FULL COURT REFERENCE HELD IN THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA ON 4TH NOVEMBER 2026, ON THE OCCASION OF THE RETIREMENT OF HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE K. NATARAJAN.

Speech by Sri. K. Jaju Babu, Advocate General.

The Hon'ble Justice Soumen Sen, the Chief Justice of Kerala, Honourable Justice K. Natarajan, The esteemed companion Judges of the High Court of Kerala; Respected Former Judges of the High Court of Kerala; The Additional Solicitor General of India Sri. P. Sreekumar, The Additional Advocate Generals Sri. P.A. Muhammed Shah and Sri. K.C. Vincent, The Director General of Prosecution Sri. T. Asaf Ali, The Deputy Solicitor General of India Smt. O.M. Shalina, The President, Kerala High Court Advocates Association Sri. Peeyus A. Kottam, The Chairman, Bar Council of Kerala Sri. Muraleedharan G., The State Attorney Sri. Anoop V. Nair, The President, Kerala High Court Senior Advocates Association Sri. Nanda Kumara Menon, The President, Kerala Federation of Women Lawyers Smt. S. Karthika, The Mediator-Coordinator, High Court Mediation Centre Sri. Mathew Kuriakose, Law Officers of the State and Central Government and other Law Officers, Learned Senior Advocates, Esteemed fellow members of the Bar, Sri. G Gopakumar, Registrar General, High Court of Kerala, Registrars, The Directors of Kerala Judicial Academy, The Member Secretary, Kerala State Legal Services Authority, Sri. Prathapan, The President, Kerala High Court Advocates Clerks Association and all other dignitaries, Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is both a privilege and an honour to stand before this distinguished gathering today, to bid farewell to Hon'ble Mr. Justice Krishnan Natarajan who is demitting office upon attaining the age of superannuation and also to place on record our deep sense of appreciation, gratitude and respect.

A judicial career spanning more than three decades is not merely a chronicle of years served or positions held. It is a journey of learning, responsibility and service to the cause of justice. While a few minutes reference may not do justice to such a distinguished journey, they can certainly reflect upon the values, commitment and legacy that have defined it.

His Lordship's journey is, in many ways, a story of perseverance, dedication and professional accomplishment. Born in Bengaluru, where he received his entire education from Govt. Primary School, Sultanpet to V.V. Puram Law College. His Lordship, started his professional journey in the year 1992 under the guidance of Sri. V.Jagathish Gowda, a leading Criminal Lawyer. Within

3 years, he started independent practice in both the civil and criminal sides, all over the State of Karnataka. These formative years at the Bar gave him something invaluable: a firsthand understanding of the challenges faced by litigants, the responsibilities of advocates and the realities of the administration of justice. It was this experience that would later enrich his contribution to his judicial career which he started within 10 years of enrolment as a lawyer.

In 2002, he assumed charge as District and Sessions Judge beginning a remarkable sixteen-year legal journey through different Districts of Karnataka. He also shouldered important administrative responsibilities as the Registrar of the High Court and the Law Secretary of the State. These assignments provided him with a rare and comprehensive understanding of the justice delivery system and administrative functions, from the courtroom corridors to the highest levels of institutional responsibility.

His elevation to the High Court of Karnataka in 2018 was a natural culmination of this rich and varied experience. He later came to Kerala on 2nd May, 2025 bringing with him long years of judicial experience, coupled with a deep appreciation of the High Court as an institution and its responsibilities. My Lord, though you came to us from another High Court, it was only a matter of time before you became one of us. In a relatively short span, you have become an affable and agreeable companion of this institution, earning the affection, esteem and respect of your colleagues and members of the Bar.

On the Bench, His Lordship distinguished himself through his commitment to fairness, impartiality and judicial temperament. He understood that the strength of a judicial institution lies not merely in the authority it exercises, but in the confidence and trust it inspires by treating every lawyer equally without bias or favouritism.

