

FAREWELL SPEECH

My Lords, Hon'ble Chief Justice of High Court of Delhi, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ajit Prakash Shah, Hon'ble Mr. Justice T.S. Thakur and his Hon'ble Companion Judges, Mr. K. C. Mittal, President, Mr. J. P. Sengh, Vice-President, Mr. D. K. Sharma, Secretary and other office bearers of Delhi High Court Bar Association, Central Government Standing Counsels, Ms. Mukta Gupta, Standing Counsel for Government of NCT of Delhi (Criminal), Mr. Najmi Waziri, Standing Counsel for Government of NCT of Delhi (Civil) and Counsels for various statutory authorities and other bodies, Mrs. Amita Thakur, Mr. Sharan Thakur, Ms. Natasha Thakur, Mr. Siddharth Thakur and other relations, my esteemed colleagues at the Bar, ladies and gentlemen.

2. Today we have assembled to bid farewell to Hon'ble Mr. Justice Tirath Singh Thakur. I am very happy and sad on this occasion. I am happy that his Lordship is being elevated to the highly deserved position of a Chief Justice and I am sad that we will be missing a smiling judge but feel that our sadness will be short-lived and his Lordship will be brought back to Delhi to a richly deserved position.

3. Hon'ble Mr. Justice Tirath Singh Thakur was born on 4th of January, 1952 and was enrolled as an Advocate in the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir in April, 1974. His Lordship practiced in varied branches of law including civil, criminal, constitutional, taxation and service matters. His Lordship was a Standing Counsel for various Departments including RBI,

University of Jammu, Income-tax Department and other institutions. At a young age of 34 years and having practiced both in Jammu and Srinagar for a period of about 12 years only, his Lordship was elected as a President of the Jammu Bar Association in the year 1986. I think it is the rarest distinction to be a President of the Bar after such a short duration of practice which clearly indicates the acumen, qualities, etiquette and manners which were possessed by his Lordship even at the beginning of his career.

4. I first met Justice Thakur in the years 1979-80 when he was a well thought of and sought after lawyer. I had the privilege and opportunity to do some insurance matters with him in Srinagar. As a Counsel his Lordship was always meticulously prepared about the facts as well as law and could with great ease cull out the real issues. Working together was a great experience. I discovered in him a young and energetic lawyer, a man full of sincerity, self-restraint, purity of mind, forbearance, uprightness and above all full of knowledge. I found in him a man who has love for humanity. He possessed all the true virtues of a good man. His Lordship always studied his briefs in depth, he was always clear on the propositions of law and had no ambiguity about his ideas about the case. His Lordship's approach to the case was very clear, simple, systematic and could solve the issue in a serene and sober manner without any heat inside or outside the Court. I cannot forget his Lordship's hospitality showered on me in Srinagar and I still remember the evenings we spent together at Chasm-e-shahi. It had always been a

great pleasure for me when I was associated with His Lordship when he was a lawyer in Srinagar.

5. His Lordship was designated as a Senior Advocate by the Jammu & Kashmir High Court. in the beginning of February, 1994. Soon after his Lordship was elevated as a Judge of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court and in March, 1994 was transferred to Karnataka High Court where his Lordship had a long spell of about ten years and in 2004.

6. I have not only known Justice Thakur, but had the opportunity to work with his Lordship's father Late Mr. D. D. Thakur. He was a versatile personality. He had been a Judge of the Jammu & Kashmir High Court, Dy. Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, a well-respected Sr. Advocate and everyone who has practiced in Delhi knew about Late Mr. D.D. Thakur as a cool-headed, smiling personality who could be ready in a brief in a short time and who could handle difficult cases with ease, a very hospitable, jovial person who suffered from long illness and probably that was the reason the Government transferred Justice Thakur to Delhi so that he could be of some assistance to his ailing father.

7. I had lost touch with Justice Thakur since the beginning of 80s as I stopped going to Srinagar but I appeared in his Court in 2004 when he was transferred to Delhi. According to me he has been a role-model judge, a judge who has a cool temperament, ability to hear the Counsels with patience and calmness, never being agitated by any provocation.

His Lordship always picked up the real issue in no time and invite the Counsel to address the issue. He had always given a patient hearing is a perfect judge, a good man, a gentleman, a man with whom you could converse freely, a man who kept the interest of the Bar in the forefront, a man who has no egos or hassles about himself, a man of honesty and integrity, a man who performed his duties both as a lawyer and as a judge with perfection, a man who is liked by all, I can safely say, by every member of the Bar.

8. Though Justice Thakur is going to Chandigarh as the Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court and we all will be missing him, his children, Shravan Thakur, Natasha Thakur and Sidharth Thakur shall be missing him most in as much as they will have to remain in Delhi. I wish and pray and hope that the transfer of Justice Thakur to Chandigarh may not be for a long period and his Lordship would come back to Delhi for exercise of a larger jurisdiction and I end my speech with these thoughts.

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

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