

(Speech delivered by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Pankaj Mithal on the occasion of the Post Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Meerut Bar Association at Meerut on 3rd May, 2008)

Hon'ble Chief Guest Justice Tarun Chatterjee,
Judge Supreme Court of India,

My brother Justice Rakesh Tewari,
Judge High Court Allahabad,

Shri B.N. Shukla,
District & Sessions Judge Meerut,

My friend Shri Amrendra Singh,
Chairman, Bar Council U.P.,

Shri Parekh,
President Supreme Court Bar Association,

Leader of Bar Shri V.C. Misra,
President Bar Association Allahabad,

President Meerut Bar Association,

Members of the Meerut Bar,

Judicial Officers,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am overwhelmed to be in the midst of my own people – people who taught me law, people who are friends of my father and shaped my carrier and people who helped me in profession. I thank all of them from the core of my heart.

By today the Meerut Bar Association has lived for 125 Golden years. This is on historic occasion in the annals of the Meerut Bar.

I am happy to be here and to take part in your rejoicings on this festive occasion of completion of 125 years of valuable existence of your Bar. It is a proud moment for everyone connected with it. I thank the members of the Bar for bestowing immense love and affection upon me. I was never a member of

your Bar officially but nonetheless I always considered myself to be one. I am privileged to be associated with it as my grandfather, father and uncle all happened to be its members in the past and even today two of my cousins are still practising law as its members. So I think I can say with proud that I am one of you.

When I stand before you today on this happy and solemn occasion, my thoughts go back in the past when my father and uncle used to practice here. Few portraits of some of the contemporaries of my father who have earned recognition and reputation of good and noble lawyers such as Rajendra Rai Saheb, Data Ram Singhal, Kailash Bansal, SC counsel, G.K.Jain, J.K. Bhatnagar and Moh. Hilyas and many others keep flashing upon my "inward eyes". Apart from these, I have a faint recollection of some of the great stalwarts of Meerut Bar such as Pt. Ganga Dan, Shankar Dayal Ji, Brij Raj Kishori Ji (who passed away recently at Kanpur at the ripe age of 101 years), Raj Narain Saxena, Bade Rai Saheb. Even today there is no dearth of talent in the profession at Meerut.

I am aware of your glorious past but I am more concerned with the present and the future. The reason is the road ahead is strewn with hurdles- people are loosing faith in judiciary for various reasons. Therefore, a giant and a concrete step by the Bar is required to be taken whole heartily to improve the stature of the Advocates and to enhance the reputation of the judiciary, confidence of the people in judiciary has to be rebuilt. A good Bar is the foundation of Temple of Justice. The existence of a fearless

and an independent judiciary is the very basic structure of our constitution. This is not possible in the absence of a strong and a responsible Bar.

Recently, last week only, I visited the district courts of Kannauj and surprisingly I was told that as of practice they never elect the President by ballot. The president is nominated unanimously by the members. This is a very healthy practice as not all decisions can be taken by poll of votes. Therefore, at this occasion I would like to appeal to the members of the Bar to shun elections at-least for the office/post of the President of the Bar Association. The post of President of the Bar should be left to the elderly people at the Bar to be filled up by nomination from amongst its recognised senior members with unanimity. This will certainly add glamour to the office of the President and with his experience and stature such a person would be in a better position to guide and unite the members of the Bar and to take cooperation of the judicial officers also. I hope that the Meerut Bar will take the first stride in this direction.

I earnestly believe the profession of law is still very noble and has tremendous scope. Only a minor change in the attitude of lawyers is needed. I wish the members all success.

Thank you.