

OBITUARY REFERENCE ADDRESS BY HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUDHANSHU DHULIA, CHIEF JUSTICE OF GAUHATI HIGH COURT, GUWAHATI, ON 18.1.2021 AT 3.30 PM, ON ACCOUNT OF SAD DEMISE OF 6 (SIX) LEARNED SENIOR ADVOCATES AND 7 (SEVEN) LEARNED ADVOCATES AND MEMBERS OF THE GAUHATI HIGH COURT BAR ASSOCIATION SITTING IN THE COURT NO.1 (NEW BLOCK).

**THE GAUHATI HIGH COURT AT GUWAHATI
(THE HIGH COURT OF ASSAM, NAGALAND, MIZORAM AND ARUNACHAL PRADESH)**

BEFORE

**HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE N. KOTISWAR SINGH
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE MANASH RANJAN PATHAK
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE MANOJIT BHUYAN
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE MICHAEL ZOTHANKHUMA
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUMAN SHYAM
HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE RUMI KUMARI PHUKAN
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ACHINTYA MALLA BUJOR BARUA
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE KALYAN RAI SURANA
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE PRASANTA KUMAR DEKA
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HITESH KUMAR SARMA
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE MIR ALFAZ ALI
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE NANI TAGIA
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE MANISH CHOUDHURY
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SOUMITRA SAIKIA
AND
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE PARTHIVJYOTI SAIKIA**

Reference by:

1. Mr. Jiten Payeng, Secretary General, Gauhati High Court Bar Association.
2. Mr. Putul Chandra Deka, President, Gauhati High Court Advocates' Association.
3. Mr. Sailendra Das, Chairman of Bar Council of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim.
4. Mr. B. Goswami, Additional Advocate General, Assam.
5. Mr. B.D. Goswami, Additional Advocate General, Arunachal Pradesh.
6. Mr. Ranjit Kumar Deb Choudhury, Assistant Solicitor General of India.
7. Ms. M. Kechii, Senior Government Advocate, Nagaland

Reply by: Hon'ble the Chief Justice

1. My esteemed colleagues on the Bench.
2. Mr. Jiten Payeng, Secretary General, Gauhati High Court Bar Association.
3. Mr. Putul Chandra Deka, President, Gauhati High Court Advocates' Association.
4. Mr. Sailendra Das, Chairman of Bar Council of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim.
5. Mr. B. Goswami, Additional Advocate General, Assam.
6. Mr. B.D. Goswami, Additional Advocate General, Arunachal Pradesh.
7. Mr. Ranjit Kumar Deb Choudhury, Assistant Solicitor General of India.
8. Ms. M.Kechii, Senior Government Advocate, Nagaland.
9. Members of Judicial Service and Registry.

Today, we have assembled here to mourn the sad demise of Senior Advocates Kula Ranjan Pathak, Achuta Sankar Bhattacharjee, Rohini Kumar Das, Bhubaneswar Kalita, Prabin Borthakur and Bhabatosh Banerjee, and;

Advocates Haripada Barman, Manindra Singha, Abu Sharif, Ajit Chandra Kalita, Binod Kumar Agarwala, Alok Deb and Abhranil Saikia, who left us for heavenly abode during the pandemic period 2019 -2020. Obituary references of the departed souls could not be held in the usual manner and at an earlier point of time because of constraints of the prevailing pandemic.

Late Kula Ranjan Pathak, born on 1st April, 1931, who left us for heavenly abode at the age of 90 years on 26th October, 2020. He was the father of my esteemed Brother on the Bench Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak. Late Kula Ranjan Pathak had vast experience as a law practitioner on the civil side, particularly in Land Acquisition cases. His contribution to the legal field will always be remembered. He leaves behind his wife, one son and a daughter.

Late Achuta Sankar Bhattacharjee was born on 30th May, 1937 and breathed his last on 21st September, 2020, at the age of 83 years. He leaves behind his wife and a daughter. He was also the former Advocate General of Assam and I am told that he had an extensive practice on the civil side.

Late Rohini Kumar Das was born on 1st February, 1939. He left for heavenly abode on 1st January, 2021, at the age of about 82 years. He was the founder member of the All Assam Lawyers' Association and Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee of Bar Council. With his death, the Bar has lost a senior Advocate, who had extensive practice on the criminal side. He leaves behind his three sons, one of whom, is a practicing Advocate in this High Court.

