

Speech of Hon'ble the Chief Justice in the Full Court Reference held on December 23, 2021, on the sad demise of Justice Tejinder Singh Doabia, former Judge of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

- My esteemed Sister and Brother Judges;
- Learned Advocate General;
- Shri M. K. Bhardwaj, President, J&K High Court Bar Association;
- Learned Senior Advocates;
- Learned ASGI, Jammu;
- Learned Members of the Bar;
- Judicial Officers;
- Officers in the Registry of this Court;
- Family members of Justice Late Tejinder Singh Doabia;
- Members of the Court Staff;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

We have assembled today to express our heartfelt grief and to pay our tribute to the memory of Justice Tejinder Singh Doabia, a former Judge of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, who passed away on 20th December, 2021.

Justice Tejinder Singh Doabia is fondly remembered by the members of the Bar for his great qualities of head and heart. He was a person of great intellect, mild manners and was known for his pleasant behaviour and very good relations with members of the Bar across both wings of this High Court.

Justice Doabia was born on 14th February, 1941, in Lahore in the family of Sh. Harbans Singh Doabia, a lawyer by profession. His parental family had shifted to Shimla in 1947 and thereafter to Chandigarh in 1953. They were among the first settlers in the city of Chandigarh. Justice Doabia received his School education at Senior Model School in Sector-6, Chandigarh. After completing his Law Degree from Panjab University, Chandigarh, he was enrolled as an Advocate in the year 1962. He was elevated as Judge of the High Court of Punjab and Haryana and took oath on 14th February, 1994. Shortly, after his elevation he was transferred as Judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court where he took oath on 2nd March, 1994. Justice Doabia remained as Judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court till 6th December, 1997, whereafter he was transferred as Judge of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir. He took oath as Judge of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir on 11th December, 1997.

During his tenure as Judge of this High Court, Justice Doabia worked tirelessly and disposed of a large number of cases on civil, criminal and constitutional side. He delivered many landmark judgments, among them is the celebrated judgment he co-authored with Justice V. K. Jhanji and Justice Muzzafar Jan, relating to the female residents of Jammu and Kashmir marrying outside and losing all the benefits of property and employment. Such law was declared unconstitutional by the Bench in which Justice Doabia had concurred with the majority opinion. It paved way for females to gain considerable confidence to fight for achieving their rights.

After serving for more than five years as Judge of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir, he laid his robes on 13th February, 2003. After retirement, Justice Doabia started his practice in Law in the Supreme Court of India and continued to be in active practice till his death on 20th December, 2021. He outshined many of his contemporaries in the profession while practicing in the Supreme Court. He represented State of Punjab and many Government Institutions and Corporations before the Supreme Court with considerable success. He was also a much sought after an Arbitrator.

Justice Doabia has authored more than 50 books and commentaries on various subjects of Law, prominent among them being Environmental Laws, Election Laws, Service Laws and Constitutional Law. Justice Doabia is also credited with editing Punjab Local Acts in 17 Volumes and Haryana Local Acts in 14 Volumes.

Justice Doabia is survived by wife Smt. Raghbir Kour and sons Sh. Inderpal Singh Doabia and Sh. Manpreet Singh Doabia, both practicing Advocates. Sh. Inderpal Singh Doabia is presently an Additional Advocate General for the State of Punjab in the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

He was widely respected for his wit, humour and graceful manners. He was able to make a mark on the bench because of his knowledge of law, sharp understanding and quick disposal, and was able to handle difficult cases with ease. He was known for his constant guidance and help to the budding lawyers to achieve excellence in the profession. I understand that as at present there are large numbers of established lawyers in the Bar in the UT of J&K who owe their prominence in the Bar

to the guidance they received from Justice Doabia during their formative days in the profession. With his loss the Bar and the Judiciary both lost a good well wisher.

I, on behalf of my esteemed colleagues on the Bench and on my own behalf mourn the sad demise of Justice Tejinder Singh Doabia and pray to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to his soul and bestow immense strength to the bereaved members of the family to bear the loss.

(Pankaj Mithal)
Chief Justice

As mark of respect to the departed soul, we shall stand in silence for a minute.

The Court work shall remain suspended for the rest of the day.
