

**FAREWELL REFERENCE ADDRESS BY HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE D.K.  
UPADHYAYA, CHIEF JUSTICE, HIGH COURT OF DELHI ON THE  
ELEVATION OF JUSTICE VIBHU BAKHRU AS CHIEF JUSTICE OF  
THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA**

Brother Justice Vibhu Bakhru,

Gracious family members of Justice Bakhru,

My esteemed sister and brother Judges at the High Court,

Shri Chetan Sharma, Additional Solicitor General of India,

Shri Rajesh Mishra, Honorary Secretary, Bar Council of Delhi,

Shri N. Hariharan, President, Delhi High Court Bar Association,

Shri Sachhin Puri, Vice-President, Delhi High Court Bar Association,

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

Shri Vikram Singh Panwar, Secretary, Delhi High Court Bar Association,

Shri Sameer Vashishth, Standing Counsel (Civil), Govt. of NCT of Delhi,

Standing Counsels of the Central and State Government,

Executive Members of the Delhi High Court Bar Association,

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

Amongst us today are Justice B.D. Ahmed, Former Chief Justice, J&K High Court, and our own Justice Rekha Palli,

Senior Advocates,

Members of the Bar, Members of the Registry,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very Good Afternoon to all of you.

We have assembled today here to bid farewell to Justice Vibhu Bakhru upon his elevation as Chief Justice of High Court of Karnataka.

Justice Bakhru was born in Nagpur on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 1966 – a year younger to me. He did his schooling from Delhi Public School, Mathura Road, New Delhi. After completing his schooling, he enrolled as a student with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India and commenced his articleship with Thakur, Vaidyanath Aiyar & Company on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 1985. Thereafter, he enrolled for graduation and earned the degree of Bachelors of Commerce from Delhi University in 1987. After completion of B.Com. Honours, Justice Bakhru cleared his final examination for Chartered Accountancy from the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India in 1989. In 1990, Justice Bakhru completed his LL.B. and got enrolled as an Advocate with the Bar Council of Delhi in the same year.

As an advocate, he actively practiced in the Supreme Court, High Court of Delhi, Company Law Board and various other Forums and Tribunals. In recognition of his experience and intellect, Justice Bakhru was designated as Senior Advocate by this Court on 28<sup>th</sup> July, 2011. Soon thereafter, on 17<sup>th</sup> April,

2013, Justice Bakhru responded to the call of public service and was appointed as Additional Judge of High Court of Delhi. He was made permanent on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2015. Notably, from 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2024 to 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2025, Justice Bakhru has also served as the Acting Chief Justice of this Court.

Justice Bakhru has served this institution in different capacities. For a period spanning over 35-36 years, he served as an Advocate, a Senior Advocate, and for over a decade now, he has been serving on the bench of this Court. As a Judge, it would not be an overstatement to say that he has always been quite popular with the bar. His calm and composed demeanor makes his courtroom a pleasant place for all the stakeholders. Justice Bakhru is known to be a man of few words in his Court and his style of working is a delicate mix of patience and firmness. During his tenure as a Judge of this Court, Justice Bakhru presided over multiple rosters and delivered various decisions of key public importance. Of the multiple subject matters that arrived for adjudication in his Court, he has contributed most significantly to the development of intellectual property laws, arbitration, taxation, criminal law and constitutional law and the debate where he will excel the most keep on going. Justice Bakhru has a deep understanding of the commercial laws and it has enabled him to forensically arrive at the core of the complex commercial legal issues in order to decide effectively and swiftly. His presence on the bench of this Court has greatly benefitted this institution and has been a boon for the lawyers and litigants alike.

Justice Bakhru's contributions are not limited to his judicial output as he has also contributed immensely on the administrative side of this Court. He has been a part of various key committees of the Court and his valuable inputs have been instrumental in dealing with issues emerging from time to time. The effort and time of a Judge in dealing with administrative issues often go unnoticed as it happens beyond the courtrooms and is generally not talked about. However, all administrative decisions are backed by extensive deliberations amongst the Judges and other stakeholders, which require a strong commitment as time is one luxury that Judges do not have. Justice Bakhru has always ensured that administrative issues receive timely attention and are dealt expeditiously and decisively. Justice Bakhru's role in the evolution and functioning of the Delhi International Arbitration Centre is significant which deserves a special mention. With the help of the members of the Committee, Justice Bakhru has led the Centre with unparalleled vision and dedication. Under his leadership, the Centre has grown significantly in terms of the number of arbitrations being handled by it and has also hosted two editions of Delhi Arbitration Week, an international arbitration conference.

It is a moment of great honour for Justice Bakhru and a matter of pride for all of us that a Judge of this esteemed institution is being elevated as the Chief Justice of High Court of Karnataka. Whereas, it is a great loss for this institution

as one of the senior most members of the bench is going to leave us, however, I have no doubt that his presence is going to be highly beneficial for the High Court of Karnataka and the district judiciary in the State of Karnataka. Territorially, the State of Karnataka is bigger than Delhi and the administrative challenges are also going to be different, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Having said that, I am confident that it is going to be a great learning experience for Justice Bakhru. His association with this institution is fairly long and it cannot be gainsaid that this parting is going to be tough for him. Brother, I may only say that this institution is going to miss you and you shall always have a seat of permanence in the hearts of those whose lives have been touched by your decisions and conduct. Justice Bakhru may have a lot to miss in Delhi, but if there is one thing that he is certainly not going to miss in the pleasant Bangalore weather, it is the harsh summer of Delhi which he is leaving behind for the good.

On my behalf and on behalf of this Court, I wish you the very best for your time in Bangalore. We pray for your good health for all times to come.

Thank you and Jai Hind.