Late Bhubaneswar Kalita was born on 6th October, 1945 and left for heavenly abode on 26th December, 2019, at the age of 93 years. He leaves behind his wife and three daughters. With his death, the Bar has lost a renowned civil lawyer.

Late Prabin Borthakur, who was born on 30th October, 1947, left for heavenly abode on 22nd September, 2020. He leaves behind his wife and two sons. Late Borthakur, I am told, had extensive practice in this High Court on civil and service matters.

Late Bhabatosh Banerjee was born on 1st September, 1948, and left for heavenly abode on 4th October, 2019. He passed away at the age of 71 years, leaving behind his wife and only son Sri Dibya Banerjee, who is also an Advocate. With his death, the Bar has lost an eminent lawyer on the civil and service laws.

All the six learned Senior Advocates had immensely contributed in the field of law and were a source of inspiration to other members of the Bar. I am told that they were very outspoken but always dedicated and devoted to the cause of justice and expressed their views fearlessly in the court. It is for this reason that all of them earned great respect from the Bar as well as from the Bench.

Apart from the above named Late Senior Advocates, very unfortunately, the Bar also lost seven (7) of its other more members, who left for heavenly abode during this pandemic period.

Late Haripada Barman was born on 1st September, 1931 and passed away on October, 2020, at the age of 89 years, leaving behind his only daughter.

Late Manindra Singha was born on 2nd December, 1943 and passed away at the age of 77 years, leaving behind his wife and son. I have been told that his son Mr. Gaurav Singha is also an Advocate.

Late Abu Sharif, who was born on 1st March, 1950, passed away on 15th May, 2020. He left behind his wife, two sons, who are Advocates and one daughter, namely, Ms. Salma Sultana, who is a Judicial Officer of Assam Judicial Service.

Late Ajit Chandra Kalita was born on 1st June, 1954, breathed his last on August, 2020, at the age of 66 years.

Late Binod Kumar Agarwala, born on 24th January, 1965, breathed his last on 29th October, 2020, at the age of 55 years, leaving behind his wife, one son and a daughter.

Late Alok Deb, born on 4th January, 1972, breathed his last on 9th August, 2020, at a very young age of 48 years, leaving behind his wife Smti Sunita Goswami, an employee in the Railways Department and a minor daughter.

Late Abhranil Saikia, born on 11th October, 1978, also breathed his last on 10th June, 2020, at a young age of 42 years. He leaves behind his wife Smti Pallabi Hazarika, who is a teacher and a minor daughter.

As I have joined this High Court very recently, I did not have the opportunity to meet any of them personally, but I am told that late Senior Advocates, namely Kula Ranjan Pathak, Achuta Sankar Bhattacharjee, Rohini Kumar Das, Bhubaneswar

Kalita, Prabin Borthakur and Bhabatosh Banerjee, Senior Advocates were admired and respected by one and all for their cheerful and amiable dispositions. Their contributions in the field of law and their approach and behaviour with the members of the Bar and Bench will continue to inspire the legal fraternity.

Advocates, namely Haripada Barman, Manindra Singha, Abu Sharif, Ajit Chandra Kalita, Binod Kumar Agarwala, Alok Deb and Abhranil Saikia were equally loved and respected by all for their gently approach and fair submissions in the Court. Their death is a great loss, not only, to their respective families but also to the legal fraternity.

What is not cremated or buried are the good deeds of a person. Such a person becomes a memory which will always linger in our minds and remain with us. I am sure that the senior Advocates and the Advocates who have left us will remain with us always in our memory.

I and my colleagues on the Bench, fully associate with the sentiments and feelings expressed by the members of the Bar. I, on my behalf and on behalf of my esteemed colleagues on the Bench and members of the Registry convey our heartfelt condolence to the members of the bereaved families and pray the Almighty to grant eternal peace to the departed souls and give sufficient strength and courage to the members of their families to bear the irreparable loss.

As a mark of respect to the departed souls, I request the learned members of the Bar and Bench to observe a minute's silence.

The Court work on the judicial side will remain suspended for the rest of the day as a mark of respect to the departed souls.

The Registry is directed to communicate the proceedings and convey our heartfelt condolence to the members of the bereaved families.



(Sudhanshu Dhulia)

Chief Justice

Gauhati High Court, Guwahati