His approach reflected a balance of procedural fairness and human empathy and the need to ensure that the processes of law are never misused by applying abstract legal rules in a pursuit of public approval. Your Lordship's command of diverse branches of law—civil, criminal, constitutional, service, family and administrative—is enriched by the rare practical wisdom acquired through decades of experience. Your Lordship's Court room presence maintaining courteous patience and smiling composure while genuinely hearing all sides ensuring fairness with firmness has helped to reduce the intense stress faced in the Advocates. Your Lordship is appraised by the Bar for adopting a judicial temperament of active listening and clear communication that an average lawyer can understand.

But today is not merely an occasion to speak of judicial offices, professional milestones or reported decisions. It is definitely an occasion to acknowledge the human side of a distinguished judicial career. My Lord is not just retiring from the Court, but retiring from the stress and strain of Office and saying hello to home again after a long time.

Behind every demanding public office is a family that makes its own sacrifices, shares its uncertainties and provides the strength to carry on. We therefore place on record our sincere appreciation to Smt. D. Lalitha, his lifelong companion in this journey, and to his children, Adv. Vignesh, Adv. Vishnu and Adv. Priyadarshini, together with his daughter in law, Dr. Alekhya.

The fact that all three of his children have chosen to carry their father's torch is his greatest victory in the court of his heart. It perhaps is the finest celebration of the bond between a lawyer cum Judge, father and his children, which has inspired the next generation to ensure that the rule of law, rules the house.

My Lord as you prepare to lay down the responsibilities of judicial office, may we say that the retirement marks only the conclusion of a tenure, not the conclusion of an influence.

The robe may now be laid aside, the courtroom may no longer await your presence, and the daily demands of judicial office may not be there. But the values you have upheld, the principles you have defended and the example you have set will continue to remain with this institution and the multigenerational family of lawyers following your footsteps. All dads are created equal but only the finest raise lawyers - this quote blends your professed pride with heart-warming sentiments.

Judgments may be preserved in law reports, but the manner in which a Judge conducts himself, treats those who appear before him and upholds the dignity of the institution leaves an impression that remain in our minds.

On this occasion, we convey our profound gratitude for your service, our sincere admiration for your contribution to this institution celebrating its Platinum Jubilee and our warmest wishes for the years ahead.

May this new season of life bring Your Lordship and your family good health, peace, happiness and the freedom.

My Lord, you may be retiring from the Bench, but the respect you have earned and the legacy you leave behind will continue to occupy a place in this 70 year old institution and light the way to others.

Thank you, My Lord. May we wish you a very happy and fulfilling retirement.

Thank you all

Jai Hind

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Speech by Sri. Peeyus A. Kottam,
President, Kerala High Court Advocates' Association.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Soumen Sen Chief Justice of Kerala, Honble Mr. Justice Krishnan Natarajan, Hon'ble Judges and Former Judges of the High Court of Kerala; Learned Advocate General, Sri.K.Jaiju Babu, Adv. Muhammed Sha, Addl. Advocate General, Adv. K.C. Vincent, Addl. Advocate General, Director General of Prosecution, Asaf Ali T., Adv. Mohammed Shafi M., State Addl. General of Prosecution, Adv. Sreekumar P., Additional Solicitor General, State Attorney, Sri.Anoop V. Nair, President, Senior Advocates' Association, Nandakumar Menon N; Smt.Nima Jacob; Secretary, Kerala High Court Advocates' Association, Executive Committee members of Kerala High Court Advocates' Association; Smt.Karthika Sukumaran, President, Kerala Federation of Women Lawyers, Sri.R.V. Sreejith; Legal Retainer and Senior Central Government Counsel for Lakshadweep Administration, Co-ordinator, High Court Mediation Centre, Respected Senior Members of the Bar; Registrar General and Registrars of this Hon'ble Court; Court Officers, Advocate Clerks Association President; Esteemed family members of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Natarajan, My esteemed colleagues at the Bar; My dear brothers and sisters;

Namaste, and a very warm good evening to one and all.

