

## Retirement Speech

Hon'ble the Chief Justice, Justice G. Rohini, and my esteemed brother and sister Judges, Sh. Kirti Uppal, President, Sh. J.P. Sengh, Vice President, Sh. Amit Sharma, Hony. Secy., Sh. Mohit Gupta, Treasure, Sh. Anil Sapra and Sh. Vikas Pahwa, Designated Senior member executive and other office bearers of Delhi High Court Bar Association, Sh. Manan Kumar Mishra, Chairman Bar Council of India, Mr. Sanjay jain, Additional Solicitor General, Mr. Rahul Mehra, Standing Counsel, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, other Standing Counsels and additional standing counsels of the Govt., the office bearers of Delhi Bar Council, Office bearers of other District Bar Association, Senior Advocates and other members of the Bar, District and Session Judges, Law Secretary, my family members, officers and staff of the High Court; Ladies and Gentleman.

I am extremely grateful and humbled for the kind words spoken about me. I accept this honour bestowed on me with all the humility at my command. Also, thank you everyone, for being here today on the occasion of my retirement.

It is a very emotional day for me as i stand here going down the memory lane and revisiting the trajectory of my life. Today when i

reminisce those old times, one thing always occur to me that i might not have been here today had i not given a chance to myself to opt for law. The event which proved to be turning point of my life i would like to share it with you all at this occasion.

When i was in college doing my post graduation in philosophy, i always used to pass through the law faculty and had a misconception in my mind that people with casual attitude towards studies only take up law. Once i completed my post graduation. I applied for PhD, however, the particular subject in which i wanted, i did not get it. Therefore, i joined law. But having joined LLB i never looked back. I enjoyed it thoroughly. I need to acknowledge just how much I have been shaped by my teachers and friends. I have a myriad of experiences, too many to mention, that have impacted on my life in a memorable and meaningful way. What follows barely scratches on the surface of all that I have learned over the years, but bear with me as I make mention of one of these memories.

Mr. C.L. Joseph Advocate was a part time lecturer in Law faculty at that time and he used to teach Civil Procedure Code. Despite the fact that i was not a student of his class, me and one of my friend used to attend his classes and always reserve the first bench for ourselves as he used to teach the subject brilliantly. There was a customary practice in his class that after the end of every semester he would take

his students to the cafeteria. Following the same practice, he asked the students for coffee when the term got over. Since we were not part of his class, we just tried escaping this situation. But he noticed and inquired as to why we are not coming. We disclosed it to him that we are not students of his class but of the other class. Hearing that he got overwhelmed and told us that we should definitely join him in that case.

I completed my LLB course in the year 1978. After that, for a short span of time i practised in District Courts and got full co-operation from my seniors and encouragement at the Bench.

It always requires someone who can inspire you to achieve your goal. Late Justice P.K. Jain was the guiding spirit who inspired me to appear for the judicial service examination. Besides that I had the blessings of my parents who were all along the way to encourage and bestow confidence in me.

I joined Delhi Judicial Service in the year 1980. I am grateful to the almighty God for giving me opportunity to join this dedicated forward looking and highly respected profession.

When i first sat on this chair i realized what an ownership i had taken on. Whatever decisions i take will impact someone's life, their family, reputation, stature in the society and could have a lifelong impact. The judgments we give are like seeds planted which have a bearing for our future generations and our legal framework. Our job comes with huge responsibility. It is not always easy to be unbiased, and look and think beyond what is presented in our court rooms. But i always tried to respect our legal framework, go with my judgment, my intuition and operate in the realm of law.

To the best of my ability and support of everyone, especially my parents and in-laws, I had grown and tried to excel in the field, which was the concern I had been hoping to find. During all this period my family has been my pillars of strength. My husband has acted as guide and also stood by me whenever i needed it most. I also want to express special thanks to my in-laws, my brother and sisters as without their support and encouragement i would not be able to fulfil my duties to the best of my ability.

I would like to say that whatever I could do, was part of my duty and responsibility as a Judge. By becoming a judge, i took responsibility to advance the cause of justice, improve the administration of justice as well as for preservation of justice. I have tried to contribute whatever i could, in my humble way.

Over the years i had the privilege of dealing with cases in various jurisdictions including Civil matters, Criminal matters, Rent control, Company matters, Labour matters, MACT, Service matters, Regular first Appeals, and the Division Bench appeals, writ petition etc.

