

Speech of Hon'ble the Chief Justice in Full Court Reference held on May 03, 2021 on the sad demises of Sh. Rashpal Singh Jamwal and Sh. Narinder Prakash Kotwal, Advocates.

- My esteemed Sister and Brother Judges;
- Learned Advocate General;
- Sh. Surinder Singh, Advocate, Chairman of the Presidium of the J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu;
- Learned Senior Advocates;
- Learned ASGI, Jammu;
- Learned Members of the Bar;
- Judicial Officers;
- Officers of the Registry;
- Members of the bereaved families;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

We are passing through bad times hit by Covid-19 pandemic. Everyone is in distress and fear. During this period we have lost two of our very senior and respected members of the Bar.

We have assembled today in virtual mode to express grief and pay our tribute to the memory of Rashpal Singh Jamwal and Narinder Prakash Kotwal, Advocates of this Court, who passed away on 21st April and 11th April, 2021 respectively.

It is clear from what has been said by Sh. D. C. Raina, Ld. Advocate General and Sh. Surinder Singh, Chairman, Presidium of J&K High Court Bar Association that both of them were not only accomplished lawyers but were also persons with rare and distinguished qualities. Both of them had a wide public acclaim.

Rashpal Singh Jamwal was born on July 08, 1936. He did his schooling in Jammu and graduation in law from Punjab University. He was a Post Graduate in English.

He had started practicing in the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir in the year 1963. He was a known gentleman and a lawyer committed to his professional duties. He had represented various Banks, Insurance Companies in the District Courts and High Court. He served as Central Government Standing Counsel in the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir from September, 2009 till 2014. Apart from being a competent lawyer, he also had keen interest in the welfare of the workers and the labour class. He was a trade union leader. He was widely respected for his mild and graceful manners. Rashpal Singh Jawmal was bold enough to stand up for his convictions. He was known for his constant guidance and help to young lawyers in the profession. I am told that there are large numbers of promising young lawyers in the Jammu Bar, who owe their very existence to the guidance and mentorship of Jamwal. With him, we have lost a friend and a well wisher. The vacuum created by him would be hard to fill up.

Narinder Prakash Kotwal, Advocate, received his early education from his native village at Bhaderwah. He completed his Graduation in the year 1967. He did his Post Graduation in the year 1970 and thereafter obtained his law degree in the year 1972 from Jammu University.

Narinder Prakash Kotwal had joined the chamber of Justice Iqbal Krishan Kotwal and worked with utmost devotion and zeal. He was able to make a mark in the profession by his sheer hard work and knowledge of law. He remained Central Government Standing Counsel for Cantonment Board and Jammu Municipality for a long time.

He was widely respected and was able to handle difficult cases with ease. He had a unique style and led by example to raise the standard of the Bar by exhibiting knowledge, wisdom, fairness and professional commitment. He was an active member

of the Bar and was dedicated to its welfare. He held the post of Secretary and Vice President of Jammu Bar Association.

I am told that beyond his professional commitments Sh. Kotwal had actively participated in social activities. Unfortunately he lost the battle for his life on 11th April, 2021. Sh. Kotwal leaves behind his wife and two sons. It is a matter of great solace that one of the sons Mr. Akash Kotwal is a practicing lawyer of High Court as well as District Court.

On the demise of Sh. Rashpal Singh Jamwal and Sh. Narinder Prakash Kotwal, we have lost noble souls and lawyers of eminence. While their untimely demise is loss to the society at large, it shall be an irretrievable loss to the legal fraternity.

I, on behalf of my esteemed colleagues and on my own behalf express heartfelt condolences on the sad demise of Sh. Rashpal Singh Jamwal and Sh. Narinder Prakash Kotwal and pray to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to their souls and bestow immense strength to the members of the bereaved families to bear the irreparable loss.

Om Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!

**Sd/-
(Pankaj Mithal)
Chief Justice**

We shall stand in silence for a minute as a mark of respect to the departed souls.

The court work will remain suspended for the rest of the day.