It is both a privilege and a proud moment to stand before this august gathering and express our deep respect, admiration and affection for the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Natarajan as His Lordship concludes a distinguished chapter of service on the Bench.

Mr. Justice Natarajan is an extraordinary personality who earned the confidence, love and affection of the Bar in a remarkably short time. Though His Lordship served as a Judge of the High Court of Kerala for only about one and a half years, that brief tenure was enough to win a lasting place in the hearts of the members of the Bar.

The Bar deeply appreciated His Lordship's manner of hearing cases and the calm, composed atmosphere maintained in the courtroom. Every lawyer—senior or junior—was treated with equal courtesy, patience and consideration. His

Lordship made room for everyone to be heard and discharged His judicial responsibilities with courage, and fearness.

His Lordship's judicial experience has ranged across criminal law, service matters, civil revisions and constitutional challenges. In these varied areas, the Bar has seen a Judge committed to careful consideration, fairness and the redress of genuine grievances.

The decision rendered by Justice Natarajan reflects a judicial conscience attentive to the needs of the vulnerable and a profound understanding that justice must respond meaningfully to human suffering.

Dear Justice Natarajan, the members of this Association will always remember Your Lordship's tenure with affection and respect. We admire the manner in which You discharged Your duties and the temperament, compassion and commitment You brought to the Bench.

Your journey—marked by struggle, perseverance, dedication and hard work—is an inspiration to the next generation. Your service reminds us that integrity and determination can carry a person to the highest responsibilities in the State judiciary.

We extend to Your Lordship our heartfelt gratitude and warmest wishes. We wish you every success in the next innings of your life. As you begin this new chapter, may you continue to move forward with the same wisdom, grace and distinction.

Thank you all.

Jai Hind!

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Speech by the Honourable the Chief Justice Mr. Justice Soumen Sen.

Brother Justice K. Natarajan, My Esteemed Sister and Brother Judges, Former Judges of this Court, Learned Advocate General, Learned Additional Solicitor General for India, Law Officers of the State and Central Governments, and the Union Territory of Lakshadweep, President, Kerala High Court Advocates' Association, President, Senior Advocates' Association, President, Kerala Federation of Women Lawyers, Senior and Junior Members of the Bar, Registrar General and other Registrars of this Court, Smt. D. Lalitha, wife of Justice Natarajan, and other members of his family, Officers and Staff of this Court, Members of the Advocates' Clerks' Association, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon to all.

We are assembled here today to bid an affectionate farewell to our esteemed Brother, Justice K. Natarajan, who, after rendering over three decades of distinguished and dedicated service to the justice delivery system, in the District Judiciary and the High Courts of Karnataka and Kerala, is demitting office on attaining the age of superannuation.

2. Justice Natarajan was born on 5th November, 1964, at Bengaluru, to late Sri. Krishnan and Smt. Bhanumathi. After completing his school education at various institutions in Bengaluru, he pursued his studies in Commerce and Law. He enrolled as an Advocate with the Karnataka Bar on 14th February, 1992, and commenced his legal career under the able guidance of Advocate Sri V. Jagadish Gowda, practising before the Magistrate and Sessions Courts at Bengaluru. In January 1995, he commenced independent practice in both civil and criminal law. He subsequently served as a Panel Advocate for the New India Assurance Company before being selected to the cadre of District and Sessions Judges.

3. On 27th May, 2002, he was appointed as a District and Sessions Judge and served in various districts, including Kalaburagi, Bengaluru, Bellary, Dharwad and Shivamogga. During his judicial career, he also held several important positions, including Registrar (Review and Statistics) and Registrar (Recruitment) in the High Court of Karnataka, Presiding Officer of the Labour Court at Chikmagalur, Principal Secretary to the Government of Karnataka, Law Department, and Principal Judge of the Family Court at Bengaluru.

4. In recognition of his service and dedication, he was elevated as an Additional Judge of the High Court of Karnataka on 3rd November, 2018, and became a Permanent Judge on 26th February, 2020. He was subsequently transferred to this Court and took oath as a Judge of the High Court of Kerala on 9th May, 2025.