Every room, every chair i sat, gave me life lessons. We hear and see everything in life and it has touched me deeply. Sometimes it is really disturbing to see and hear about the events around us and it becomes difficult to remain unperturbed. However, those were the challenging times where i had to pull myself together and uphold the Constitution. I have been fortunate that i got this opportunity where i could help shape someone's life and bring justice.

From the time i started to where i am today, society has evolved and so have the challenges. The cases / crimes etc., I see today were not what i encountered at the beginning of my career. The world around us has become technology savvy however, our legal framework still remains traditional. It is a challenge for us to embrace the new world with seasoned arms. It is a very fine balance that our legal system is treading on. I have tried to follow the direction and preaching's of our father of the Nation, *Mahatma Gandhi* who said:

*“i do not want to forsee the future. I am concerned with taking care of the present. God has given me no control over the moment following. Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is very important that you do it. We must become the change we want to see in the world. Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will”.*

Over the years i was very privileged to learn from able members of legal fraternity. Whenever i was at cross roads i knew i had my fellow colleagues for opinion. I had friends and colleagues helping me taking right decision throughout my career. They helped me cruise through those testing times and i knew i had their support all along. My experience is captured by *William Shakespeare famous quote:*

*“Whatever you do, you need courage. Whatever course you decide, there is always someone to tell you that you are wrong. There are always difficulties arising that tempt you to believe your critics are right. To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires some of the same courage that a soldier needs. Peace has its victories, but it takes brave men and women to win them.”*

My feelings and thoughts range from nostalgia and gratitude, to being overwhelmed, as I reflect upon about four decades spent by me on the

bench at different levels. I believe that I, have been rewarded by the honour and confidence you all have instilled in me.

The past few years have taught me the value of having a positive and enthusiastic group of co-workers. I have witnessed colleagues giving tirelessly of their time to enhance the image and productivity of this judicial system. In my retirement speech, I want to acknowledge that everybody has played his/her part in making this Court a happier and more productive place. I have also learned that this is the role that I will strive to emulate in my future.

I would like to thank Hon'ble the Chief Justice for having treated me like her sister with full love and affection. She is a pleasing personality and i always felt so comfortable while talking to her. I extend me gratitude to Hon'ble Chief Justice for her kindness and compassion. I also extend my gratitude to my brother and sister colleagues from whom i received taste of love and affection. It has been a great experience to work with Justice Sanjiv Khanna with whom i shared division Bench till recently.

I want to extend my gratitude to the advocates who appear before me and gave full co-operation in early disposal of the cases. They have

always shown their readiness and keenness to argue the complicated matters. Their service is indispensable to the judicial system.

Along this road i have my staff who have stood by me. I take this opportunity to thank my entire staff including my both present and past private secretaries, court master, assistant court master, restorer, stenographers, usher, court attendants, PSO, chauffeur, law researchers and interns, who all, have been very supportive. Thank you all for dedicating your time. It was not always easy but your support was imperative for my duty. I was privileged to have them besides me and i thank them from the bottom of my heart. I will be failing in my duty if i failed to record my appreciation to the staff of the Registry as well as staff of protocol, P&P and judge's lounge.

As i leave this family today, i feel very confident in the new generation that will come in. The old have to make way for the new and this is the circle of life. The foundation of our mythology is evolution and change. Every journey that ends embarks the beginning of a new era. I am poignant today, as my 36 years of journey ends but i look forward to being home with my family, all those hours i was not able to dedicate to my husband and my son will now be there's. I want to specially thank them today for being with me at every step of my life.



I read somewhere that retirement is when you stop living at work and begin working at living. I intend to do my utmost in following the adage that Eric quoted: "Retirement is the beginning of life, not the end!" I know, however, that regardless of how much I enjoy retirement that I will miss everyone present here.

*Tom Krause* wrote the beautiful lines-

***I CAN STILL MATTER***

*As time passes on  
I turn the next page  
To discover a new me  
while I continue to age.*

*I may no longer be  
Who I was long ago  
But I still can matter —  
That much I know.*

*With a new set of tools  
I have gathered from time —  
I keep looking forward  
To more mountains to climb.*

*My best is not over  
As the skeptics might say —  
I just learn how to conquer  
In a much wiser way.*

*So don't sell me short —  
I am not nearly done —  
I CAN STILL MATTER —  
I've only just begun.*

So, thank you all once again, for all your support and well wishes.