

**Full text of the farewell address delivered by
Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India Justice N V Ramana
at the function organised by SCBA**

18 August, 2021

1. Bidding farewell is always a difficult task, particularly when it is of a valued colleague like Brother Justice Navin Sinha.
2. Brother Sinha was born on 19 August 1956 in an extremely reputed family. Brother Sinha's paternal grandfather was the first Advocate General of Bihar, Babu Baldev Sahay, while his maternal grandfather was the Padma Bhushan awardee, Dr. Raghunath Saran, who was personal physician to India's first President Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Brother Sinha's father was a reputed officer, who superannuated as the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Power while his mother was a social worker associated with the Indian Red Cross.
3. The ethic of public service was deeply ingrained in Brother Justice Navin Sinha due to his illustrious background. It is no wonder that, after completing his schooling from St. Xavier's High School in Patna and

graduation from Hindu College, New Delhi, he studied law from the University of Delhi. Brother Sinha enrolled as an advocate in 1979 and practised with great success before the Patna High Court for 23 years in all areas of law including Civil, Constitutional, Service, Commercial and Criminal.

4. Brother Sinha was appointed as a permanent Judge of the Patna High Court on February 11, 2004. He was sworn in as the Chief Justice of the Chhattisgarh High Court on April 09, 2015. On May 14, 2016, he was sworn in as the Chief Justice of the Rajasthan High Court.

5. Brother Sinha was elevated as a Judge of this Court on February 17, 2017. During his tenure, Brother Justice Sinha has penned 114 judgments on diverse topics including Intellectual Property, Criminal Law, and many more. He has disposed of over 13,671 cases in the Supreme Court.

6. This morning we saw the outpouring of love, support and respect for Brother Sinha. All the members of the Bar referred to the humility and simplicity with which he conducted himself. He was also appreciated for his fairness, and the

patience with which he conducted his Court. Juniors and seniors alike were given equal treatment in his Court.

7. An aspect I wish to highlight is that the process of decision making goes beyond the knowledge and application of principle of law. It needs moral courage to render an opinion which might displease many. It is imperative for judges not to be swayed by these external pressures. Brother Sinha is a man of impeccable integrity, strong morals, and the conviction to always stand by his principles. He is fiercely independent and impartial.

8. Impartiality is not an easy quality to possess or apply to the cases before us. We often carry our individual baggage-our biases and prejudices which can unconsciously affect the decision-making process. Our social conditions, upbringing and life experiences often colour our opinions and notions. But, when we adorn the robe of a judge, we must make a conscious effort to cast aside our biases and prejudices. After all, equality, objectivity and even-handedness form crucial aspects of fairness. At the same time, we must not forget the social dimensions that is at the heart of every case before us.

Brother Sinha balanced these issues admirably, and with apparent ease. Brother Sinha truly personified the virtues necessary for a Judge of the Apex Court.

9. A wise statesman had once said, “Doing the right thing is not the problem. Knowing what the right thing is, that’s the challenge.” We judges are often caught in the dilemma of morality versus legality, in our quest to deliver justice. There are multiple sleepless nights, that we go through to resolve such issues. It is often a tight-rope walk, more so, for a Supreme Court judge. Afterall, the Supreme Court is the final arbiter. This was the reason the framers of the Constitution gave Supreme Court the power under Article 142, to render complete justice. This is our sacred duty and a burden that we bear gladly.

10. Brother Sinha carried this burden upon his broad shoulders with ease. In this quest, he always brought forward the humane side of the law.

11. Today I am feeling sad that I am losing such a valued colleague and friend. I am reminded of a famous Sanskrit saying:

काकः कृष्णः पिकः कृष्णः
वसन्तकाले सम्प्राप्ते
काकः काकः पिकः पिकः॥

12. Loosely translated in to English the quote goes:

“A crow and a koyal bird may look alike. Only when testing times come, one reveals its true self.”

I will always be thankful to Brother Sinha for his continued support, through good times and difficult times.

The members of the Bar have presented before Brother Justice Sinha another issue to resolve on the day of retirement. One of them today suggested that Justice Sinha should take-off on a bike whereas another member advised him caution as the roads are not safe in Delhi. Brother Sinha, of course, is capable of addressing this dilemma judiciously.

I thank Mr. Vikas Singh and the Bar Association for standing with the Judges. Their support is much appreciated. The Bench shall reciprocate in equal measure.

13. I am sure Brother Sinha will continue to serve the public even after demitting office from the Supreme Court. I look

forward to his continued contributions. I wish him all the best for all his future endeavours.

14. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Brother Sinha's wife Mrs. Vandana Sinha and family. I wish them the best of health and happiness.

Thank you