

Brother Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar,

Gracious family members of Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar

My esteemed sister and brother Judges at the High Court,

Shri Anil Soni, Central Govt. Standing Counsel,

Shri S.P. Khatri, Chairman, Bar Council of Delhi,

Shri Mohit Mathur, President, Delhi High Court Bar Association,

Shri Jatan Singh, Vice-President, Delhi High Court Bar Association,

Shri Sandeep Sharma, Secretary, Delhi High Court Bar Association,

Shri Sanjay Lao, Standing Counsel (Criminal), Govt. of NCT of Delhi,

Shri Santosh Tripathi, Standing Counsel (Civil), Govt. of NCT of Delhi,

Standing Counsel of the Central and State Governments,

Executive Members of the Delhi High Court Bar Association,

Office Bearers of Bar Council of Delhi and other District Bar Associations,

Senior Advocates,

Members of the Bar,

Members of Print and Electronic Media,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very Good Afternoon to all of you.

We have assembled here to bid farewell to Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar, on the occasion of his retirement as he completes an illustrious career on the bench.

Justice Bhatnagar was born on 14<sup>th</sup> June, 1962. He graduated in Bachelor of Science from University of Delhi in the year 1983. Thereafter, he enrolled in the LL.B. course at the Campus Law Centre, Delhi University and completed it in the year 1987. In the same year, he was enrolled as an Advocate with the Bar Council of Delhi and started practising before different foras. During his practice spanning over 13 years, Justice Bhatnagar handled both Civil and Criminal matters and appeared extensively before various forums in Delhi. Despite having an active practice, Justice Bhatnagar could not shed his inclination towards the bench and on 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2000, he joined Delhi Higher Judicial Service and with that began his judicial journey. During his time as a Judge in the District Courts of Delhi, he presided over various Civil and Criminal Courts including as the Principal District & Sessions Judge of North-West District, Rohini Courts, Delhi for a period of over three years. On 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2019, he was elevated as a Permanent Judge of this Court and ever since, he has been serving on the bench of this Court.

As a Judge of this Court, Justice Bhatnagar presided over various important jurisdictions and contributed immensely to the administration of justice. He brought immense judicial experience on the bench owing to his long career in the district judiciary and the same reflected in his judicial approach. A deep understanding of the nature of litigation and litigants before the courts of first instance or the Trial Courts is an asset for a Judge, irrespective of his place in the judicial hierarchy. It certainly helps in the development of an inclusive judicial philosophy. In his approach towards the law, Justice Bhatnagar never leaned in favour of rigidity and in fact, observed that legal decisions must not be based on a mechanical or mathematical understanding of the letter of law, as they affect lives and livelihoods. As a Judge, he displayed great compassion, empathy and sensitivity, which reflected well from his observations in a case involving death of a student of IIT, Delhi. Speaking for the Court, he urged the faculty and staff of the institution to conduct suitable counselling of the students to make them understand that a lot could be achieved in life without succumbing to performance stress. A crucial observation indeed in the times we live.

Brother, life after retirement is certainly not going to be the same, but it cannot be understood as an end of the journey. In fact, it is the commencement of a new chapter and you would have the luxury to write this chapter on your own terms and without being bound by the limitations of service. We hope that you find more time for the family and for taking care of your health. We congratulate you for a successful career in the legal profession and hope that you would continue to serve the society in some way or the other.

On behalf of this Court, I wish you a fulfilling time ahead. We pray for your good health for all times to come.

Thank you and Jai Hind.