5. The discharge of judicial functions calls for considerable wisdom, discernment and a deep sense of responsibility. Though Justice Natarajan's tenure in this Court has been relatively brief, he has disposed of more than 1870 cases and delivered judgments across different branches of law. His decisions reflect a keen sense of justice, firmly rooted in established legal principles. His judicial output during this period is particularly commendable. Throughout, he has remained conscious of the responsibilities attached to judicial office, demonstrating an understanding of both the authority vested in a Judge and the constitutional restraints that govern the exercise of judicial power.

6. On the administrative side, Justice Natarajan has made valuable contributions to this institution through his association with several committees.

He served as the Chairperson of the Committee for Juvenile Justice and Child Rights, entrusted with monitoring the progress of trials under the POCSO Act. He also chaired the Committee constituted to examine the matter of maintaining a Dress Code to the Officers and Staff of this Court befitting the decency and decorum. In addition, he served as a member of the Security and Maintenance Committee and the Committee responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the High Court Guest House and Lyceum. His involvement in these assignments reflects his willingness to contribute to the institutional responsibilities of this Court beyond the adjudicatory sphere.

7. Justice Natarajan is a person of calm disposition, composed demeanour and firm convictions. His judicial career, spanning different courts and institutions, bears testimony to his commitment to the administration of justice. He has discharged the onerous duties and responsibilities of judicial office with diligence, integrity and an abiding sense of duty. His professional conduct and commitment have earned him the respect and esteem of his colleagues and members of the Bar. His contributions to this institution and his association with this Court will be remembered with appreciation and respect.

8. Retirement is one of the most fulfilling milestones in a person's professional journey. It marks the culmination of years of dedicated service and offers an occasion to look back with pride upon the responsibilities shouldered, the challenges overcome and the contributions made. At the same time, it heralds the beginning of a new chapter, carrying with it cherished memories and the satisfaction of having served with commitment and distinction. Justice Natarajan, through his distinguished judicial career and personal integrity, exemplifies the fulfillment that comes from a life devoted to duty and service.

9. On behalf of the High Court of Kerala, I take this opportunity to extend my best wishes to Smt. D. Lalitha, his wife, his elder son, Sri. Vignesh, his younger son, Sri. Vishnu, and his daughter, Smt. Priyadarshini, all of whom are associated with the legal profession, as well as to the other members of his family. May they be blessed with continued good health, peace and happiness in the years ahead.

10. As we bid farewell to our esteemed Brother Justice K. Natarajan, I place on record, on behalf of this Court and the legal fraternity, our sincere appreciation and gratitude for his valuable service and co-operation. I wish him good health, happiness and a long, peaceful and fulfilling life in the years to come.

Thank you all.

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Reply speech by the Honourable Mr. Justice K. Natarajan.

" ELLAVARKKUM ENTE NAMASKARAM "

Good afternoon to all

Honourable Sri.Justice Soumen Sen, The Chief Justice, High Court of Kerala, All Sister and Brother Judges of this Court, Sri.Jaju Babu, Advocate General, Sri.P.Sreekumar, The Additional Solicitor General of India for High Court of Kerala, Sri.Mohammed Shah and Sri.K.C. Vincent, learned Additional Advocate General, Sri.Muraleedharan G., Chairman and other members of Bar Council of Kerala, Sri.T.Asaf Ali, DGP/SPP, High Court of Kerala, Smt.O.M. Shalina, Deputy Solicitor General of India, learned Central Govt. Counsels and High Court Govt. Advocates, Sri.Gopinathan, Former Judgment of this Court, Sri.Peeyus A. Kottam, The President, Smt.Nima Jacob, The Secretary, Sri.Biji A. Manikoth, The Treasurer and other office bearers of the Kerala High Court Advocates' Association, Sri.G. Gopakumar, The Registrar General, Sri.Nixon M. Joseph, Registrar (District Judiciary) and other Registrars of this Court, Sri.Kamanees K., Principal District Judge, Kollam, Smt.Reshmi Ravindran, Chief Judicial Magistrate, Kollam representing the Judicial Officers of Kollam District, Smt.Karthika Sukumaran, The President, Kerala Federation of Women Lawyers, Members of the Registry, Senior Counsel, other Members and Young Advocates of the Bar, Staff of the High Court and Advocate Clerks', My Family Members, Relatives, My Staff Members and Friends from various places, Ladies and Gentlemen;

I express my sincere gratitude to the Hon'ble Chief Justice, learned Addl. Advocate General and President of the Advocates Association for spoken good words towards me on this occasion.

