

(This speech was delivered by Justice Pankaj Mithal on 25.02.2018 in the National Criminal Law Moot Court Competition, 2018 Law Faculty Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh)

Art of Advocacy

My beloved students, the architects of the modern India,
Brother and friend Justice Shashi Kant,
Prof. Zaheeruddin, Dean faculty of law Aligarh Muslim University
Prof. Javed Talib, Chairman Law Deptt. of Aligarh Muslim University
The other faculty members, ladies & gentlemen.

It is said that where there is no law, there is no freedom. Therefore, framing and learning of Laws, both are necessary for the maintenance of freedom of citizens.

It is a very proud and privileged moment for me to be present in this famous premier Institution of Anglo Oriental Education. A visit to this institution is like visiting Oxford and Cambridge of England.

I greatly admire the vision and philanthropy of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in laying the foundation of this great University on the pattern of Oxford and Cambridge in the times when education system in the country was in its infancy.

Many of you may or may not be knowing that a scholarly judicial officer who was posted as sub-judge/small cause courts Judge at Agra came in close contact with Sir Syed who was deeply impressed by his knowledge of law and drafting skills. Together with him the draft constitution was prepared and the foundation of this great institution of learning was laid.

Coincidentally, this sub-judge A.C. Banerji was none else than the father of legendary legal personality of his times Satish Chandra Banerji of Allahabad, who was involved in the drafting of the constitution of Banaras Hindu University founded by Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya.

The father Avinash Chandra Benerji and the son Satish Chandra Benerji both were intellectuals of the highest order; one was instrumental in founding Aligarh Muslim University and the other in Banaras Hindu University.

In this first and short visit of mine, I may not have fathomed the depth of the educational roots of this University nonetheless, I can very

well realise the yeomen services which are being rendered by it.

Its law department seems to have the best of faculty that is helping in inculcating judicial discipline amongst the students. This in turn would be building a strong law abiding nation. Its law department is no less than the top rated Law Universities of India. I wish it and the University the very best and much more recognition to put it in the highest slot.

The faculty of Law of the University has done a tremendous job in organising this Moot Court Competition in collaboration with Surana & Surana as a tribute to Sir Syed, the legendary founder of the University.

The competitive teams have all performed well. The students have worked very hard and their argumentative skills are matchless. I am confident that these new generation law students would rise up to the occasion and check the falling standards of the profession of law and restore it that of a noble profession. But still I would like to give a tip. The art of advocacy lies in arguing facts more when the facts are on your side and to argue more law when the law is your favour.

I know the corporate sector is more attractive and lucrative but still prefer the litigation side for two reasons. First, the profession of law has become more of a business and less of a profession. The new generation, I expect, would stop this commercialisation of this profession. Secondly, with their acute sense of civilization would restore its lost position as a noble profession.

In the end, I thank the organisers of Sir Syed and Surana & Surana National Criminal Law Moot Court Competition, 2018 specially the University, its Vice Chancellor, faculty of Law, students and the competitions. My special thanks to all participants and congratulations to the winning team.

Jai Hind.