

Speech delivered by Hon'ble the Chief Justice Sri H.N. Seth on 14th August, 1986 on the solemn occasion of Full Court Reference (bidding farewell) to his Lordship the Hon'ble the Chief Justice on the eve of his transfer to Punjab and Haryana High Court

Hon'ble Sri H.N. Seth, Chief Justice.

Justice Ojha, Brother Judges, Mr. Advocate General, Sri A.D. Giri, President of Bar Association, my friends at the Bar, the entire staff of this court.

When I came to know that you decided to give me a farewell on the eve of my transfer to Punjab and Haryana High Court, I thought that I will have to speak on the occasion. I was trying to compose my thoughts and thinking what to say and what to tell you on this occasion and I confess that I could not compose my thought, I could not prepare the subject or the trend on which I will be able to respond to the feelings that have been expressed by you so affectionately. Yet during this time I am in the midst of conflict of emotions and I have been able to think something that I have to say to you.

It is note time when I am expected to give you any advice or to recount my achievements or failures. This is an occasion when a person, who has been walking in the corridors of this great court for about 40 years, is going to sever his connection. It is true that my departure from Allahabad may be for a short time, that is about for a period of about 13 or 14 months but nonetheless it is a time when my active connection with this court is going to be snapped. Even when I come back to Allahabad from Punjab, I will not be able to resume my functioning in this court or walking in the corridors of this court or taking parts in the proceedings of this court and this is one aspect which make me sad today. For all that I can recount at this stage is when I took oath of office as a Judge of this court about 17 years back and when you very affectionately welcomed me on the Bench of this court I said that I have been long enough in this Court to know that you expect of me and you also have known me quite closely and I also know what you expect of me. I must say that during my tenure on the Bench, I got in abundant measure, though not hundred percent what I expected from the Bar and I am happy that to that extent the cooperation was

extended to me. I do not know whether you received from me all that you expected from me but then your utterness here and the way you have addressed me today certainly makes me believe and I am happy to know that you have also received in abundant measure what you expected from me. I assure you that this is a matter of great satisfaction to me, unless at a later stage. I am by something disillusioned that I believed was not the real thing but I hope that occasion will not arise.

Today I am being uprooted from this place and I am going to be planted on a different soil altogether. It is true that when a sapling is taken out from one piece of ground and is planted in another field, it grows with vigour but I do not know whether it can be said about the older thing also and that what is causing an apprehension in my mind that after being planted in a different soil, soil with different environment, whether I will be able to do all that is again expected of me in that corner. And in that I do require your good wishes and good will, which I am encouraged to say that it appears that I enjoy ample measure and this again is a matter of great satisfaction to me.

This court has had great traditions. Today when I go to another court to preside over the destinies of that court, members of the Bard would always, or the public of that State would always judge me again in the context for what this Bar and this court has made me. If I do something good the credit will come to this court. If I fail in doing something then the discredit will again come to this court more or less I am your emissary in that court and the image of this court would be reflected in me. This again is a matter which causes great apprehension in my mind.

I cannot help in telling you that whatever is happening here or will happen in future is also going to affect my position or the respect which the people can have for me over there while functioning in that court and all I hope is that the times which you visualise are difficult times which are forthcoming the Bard of this court will stand up and will not do anything which tarnishes the image of this court and also when I go there make me embarrassed by feeling that something proper is not being done.

I once again thank all of you for the courtesy which you have extended to me throughout my career whether at the Bar or on the Bench and I really mean to say that I received your cooperation in

a very ample measure.

I am also very thankful to the Registry of the court which has been of immense help to me in the performance of my duties. It is a team which is capable of doing credit and doing service to the court and the institution as such. I am also very thankful to the clerical staff of this court which had been functioning in this court as best as it can in the present context. After assuming the charge of office as Chief Justice of this court I went round to various offices and found the appalling conditions in which they have been required to perform their functions. Believe me that anybody else placed in the situation in which our staff is, could not have done better than they are doing at this moment. I am also very thankful to my personal staff which had been serving me with loyalty. I also extend my thanks to the class IV employees of this court who have been serving their masters well.

Before parting, I cannot ignore thanking the clerks of the advocates, who took have been constantly meeting me and getting in touch with me and behaving with a lot of courtesy extending to me a lot of courtesy.

With these few words, I do not know how to thank you for all that you have done for me.

But then while closing, finishing what I was telling you, I may tell you that when I assumed the office of the Chief Justice same day I had to perform the duty of bidding farewell to two of my colleagues. Today when I am laying down the office as Chief Justice today I am not laying down the office, but when it is any last working day in the Court on the judicial side, I have been informed that four new Judges will be inducted and perhaps it will be my pleasant duty to, while laying down the office, induct them and administer oath of officer to those new judges before I leave this Court. This, I think is a unique record for any Chief Justice for the Court together with it you will find perhaps a Chief Justice after accepting farewell again sitting in the open court to administer the oath of office to new judges. This again, I think, has never happened before, may not be repeated in future. But let us keep our fingers crossed whether I am able to hit that mark or not, and in all probability that occasion may take place on Saturday, the 16th of this month at about 11 o'clock.

With these few words, I am wish well for this court. I wish

that this court prospers and continues to give a lead in every sphere to all the High Courts of the country.