When I was transferred to the Kerala High Court in April 2025, many of my colleagues in the High Court of Karnataka and Kerala may be surprised. But it is for your information that, when I was elevated as a Judge of the High Court of Karnataka, I had indicated 'Kerala' as my first preference for a place of posting in the event of my transfer from the Karnataka High Court. Accordingly, the Hon'ble Supreme Court transferred me to the Kerala High Court last year in the interest of the better administration of justice. I believe that I have discharged my responsibilities to the best of my knowledge and ability and made sincere efforts to improve the functioning of the district judiciary during my tenure as Portfolio Judge of various districts, including Palakkad, Kozhikode, Thrissur, and presently at Kollam. I am fully satisfied and deeply grateful for the opportunity entrusted to me by the Hon'ble Supreme Court through my elevation from the District Judiciary to the High Court. I consider

it a privilege to have been given the responsibility of serving as a Judge of the High Court.

After completing 24 years and 6 months of service, this is the 25th year of my judicial service, and I am demitting the office with a deep sense of satisfaction, having had the privilege of serving in the High Court and witnessing the celebration and being part of the Platinum Jubilee of the prestigious Kerala High Court. I consider it as a privilege to serve in Kerala, a land fondly known as "God's Own Country." I have been familiar with Kerala for nearly three decades; since 1995, I have regularly visited Guruvayur, Chottanikkara, and Sabarimala Ayyappa Temples. My visits to these sacred places have fostered a deep spiritual connection with this State. By offering my prayers at these temples, I had the opportunity to come to Kerala. I consider this opportunity to serve the people of Kerala as a blessing bestowed upon me by the Divine Power to serve God's Own Country. I was truly delighted when I learned of my transfer, as it allowed me to discharge my constitutional and judicial functions in this beautiful State and serve this institution.

You may agree with me that the judiciary is the last resort for citizens seeking justice and the institution in which they place their trust. We must therefore hear them patiently, treat them courteously, and determine their rights in accordance with the law, rather than merely dispose of their cases. Of course, the judges are human beings, having common sense with knowledge of law and authority by the statute.

I am aware of the concept that the judges should not speak, but their judgments should speak. Hence, I do not speak much on this occasion, except to extend my gratitude to my well-wishers, and it is time for me to remember them on this occasion.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Recruitment Committee of the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka for selecting me for appointment as a District Judge in the year 2002. I also express my gratitude to the Collegium headed by Hon'ble Mr Justice Subhro Kamal Mukherjee, the then Chief Justice of the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka, for recommending my name for elevation as a Judge of the High Court, and to the Collegium of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India for recommending my name to the Hon'ble President of India for appointment as a Judge of the High Court.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to the former Judges of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, Hon'ble Mr Justice Mohan M. Shantanagoudar, who also served as the Chief Justice of this Court, also a three-time portfolio judge for me, and Hon'ble Mr Justice S. Abdul Nazeer, presently Hon'ble Governor of Andhra Pradesh. I am particularly grateful to Mr Justice R. V. Raveendran, former Judge of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, my mentor, whose guidance and support were

instrumental in my appointment as a District Judge and who has continued to encourage and support me throughout my judicial career.

I also extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon'ble Mr Justice V. Gopala Gowda, former Judge of the Supreme Court of India, who was my Guru during my studies at V.V. Puram Law College. I remain deeply grateful for his constant encouragement, invaluable guidance, and support in shaping my legal career.

