHI HIGH COURT ON
31.05.2019 AT 3:00 P.M.**

**JUSTICE RAJENDRA MENON
CHIEF JUSTICE**

My esteemed brother and sister Judges,
Sh. Justice Ravindra Bhat, Chief Justice, Rajasthan High Court
Sh. Justice Mohd. Fahim Anwar, Judge, Madhya Pradesh High
Court
Mr. Fali S. Nariman, Senior Advocate
Smt. Maninder Acharya, Additional Solicitor General,
Shri K.C. Mittal, Chairman, Bar Council of Delhi,
Shri Mohit Mathur, President, Delhi High Court Bar Association,
Mr. Ramesh Singh, Standing Counsel, Govt. of NCT of Delhi,
Standing Counsels of the Central and State Government,
Executive Members of the Delhi High Court Bar Association,
Office Bearers of Bar Council of Delhi and other District Bar
Associations,
Senior Advocates,
Members of the Bar,
Advocates from the High Court Bar Association, Jabalpur
District and Sessions Judges,
Officers and staff of this Court,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am deeply touched and overwhelmed by the kind words that have been expressed by the Speakers. I am not sure as to whether I am entitled to all the praise and love showered upon me but the feelings expressed have touched me and I express my gratitude to all.

As I demit office today after being on the Bench for more than 17 years, I have no hesitation in admitting that one of the best and happiest period was the one I spent in this Court.

I have developed an invincible bond with all the Judicial Institutions where I had discharged duties and, therefore, calling off and demitting office and responsibilities after such a long period is painful and departing from each one of you makes me feel sad.

I was born in a very humble family and it is because of the untiring faith reposed in me by my family and unflinching support I have received from my friends that I have reached where I am today. *Abraham Lincoln once said-*

"I am a success today because I had a friend who believed in me and I did not have the heart to let him down."

I am of the firm belief that the most important role of the bar in the legal profession is to create a genuine human being at the first instance and then to help an individual progress, grow and become a leader of the bar and the profession. I consider myself extremely honoured being part of the bar for a period of more than 21 years and had the privilege of appearing before various legal luminaries and stalwarts while

practicing in the High Court of Madhya Pradesh so also in various other Courts throughout the country.

I am further honoured and privileged today as one of the legal luminaries and eminent jurist of all times Sh. Fali S. Nariman is present with us to bid farewell to me. I am honoured by your presence Sir. I had the privilege of hearing you argue an appeal in the Madhya Pradesh High Court way back in the year 1986-87 after Bhopal Gas Tragedy you were representing one of the litigants in a matter where the interim award passed by the District Judge, Bhopal awarding interim compensation to the gas victims were under challenge. The matter went on for more than a month and as a junior member of the Bar I used to attend each and every hearing and hear you present the case on behalf of your client before the Bench.

I never in my dream thought that there would be a day when I would be heading this prestigious Institute and would have the proud privilege of your presence when I demit my office. Your presence today is a great honour to me, Sir.

I am extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to preside over this Court and I have no doubt that the Delhi High Court is the premier High Court of this country. The infrastructure facilities available, the quality of litigation, the legal acumen of the members of the Bar and every aspect concerned with the administration of justice in this Court in my opinion makes it one of the best High Courts in the country.

I had the privilege of working in three High Courts, namely, Madhya Pradesh High Court, Patna High Court and Delhi High Court, I received the same love and affection from the members of the Bar in each of the High Courts where I have discharged my duties. The members of the Bar in each of the Courts have always assisted me in upholding the best traditions in the administration of justice.

All my colleagues in the Delhi High Court without exception extended to me full cooperation and gave me their affection and esteem. On the administrative side, committee meetings and full court meetings were always held in a very cordial atmosphere, friendly in nature and all decisions without exceptions during my tenure were taken unanimously. The most pleasant time of the day used to be the time I spent on the lunch table with all my colleagues. I have lot of fond memories to carry with me while I demit office.

An institution is known by the persons who man them, a judicial institute survives and its reputation is dependent upon the assistance given by the members of the Bar and the capabilities and abilities of the judges. Both, the members of the Bar and the Bench owe a responsibility to the citizen of this country and each one of us is bound by the mandate of the constitution to dispense justice to the last man in the queue.

The huge pendency and arrears of cases in Courts and the long delay in disposal of the cases has been ploughing the country for the last few decades. It is time now for each one of

us to ponder upon various issues connected with the outburst of docket and devise ways and means to tackle it. Until and unless we are not able to deliver timely justice to the citizens, their faith on the system may erode and if such a thing happens, it would be a disaster to the democratic system. It is to address this issue that the role of the Bar and the Bench becomes crucial and important.

I am confident that both the Bar and the Bench would continue to do their best and ensure that the law is administered in its true spirit as envisaged in our Constitution.

During my tenure as Chief Justice of this Court I had the privilege of sharing the Bench with few of my colleagues. Even though I would have loved to share the Bench with each one of my brother and sister judges but the same was not possible. I enjoyed every moment I spent in this Court.

I have been overwhelmed and felt satisfied after assessing the standards and functioning of the various para-legal bodies functioning under the aegis of the Delhi High court, like Samadhan, the Mediation Centre, the Delhi International Arbitration Centre, the Judges' Library, the fully functional video conferencing and tele facility recently introduced and various other facilities provided in this Court. All these make the Delhi High Court one of the best High Courts in the country as far as the infrastructure requirements are concerned. It is this Court which has the highest number of e-Courts (paperless Courts in the country).

I would be failing in my duties if I do not refer to the individual and valuable services rendered to me by the Registrar General of this Court, the Registrars and other officers and officials of this Court who have assisted me in the discharge of my duties. It was only with the support and cooperation of the highly skilled and knowledgeable officers and staff of this Court that I have been able to discharge my duties. I am thankful to the entire staff attached to the Chief Justice Secretariat, in the Court and at my residence. I am specially thankful to my Principal Private Secretary, my private secretaries, court masters, stenographers, law researchers, law interns and all the supporting staff. I take this opportunity to thank each one of them from the core of my heart for the assistance and service rendered to me.

The members of the Bar have been very kind to me and have cooperated at every stage and at every point of time while hearing of the matters in the Court. I might have been harsh to a few of them at some point of time, I can assure you that it was never intentional, it was only because of the spur of the moment and the call of my duty. I never meant to hurt anybody. In case I have hurt anybody I seek to be pardoned.

At last, I would like to thank my family members without whose support it would not have been possible for me to discharge the onerous constitutional responsibility which the office I held calls for.

Before concluding, I would like to quote a message which none other than Mr. Fali S. Nariman has conveyed to each one of us in his recent book titled 'GOD SAVE THE SUPREME COURT'. Mr. Nariman's message to us is and I quote

"Howsoever old you be, or howsoever old you get, may you always have the vigour and the enthusiasm of youth, to appreciate the enormity and magnificence of the Law, and the will to unravel the mysteries and the mistakes in the Law!"

With this I whole heartedly express my gratitude to each one of you and wish all of you success in your life and the profession.

Thank you

JAI HIND