

Reference Speech by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Pankaj Mithal, Chief Justice Rajasthan High Court on the sad demise of Hon'ble Mr. Justice V.K. Bali, Former Judge Rajasthan High Court & Former Chief Justice Kerala High Court on 04.01.2023 at 3.45 PM through Video Conferencing.

1. My Esteemed Colleagues on the Bench,
2. Shri R.P. Singh,
Additional Advocate General, Rajasthan;
3. Shri Sunil Beniwal,
Chairman, Bar Council of Rajasthan, Jodhpur;
4. Shri Nathu Singh Rathore,
President, Rajasthan High Court Advocates Association, Jodhpur;
5. Shri Ravi Bhansali,
President, Rajasthan High Court Lawyers Association, Jodhpur;
6. Shri Mahendra Shandilya,
President, Rajasthan High Court Bar Association, Jaipur;
7. Shri Kamal Kishore Sharma
President, The Jaipur Bar Association, Jaipur;
8. Learned Senior Advocates,
9. Learned Members of the Bar,
10. Officers of the Registry &
11. Members of the bereaved family.

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With a profound sense of grief we have assembled here today to pay our respectful homage to a very distinguished personality Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vinod Kumar Bali, Former Judge of Rajasthan High Court & Former Chief Justice of Kerala High Court, who left for the heavenly abode on 25th December, 2022 at the age of about 77 years.

Justice Bali was born on 24th January, 1945 in the family of Shri Dewan Chand Bali, who was also an Advocate. After completing his B.A., he obtained the Degree of Law from Punjab University, Chandigarh in 1967 and started his practice in District Courts, Karnal. He thereafter

shifted to the Punjab & Haryana High Court, Chandigarh in 1973. He practiced on all branches of law, having specialization in Constitutional, Service, Labour and Industrial Disputes as well as in Criminal Laws. He was designated as Senior Advocate in 1987.

In recognition of his extraordinary all round accomplishments, Justice Bali was elevated as a Judge of the Punjab & Haryana High Court on 15th March, 1991. During his tenure till February, 2005, he authored several Full Bench judgments. He remained Chairman of Haryana Legal Services Authority for about 8 years. He was thereafter transferred to the Rajasthan High Court and took oath on 28th February, 2005. Here also, he remained Chairman of Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority for about 7 months.

On 22nd January, 2006, Justice Bali was sworn in as Chief Justice of the High Court of Kerala and retired in that capacity on 23rd January, 2007. During his tenure as Chief Justice, 120 Full Bench cases pending in Kerala High Court were disposed of.

After superannuation, Justice Bali was appointed as Chairman of Central Administrative Tribunal, Principal Bench New Delhi on 08th March, 2007 and completed his term on 08th March, 2012. He was thereafter enrolled as Senior Advocate in Supreme Court in March/April, 2012. He also acted as an Arbitrator in several matters.

Justice Bali was polite, down to earth, self-effacing and very grounded. By nature he was judicious in everything that he did. He was widely respected for his wit, humour and graceful manners. He was endowed with enviable qualities of head and heart and with his frankness and felicity of expression, could with ease, touch the inner cords of all those who came in touch with him. A strict disciplinarian in court, he

always used to encourage and assist the junior members of the Bar in preparing and arguing the cases. By dint of his remarkable qualities, he commanded unreserved respect of the Bar and the Bench.

A lot of historical and landmark judgments in almost all branches of law delivered by him are shining in the Law Journals which reflect his remarkable intellectual excellence and judicial wisdom.

In a Division Bench judgment rendered in the case of **Tahir Khan Vs. State of Rajasthan dated 03rd August, 2005**, while dealing with bail, it was held that in an appeal if the accused had undergone 5 years of sentence and there are no chances of early hearing of the appeal, he should ordinarily be allowed bail depending upon the seriousness and heinousness of the crime. His opinion was approved by the Supreme Court.

In a Full Bench judgment dated 18th November, 2005 delivered in the case of **Lalit Mohan Sharma & Ors. Vs. R.P.S.C. & Ors. (Writ Petition No.1042/2005)** relating to powers of High Court to interfere in the matter of questions and answers asked in an examination wherein an expert committee gave its opinion, it was held that the Court is not an expert in the field of education and the various subjects from which the question paper was settled and, therefore, the Court should not probe the matter and accordingly declined to interfere.

Justice Bali will always be remembered for his innate goodness apart from being a compassionate Judge with firm foundation of legal principles. It would be difficult to fill the vacuum created by his demise. He leaves behind his wife, one daughter and son Shri Puneet Bali, who is a Senior Advocate practicing in Supreme Court and Punjab & Haryana High Court.

I on behalf of my colleagues and on my own behalf offer heartfelt condolences and pray to the Almighty God to give sufficient strength and courage to the bereaved family to bear the irreparable loss. May his departed soul rest in eternal peace.

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In honour of departed soul, we shall now observe silence for two minutes.

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As a mark of respect to the departed soul, the judicial work of the Court shall remain suspended for the rest of the day.

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A copy of the resolution be forwarded to the bereaved family.