I extend my sincere gratitude to Hon'ble Mr Justice Shivaraj V. Patil, former Judge of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, and Hon'ble Mr Justice Narayana Swamy, former Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh and presently working as a member of the Lokpal, who have also guided me.

I also express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon'ble Mrs Justice B. V. Nagarathna and the Hon'ble Mr Justice Aravinda Kumar, Judges of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, for their valuable support and encouragement throughout my judicial career, both during my tenure as a District Judge and Judge of the High Court.

I also extend my sincere gratitude to my former Portfolio Judges of the High Court of Karnataka, including Mr Justice Guru Rajan, Mr Justice K. Sreedhar Rao, Mr Dr Justice Bakthavachala, Mr Justice N. Kumar, Mr Justice Ajith Gujal, Mr Justice Sreenivasa Gowda, and Mr Justice Aravind Kumar, now a Judge of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. I am deeply grateful for their valuable guidance, encouragement, and support during my tenure as a District Judge in various districts of Karnataka.

I also extend my gratitude to late Justice V.G. Sabhahit, former Judge of the High Court of Karnataka & Mr Justice S.N. Satyanarayana, former Judge of the Karnataka, Punjab and Haryana High Courts, for their support during my tenure as District Judge.

I also wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my Personal Secretary, Smt Shiny Sathyan; Court Officer, Sri Naveen; Personal Assistant, Smt Saritha; Confidential Assistant, Kum Veena; Research Assistant, Kum Sandra; Escorts, Sri Shivakumar and Smt Shiny Rose; Listing Officer, Smt Rajalakshmi; Chauffeurs, Sri Nidheesh and Sri Nakul; Personal Security Officers, Sri Sarath and Sri Sajith; and Personal Guards at the Guest House: Sri Vishnu, Sri Lalu, Sri Rijo, and Sri Sreekuttan.

I also extend my sincere thanks to the Guest House staff, Sri Rafeeq, Sri Saneesh, Sri Robin, Sri Ashraf, Smt Smitha, and Smt Sindhu, for their dedicated service and support at the Guest House. I sincerely acknowledge their contribution throughout my tenure.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to Sri R.Ashok,

Officer on Special Duty (Protocol); Sri Yazar Arafath, Protocol Officer; and staff members of the Protocol team, who have provided me with valuable guidance and assistance in meticulously co-ordinating all my travel arrangements from the time when I was transferred from Karnataka till date. I am deeply grateful for their dedicated service, support and assistance throughout my journeys.

I also extend my gratitude to Gopalakrishnan, Protocol Officer of Chavakkad and all other Protocol Officials of the State who assisted me and my family members while visiting the Temples.

On this occasion, I would also like to make special mention of the commendable services rendered by Smt Kausalya Ramachandran, Public Relations Officer, and the staff members of the PRO Section, for their dedicated service and valuable support.

I will always remember with gratitude the dedicated services rendered by our Medical Team, especially our Medical Officer, Dr Diana C.G., and team, for their care, support, and commitment.

I gratefully acknowledge and place on record my sincere appreciation for the Medical Protocol Wing, which extended all possible assistance and support to me whenever hospital services were required.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon'ble Mr Justice Nitin Madhukar Jamdar, former Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court, for his affection, encouragement, and for entrusting me with the responsibility of serving as Chairman of the Juvenile Justice Committee and the POCSO Committee of the Kerala High Court.

I once again extend my sincere gratitude to the Hon'ble Chief Justice, Mr Justice Soumen Sen, for continuing me in the position of Chairman of these Committees till this day. I am deeply grateful to both their Lordships for the trust and confidence they have reposed in me and for providing me with the opportunity to serve in these important capacities.

