

**FAREWELL REFERENCE OF HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE MADAN  
B. LOKUR, CHIEF JUSTICE OF GAUHATI HIGH COURT**

My respected colleague Justice Madan B. Lokur, my other esteemed peers on the Bench, Mr. A.S. Chandhiok, learned Additional Solicitor General and President of Delhi High Court Bar Association, Mr. V.P. Sharma, representative of the Bar Council of Delhi, learned members of the Bar, family members of Justice Lokur, ladies and gentlemen,

Today we have assembled to bid farewell to our esteemed colleague Justice Madan B. Lokur who has been elevated as the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court. While bidding farewell, I can only say it is an event, and absolutely a pleasant and delightful one, for he is going to head the judiciary of a High Court which imparts justice to the citizens of seven States; and it is also an occasion which has some saddening effect on our minds because all of us will indubitably feel his absence personally as well as institutionally. But as he is going to serve a greater cause, in the ultimate eventuate, we are gladdened.

I have had personal acquaintance with Justice Lokur for last seven years and I can say with utmost sincerity and certitude that the acquaintance has slowly graduated to a ripened friendship both at personal as well as institutional level.

Justice Lokur is known for his clarity of articulation, felicity of expression, constancy of commitment, incomparable humility, inflexible

intellectual objectivity, profound concern for the poor and helpless who eagerly wait for justice and above all his unquenchable thirst and insatiable avarice for doing justice that is wedded to truth. One can, without any fear of contradiction, say of him what Sir Isaac Newton said about himself: 'Plato is my friend – Aristotle is my friend – but my greatest friend is truth'.

Justice Lokur as the Chairman of the Delhi High Court Legal Services Committee and thereafter as the Executive Chairman of the Delhi Legal Services Authority has done a remarkable job both in the field of legal aid and Lok Adalats. His systemic approach by identifying a particular day to hold Lok Adalats at the district level has paved the path of result oriented settlement. He has seen to it that the districts which are expected to have the District Legal Services Authority had Secretaries and the Committees and laid the foundation for constitution of the District Legal Services Authority for each of the districts as required under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. He has been instrumental in getting lawyers empanelled for imparting adequate legal services to the needy litigants. This clearly exposit his matchless involvement in giving effect to the legal aid in its conceptual eventuality in the truest sense. He has also organized orientation and training programmes for the empanelled lawyers to make them realize the pedestal they occupy in the system of grant of legal aid and the role ascribed to them. Under his leadership, a monthly newsletter is published to apprise all necessary quarters about the

activities undertaken by the State Legal Services Authority and the Delhi High Court Legal Services Committee with the paramount purpose to percolate the principle that the ideas are only concretized by action. He has laid immense emphasis on the creation of a Para Legal Force amongst the inmates in jails to bridge the breach between the lawyers who are engaged by the Legal Services Authority and the under trial prisoners or the convicts. He has been instrumental in introducing the system of video conferencing between the accused and a lawyer so that the communication is frequent which assuages the anguish and alleviates the agony of a man in prison.

Judicial reforms, especially in the sphere of computerization, dispensation of speedy justice regard being had to the quintessentiality of transparency and adoption of scientific methodology and the contribution of Justice Lokur are yoked inseparably because of his vision and action in the preparation of annual report, publication of statistics, preparation of bench book and manuals and further facilitating the availability of information on the website for the benefit of litigants.

After the term 'mediation' got into the anatomy of the Code of Civil Procedure, Justice Lokur initially plunged into it, if I allow myself to say, as a soldier, and thereafter when the mediation became the need of the hour as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism and got galvanized, he became one of the Generals in propagating the same successfully and the result is visible in the Mediation Centres that have

been set up in Delhi and also the mediators in other States who have the privilege of being guided by his persuasive guiding skill. It is worth noting that Delhi High Court Mediation Centre has been accorded recognition by the Asian Mediation Association and the contribution of Justice Lokur as a member of Mediation and Conciliation Project Committee constituted by the Supreme Court of India speaks eloquently on this score.

Judicial education as a concept was initially viewed with circumspect and skepticism. The judicial officers had their own perception, but, the name of Justice Lokur would feature in the annals of those judges who by their convincing lectures, assiduous discussions and tireless participations in the National Judicial Academy and several State Judicial Academies speaking on many facets of law and the necessity to have continuous learning have dispelled the pre-conceived notions of many a judicial officer as a result of which the judicial education has really gained acceptability among the judicial officers and they have been beholdened to it from the core of their hearts. His acceptability as an educator is manifest as presently he is a visiting Lecturer at Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussorie for Indian Administrative Service officers.

The Law Journals stand testimony for his erudition and contribution in the field of law. I have refrained from referring to any particular judgment as that would be doing injustice to other decisions. I can only say with all the humility at my command that his sagacity of approach, ratiocination, humane consideration, conceptual clarity and sustained effort to maintain decorum in Court makes him every inch a judge – “a judge in all the elements”.

At this stage, I am obliged to say that though Justice Lokur would not be our midst but the bond and the fond memories betwixt him and us shall never be lessened. While we cannot bid him ‘adieu’ as our emotional quotient does not so permit, we fervently pray to the almighty to bestow on him the prowess to unlock the doors of such treasure houses where justice shall enter unbounded.

We shall miss him the most.

Thank you,

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