

Hon'ble the Chief Justice, my siblings, my colleagues, my friends and family present here.

This is not a Farewell rather it is 'Till We Meet Again'.

From as far back as I can remember, I have always wanted to be a Lawyer. My father has been my role model and my inspiration all along my journey; as a person, as a Lawyer and then a Judge of this Court.

For those who may not know, my late father Shri Pushp Raj Mridul was a Judge of High Court of Judicature of Bombay, where I spent all my childhood and where I completed my high school. My father instilled in me kindness, compassion and zeal to serve humanity.

Through sheer osmosis I imbibed from him fearlessness and forthrightness, as well as unity of thoughts, speech and action.

The family shifted to Delhi when my father resigned as a Judge of the Bombay High Court to pursue his practice of law at the Supreme Court of India.

With great trepidation I adjusted to Delhi in the mid 70's and completed my education. Fate struck us with a cruel blow when I lost my father at the ripe young age of 54, whilst still being a student at the Campus Law Centre.

As the eldest amongst three siblings, I was faced with the situation where although we had shelter

and means, we were left without a wage earner in the family.

I had to reinvent myself and take charge of the struggles that the family endured upon my father's sad and untimely demise.

Many a time, I almost determined to give up my dreams of becoming a lawyer by taking up employment. But by his grace, I have succeeded.

I am grateful to my family for their unstinting and unflinching support, which enabled me to walk in the direction that I wanted.

As BODHI DHARMA said "*All know the way but few actually walk it.*"

I kept telling myself through the journey that what would life be, if we had no courage to attempt anything. I also kept ruminating of how I could be useful and of what service I could be----with the belief that if there was something inside me, what would it be.

But as Albert Einstein said and I quote, “*Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.*”

Both as a person and as a professional I subscribe to the credo that “*It is better to be high-spirited even though one makes more mistakes, than to be narrow-minded and all too prudent*”.

This hallowed Institution and all those who are a part of it --- lawyers as well as judges, I thank from the bottom of my heart for accepting me and for showering me with love, support and understanding.

I would not have achieved anything without you holding my hand and raising my spirits through difficult times.

I seek your leave; not to mention, each and every one of you who have been by my side, (for that would require a tome) shoulder to shoulder, as comrades in arms in this march towards fulfillment.

The Bar and the Bench are the two wheels of the administration of justice and have always worked together to secure for the people of this great country; liberty, equality and justice – social, economic and political.

My personal belief is that, the objective all of us seek to attain is, to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of the lowest social and economic denominator. In other words, *Antyodaya* (upliftment of the weakest section of the society).

On a personal note, I candidly confess that I have no special talent, except that I am passionately curious. I am still far being for what I want to be but, with Gods help, I shall endeavour to succeed.

To the younger members of this noble profession, my advice would be to remember the famous words of Einstein, “You never fail until you stop trying.”

To my colleagues and friends, I feel duty-bound to quote an excerpt from a book called “Laughing at the Gods” by Allan C. Hutchinson which aptly states the role of judges:

“Adjudication is not carpentry. Although judges would do well to inculcate an equivalent judicial pride in their work, they also must be designers and innovators who place their professional craft in the service of political values and social ideals. It is true that legal tables will wobble and precedential doors will jam without crafted care

and professional attention, but there is a significant difference between the doors and tables of a torture chamber and those of a hospital ward; a hospital bed is not a torture rack, although it can become one. Values and commitments can be hidden, but they cannot be done away with altogether. Judges and jurists cannot so easily evade taking responsibility for the artefacts and outcomes of their crafted performances by taking refuge in matters of technical consistency and internal coherence. In the same way that a block of wood has only whatever shape and symmetry that it happened to pick up at the last turn of the carpenter's lathe, the law possesses only whatever shape and symmetry that it happened to acquire during the last occasion for legal crafting."

I reiterate what I said at the glorious farewell accorded to me by the Bar,

“मेहरबाँ हो के बुला लो मुझे चाहो जिस वक़्त

मैं गया वक़्त नहीं हूँ कि फिर आ भी न सकूँ”

To the senior members of the Bar, it is my entreaty to adopt the younger members and impart necessary skills of advocacy to them as well as support them with the resources needed to earn a dignified life.

This Bar and this Court has given me the opportunity and support to attain my personal and professional goals, and I, once again, express my gratefulness to all of you for consistently showering upon me, immense love, care, affection and respect.

I will consider myself to have succeeded if I have been able to carve a place for myself in your hearts; that is the only thing that matters.

I will miss the beautiful city of Delhi and all the courts I have practiced at as a lawyer, including, the Hon'ble Supreme Court, District Courts and Tribunals.



I conclude with a couplet that fairly describes my emotions at the moment:

“उस शाम वो रुख़सत का समाँ याद रहेगा  
वो शहर वो कूचा वो मकाँ याद रहेगा  
कुछ 'मीर' के अबयात थे कुछ 'फ़ैज़' के मिसरे  
इक दर्द का था जिन में बयाँ याद रहेगा”

Last but not the least, I thank my **personal staff** Manoj Kumar Lohani, Durgesh Nandan, Pankaj Vats, Rita Sharma, Aanchal Taggar, Kishan Kumar, Abhimanyu, Roop Ram, Prem Lal Patel, Brahmjeet Singh, Sunil Kumar.

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**Branch, Chauffeurs at the protocol branch and the medical assistants posted at the medical branch and the staff posted at the P&P Branch.**