I also express my sincere gratitude to Hon'ble Mr Justice Muhammed Mustaque, Chief Justice of the High Court of Sikkim, for his care and hospitality during my visit to Sikkim I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to my first Bench partners following my elevation to the High Court of Karnataka, namely, the Hon'ble Mr Justice Vineeth Kothari, Mr Justice Ravi Vijaykumar Malimath, former Chief Justice of the High Court of Madhya Pradesh; the Hon'ble Mrs Justice B. V. Nagarathna, Judge of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India; the Hon'ble Mr Justice K. N. Phaneendra; and the Hon'ble Mr Justice B. Veerappa. Both are now working as Upa Lokayukta of Karnataka State. They extended their encouragement,

guidance, and support to me when I was a junior Judge on the Bench, for which I remain deeply grateful. I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to Mr Justice B.S.Patil, former Judge of the High Court of Karnataka and present Lokayukta of the High Court of Karnataka.

I also express my heartfelt thanks to Mr Justice Vijaykumar A. Patil, who was my last junior Bench partner at the Kalaburagi Bench of the High Court of Karnataka.

I express my sincere gratitude to His Lordship, the Hon'ble Chief Justice, for the honour of sharing the Ceremonial Bench sitting with him as I demit the office today. I also thank my Bench partners, Mr Justice Johnson John, Mr Justice P.Krishna Kumar, Mr Justice P.V. Balakrishnan and Mr Justice P.M. Manoj of this Court for their co-operation in discharging our judicial responsibilities.

I also extend my sincere gratitude to the members of the Juvenile Justice Committee and the POCSO Committee, namely, the Hon'ble Mr Justice P. V. Kunhikrishnan, the Hon'ble Smt Justice Shoba Annamma Eapen, the Hon'ble Mr Justice Abdul Hakkim, the Hon'ble Mr Justice Muralee Krishna S, and the Member Secretary, Sri Jyothilal, for their valuable co-operation and support in organising and conducting seminars, programmes, and review meetings under the above-said Committees. I deeply appreciate their commitment and collective efforts in ensuring the effective functioning of the Committees and achieving their objectives.

I also extend my sincere gratitude to the Hon'ble Mr Justice Harisankar V. Menon, my colleague and the Portfolio Judge of Kollam District, for his valuable co-operation and support in dealing with administrative matters relating to the Kollam District. I deeply appreciate the mutual understanding and cordiality with which we have worked together in addressing administrative issues and taking decisions in the best interests of the district judiciary.

I extend my gratitude to my previous Principal District Judges at various districts Mrs Bindhukumari V, Kozhikode; Mr Salih, Former Principal District Judge, Palakkad District; Mr P.P. Saidalavi, Former Principal District Judge, Thrissur District; and Mr N.V. Raju, Former Principal District Judge, Kollam District, for their co-operation.

I owe my deepest gratitude to my wife, Lalitha; my children, Vignesh, Vishnu, and Priyadarshini; my daughter-in-law, Dr.Alekhya; her parents Smt Mitha and Amrut Ramarath and family members, Surya Prabha, Gayathri and Venkata Giri, serving in Karnataka Judiciary, and my elder brother, Subramani; my younger brothers, Anniyappa, Ramachandra, and Kannan; my sisters, Vijaya, Nagamma, and Kanaka; my brother-in-law, Jayapal; and my co-brother Sunder who are present here; and my sister-in-law Kausalya; brother-in-law Purushotham and his wife Yamini. Each

one of them has stood for me and supported me throughout my journey in my legal practice and throughout my tenure as a District Judge and subsequently as a Judge of the High Court. They have always respected my judicial responsibilities and supported me without ever allowing family considerations to interfere with the discharge of my duties. They have been my greatest source of strength, encouragement, and support. Even after my transfer to the Kerala High Court, I never felt that I was alone in a new State, as everybody showed love and affection towards me in Kerala.

I also wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my well-wishers, Sri B. V. Ramesh, Sri B. V. Krishnamoorthi, Sri B. V. Mohan, Late Sri Narasimha Shetty, and his wife Smt Lakshmidevi their sons and Mr Vishwanath, Mr Ashok and Mukesh, for providing accommodation to me and my family during my student days and for their continued support and encouragement till this day.

I also extend my gratitude to the late V.Jagadeesh Gowda, who encouragedme while practising.

