

Farewell Speech for 30th March, 2017

Each spring, the petals of the flowers blossom, to decorate the barren and the deserted fields. The butterflies return. The nights shorten, and the days increase. Life continues to resolve in set cycles. Behind this stage, time flies past; and as the clock ticks away, suddenly, one day realization dawns, that you have aged, and it is time for you to move on.

Hon'ble Chief Justice G.Rohini, my sister and brother judges, Shri Sanjay Jain, Additional Solicitor General of India, Shri Kirti Uppal, President, Delhi High Court Bar Association, Shri J.P.Sengh, Vice-President, Delhi High Court Bar Association, Shri Amit Sharma, Hony. Secretary, Delhi High Court Bar Association, other officer bearers of the Delhi High Court Bar Association, Shri Rahul Mehra/Raman Duggal, Standing Counsel, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Senior Advocates, members of the Bar, members of the Registry of Delhi High Court and my dear friends.

It is my day of realization today, and therefore today's farewell reference, is for me, in a particular sense, a remembrance – a re-visitation.

More years ago than I recall, I entered the portals of this building in August, 1981, and listened as erudite, estimable and devoted lawyers led my young and enquiring mind in the pathway of the law. It was from them that I learnt, the tenets of law as a profession. In a special way, therefore, the memory of those women and men has remained with me. Today – across the arch of the years – they take on, in the perspective of distance, a special place in the recollection of my early days as a young lawyer. I would that I could, call some of their wisdom to my command as, tempering this recollection and the warm glow of personal pleasure with the realization that firstly as a lawyer, and then as a judge I shared awesome responsibilities.

I remember the journey, firstly as a lawyer for 21 years and then on the Bench for 14 more. This journey reminds me that the light of each day was always the same. As each

morning awoke me through the light of the same sun, smiling on the windowpane.

Minutes passed by, but time never seemed to change. It just kept on progressing and re-arranging. Some moments were fleeting, and hard did I try to keep them on the palm of my hands, so that I could embrace them to my heart, they kept on slipping through the crevices of my fingers – like sand. Some moments seemed too long, and I found it hard to walk their weight, since they sat heavily on my back.

I joined the legal profession, of course, to live a life of comfort. But more than that, was the desire to be a part of a system, which challenges those who cause distress and woe aplenty; those who are burdens on the society and do not realize that every citizen owes a duty to the public, to contribute to the general happiness of all, as far as lies in his power.

The picture of justice, is captured by a Goddess, wearing a blindfold and holding scales. Scales connote the weighing and the balancing of the rights and privileges. I

always remembered, first as a lawyer and then as a judge, that in the weighing and balancing of the rights and privileges, I was to be a member of a team that builds together, a monument in the temple of justice. This building is never ending. For the process of justice is never finished. It reproduces itself generation after generations in ever changing form.

Realizing that life ends too soon, and there was too little time, as one life means nothing on the great scale of time, I confess I did not have the time to be patient and always expected perfection. It happened because I realized that our minds are the powers that control life and destiny and unwelcome ideas are perhaps closer to where future may lead.

But, this is not entirely my fault. I found wanderers to be patient – waiting, waiting, waiting and waiting until death. I found lovers naive. I found thinkers to be a burden. I found the impatient to be inquisitive, and ready with prompt answers about all the future complexed questions, and when proved to

be giving wrong answers, having the courage to admit, that with so many turns and twists in life, no one is perfectly fit. As a child, I found the joy of life was in being impatient; for in being impatient, lies the thrill of unwrapping the gift, there and then, and discover at the spot the gift you have got, and decide at the spot, what you must return.

But I am happy that I could find some time to follow my dreams to solve a few mysteries; to feel the brushing of new surprises. I am happy that I could not find time to wait and wait, and fall asleep.

Each one of us sometimes feels weakened by time and sometimes finds strength in time, and I am no different. Weakened by time I too have committed mistakes, but strengthened by time I have tried to re-fill faith with hope.

As I find myself today in a corner, silenced and caught in these ageing wrinkles; above and near – beyond life's complex; passing few and failing many fatal brutal tests, I find solace that the Bar rewards me with an acknowledgement of my being; enough to buy a thousand black gowns. I feel

entirely satisfied with the verdict I have received at the conclusion of my trial. Considering all the circumstances; it has been more than generous than I expected. For myself, I think that the worth which one displays in-deeds, is to be rewarded by honours shown in-deeds, and not to be imperilled in the mouth of a few individuals; to stand or fall, accordingly as they speak well or ill.

Sitting amongst my peers today, in life's endless breath, I acknowledge with thanks the beautiful hours and days spent in this temple of justice. To my innumerable colleagues I owe an even deeper gratitude. We have been partners in a great undertaking and have shared the joys and sorrows which invariably accompany them.

I thank the Bar for giving me space to be someone different and believe that miracles can happen. I thank each lawyer who appeared before me, not for enduring me, but in guiding me in the many opinions that I have written; and thereby empowering me to successfully live forever. I would always live through you, when in the future, through you, my

opinions would be approved, modified or over-ruled. I would be living through your blinking eyes. I only wish that I could fly with you, never age and never part company with you. But this cannot happen. But I know that through your future breath I would always breath the future air.

My task in this court is now finished and I lay down my burden. I have tried to perform it to the best of my ability. And in words at least, the requirements of the law are satisfied. It may be sometime before I return to my native land, but wherever I am, I shall always, with profound interest, follow the fortunes of this court. And if at any time, in future, I can be found of any service to this court, I shall not fail.

As I painfully part company today with this great institution and its great women and men, I remind myself that every end is a beginning and every pain is a passing phase. Even laughter swells into tears, but every sprinkle of wetness always dries.

To the budding lawyers I only wish to say, that please do not believe that the world is only what people say it

to be. All of us encounter times, when the loud thunder would scorn, and lightening would strike; cold mists would hang and angry waves would sweep. But spring opens for those who weather the hot summer and cold winter. No pitch is perfect and failure is a fact. A dream becomes a vision only if you have the eyes to see. Believe in yourself. Have the courage and find the strength to ride over the waves and hang over the mist. The spring of future would then be yours.

Dear friends, as my life flies like a kite, wherever I happen to fly, your legacy will live in my heart as a symbol of your contribution in my life. I always believed in perseverance and therefore kept looking forward at every scene and stage; never once did I look back. But today, I cannot fathom why? I keep on seeing the past like a silent cat trailing behind.

It is rightly said that parting is always painful for the reason a little bit in the one's who part company is lost; and perhaps memories fill the void. Your memories would be cherished and on these memories I shall happen to live, and therefore, I thank you all.

I thank once again every member of the Bar for having guided me. I thank all my peers for the love and affection they showered upon me. I thank the Registry for the support they provided. I thank Shri Rakesh Kumar, my Private Secretary, Ms.Mamta Arya and Shri Sandeep Kumar, who were associated with me for long as Senior Personal Assistants and have as of today been promoted as Private Secretaries, and other personal staff associated with me. I thank the Law Researchers who helped me in my task. I thank my brothers and sister, my brother-in-law, their spouses and their children for having stood by me. I thank my children for being least demanding on my time. I thank my in-laws, who have been staying with me for the last 13 years, for taking care of the house.

And lastly, my gratitude would be wanting if I do not acknowledge the support, the sacrifices, the love, the compassion, and above all the meaningful company which my late wife Minoo, an accomplished person in her own right, gave me – it was steadfast and selfless. It was infinite and

un-wanting in return. Much do I owe her, for the goodness which she grew around me, as it brought luminescence of gold, to the copper which I know I am. It was entirely on her strength that I flew **on the wings of time.**

Thank you.