I also wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my classmates and friends, Sri S. Kumar, Sri Rajendra, Sri Marappa, Sri Nagesh Babu, Sri Balakrishnan, Sri Dhanasekharan, Sri Vivek Jain, who is like my foster son, who is present here. I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to Adv. Ayyavu, Bar Council member for Chennai and Pondicherry, Sri Harish, Bar Council Member, Karnataka; and Sri Koteshwar Rao, Senior Advocate and former member of the Bar Council, of Karnataka, Adv. R.Balaji, who are all present here, and Sri Appajappa, and Sri Ashwathanarayana, for their affection, encouragement, and unwavering support throughout my career as an Advocate as well as a Judge. Their friendship and goodwill have been a constant source of strength and motivation, helping me discharge my duties with dedication and commitment.

I extend my gratitude to my senior, Sri V.Jagadish Gowda, for his support during my practice.

I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to my former Private Secretary, Smt Shoba; my typist, Smt Ambika; Additional P.S. and other personal staff at Karnataka High Court; and my former gunman, Sri Lokesh, as well as his brothers, for their care, concern, and continued support to my family even after my transfer to the Kerala High Court.

I also extend my heartfelt thanks to the personal police guards deployed at my residence in Bengaluru, namely, Sri Narasimhamurthy, Sri Praveen, and Ullappa, for their dedicated service in safeguarding and protecting my family members. I deeply appreciate their commitment and sense of responsibility.

I further express my sincere gratitude to my former chauffeur, Sri Iyanna, the Protocol Officers, and the Registrars of the High Court of Karnataka for their valuable assistance, co-operation, and support during my tenure as a Judge of the High Court of Karnataka and even after my transfer to Kerala.

I would also like to share with you the information that my parents were uneducated; among them, I became the first graduate and first lawyer in my family and thereafter became a District Judge.

I vividly remember that when I secured admission to Law College, many people discouraged me from entering the legal profession. However, my beloved parents, Late Sri Krishnan and Late Smt Bhanumathi, and my other family members stood behind me, encouraged me, and gave me the strength to pursue my dreams. Their unwavering faith in me played a vital role in shaping my life and enabling me to become a law graduate. I owe them an immeasurable debt of gratitude for their love, sacrifices, and encouragement. With their support, I turned all hardships and failures into stepping stones to my success.

I have treated every advocate appearing before me with equal respect and consideration, without discrimination, and have endeavoured to decide every case solely on its merits, in accordance with the law and the principles of justice.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the members of the Bar Associations of various District and Benches for their valuable support and co-operation during my tenure as a Judge of the High Court of Karnataka. The members of the Bar stood behind us when four judges were transferred from Karnataka, and I am very grateful to them. I also express my heartfelt thanks to the members of the Bar Association of the Kerala High Court for their co-operation, support, and encouragement during the past one and a half years of my tenure at this prestigious institution. Their contributions have greatly assisted me in discharging my judicial responsibilities.

Over time, Kerala has become my second home. I also thank Sri Jayakrishna, the Special Commissioner for Sabarimala, for his assistance.

Today, I feel a deep sense of belonging to this beautiful State, where I have found the affection and companionship of my colleagues, whom I consider my brothers and sisters, as well as the support of my staff and numerous judicial officers. I shall always cherish the fond memories of my tenure as a Judge of the Kerala High Court and the opportunity I have had to serve the people of this State.

I also extend my heartfelt gratitude to all judicial officers of Palakkad, Thrissur, Kozhikode, and Kollam Districts for the warmth, love, and affection they have shown me during my visits to these districts in my capacity as Portfolio Judge.

If I hurt anybody, knowingly or unknowingly, please forgive and forget; this could have occurred only while discharging duty and not personally.

Once again, I express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported, encouraged, and guided me throughout this journey. I shall always cherish the memories of my service, the relationships I have built, and the opportunities I have had to serve the cause of justice.

Ellavarkkum Nanni.

Thank you all.

Jai Hind.

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