

**LATE MR. HOTCHAND G. ADVANI, BAR AT LAW
AND
LATE MR. FIRDAUZ H. TALEYARKHAN, ADVOCATE**

The re-opening of the High Court after the Summer Vacation was marked by a poignant feeling of sadness among the members of the Bar on account of the unfortunate demise of two of its eminent members during the summer vacation. Mr. H. G. Advani, Bar-at-Law had breathed his last in the early hours of 9th May following a massive heart attack. Mr. Firdauz Taleyarkhan died in an unfortunate mountaineering accident in the third week of May 1991.

Late Shri H. G. Advani —

Mr. Advani- 'Dada Hotchand' as he was called by his friends had shifted to Bombay as a result of Partition in 1947 and had by sheer dint of industry and hard work carved out for himself a position of eminence at the Bombay Bar. He was not only an eminent lawyer but an eminent educationist who had started a large number of educational institutions in the city of Bombay.



He was one of those old stalwarts at the Bar who believed that the activities of the lawyers should not be confined merely to the field of law but that they owe a duty to the society at large also. Social service in the educational field had, in later years, almost become his first love. The trust which people reposed in him and regard which they had for him as an elder member of his community manifested itself in the munificent donations which he so easily received sometimes merely for the asking, for starting and running institutions for higher education in different disciplines. Indeed in later life a large part of his own earnings was also given away to charity by him. He

was a father-figure to most among his community to whom they would go for guidance and innumerable are the institutions and persons who have felt orphaned by his death. The bar has lost one of its leading members whose pleasant personality will be seen no more in the corridors of the Court.

A reference was held in the High Court on 20th of June 1991 to the Late Shri H. G. Advani at which glowing tributes were paid to him.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice Shri P. D. Desai speaking at the reference said :

“My colleagues and I are deeply grieved at the sad and sudden demise of Shri Hotchand Gopaldas Advani, a Senior Counsel of this Court, on 9th May 1991.

Shri Advani was born in Hyderabad Sind in 1906. He was educated in Karachi as well as in the King's College, London. He was called to the Bar in 1929. His father, who was a leading legal practitioner of Sind, died soon after late Advani started practice. Although he lost the patronage and guidance of his father in the early days of his professional career, he soon established extensive practice by dint of his ability and industry. Early forties saw him emerging as a leading lawyer of Sind at a comparatively young age.

In the aftermath of partition, he came over to India and settled in Bombay. It was virtually the beginning of the professional career anew but he soon built up lucrative practice on the Original Side of this Court. He was also a member of the Appellate Side Bar and had clientele in the Far East and in the U. K., which he visited during the Court Vacations.

Shri Advani was a man of many parts. He organised one of the early co-operative housing societies on ownership basis in Bombay. He was the Chairman of the Jai Hind Co-operative Bank Ltd., which helped displaced persons to buy homes. He was the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bombay Printers Ltd., publishers of the Sindhi Newspapers — Hindustan Daily and Hindwasi, having countrywide circulation. He was a founder member of the Sindhu Resettlement Corporation and was its Chairman for over 25 years. The Corporation was entrusted with the task of resettling Sindhis in a portion of the barren land of Kutch in which the flourishing town of Gandhidham has since come into existence and the Port of Kandla has developed. Education was a subject very near to his heart. He was the Chairman of the Hyderabad Sind National Collegiate Board which runs many educational Institutions affiliated to the University of Bombay, including two arts and science colleges, two commerce colleges, two law colleges, a pharmacy college, an engineering college and a computer science college.

These are the highlights of the career of a legal luminary who, like the lawyers of the yester years, was active in public life and whose interests were not confined to law alone. He was a loved and respected leader of the Sindhi community and a popular member of the Bar. He had appeared on a few occasions before me and the last appearance was just before the Court closed for the Summer Vacation. His advocacy was persuasive and pleasant.

In his sudden demise this Court has lost a prominent lawyer and the

Bar one of its leading members. On behalf of myself and my colleagues, I extend heartfelt condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

May his soul rest in peace."

Tributes were also paid to the Memory of Mr. H. G. Advani by Shri A. S. Bobde, Advocate General, Shri S. G. Page, Government Pleader, Shri I. M. Chagla, President, Bombay Bar Association, Shri M. V. Paranjape, President, Western India Advocates' Association and Mr. J. R. Gagrati, President, Bombay Incorporated Law Society.

Late Shri F. J. Taleyarkhan, Advocate —

Every one at the Bar was stunned when a news item appeared in the newspapers in the third week of May that while on a mountaineering expedition in the Himalayas Shri Taleyarkhan had fallen into a crevasse from where he could not be rescued and unfortunately his body still lies there covered by ice.

Having commenced his practice in 1973 in the Chamber of Late Mr. R. G. Joshi, Mr. Taleyarkhan soon made a mark at the Bar and was one of those young and upcoming lawyers who at the young age of 41, was heard with respect and attention by the Court. The only son of his parents, he took to the dangerous hobby of mountaineering and had really become an expert mountaineer. Riding and music were his other hobbies but mountaineering was his special love since 1971. He had completed his advanced mountaineering course. He had visited Pindari glaciers and had gone to Gangotri glaciers and the Rohatang Pass. He had joined an expedition for assault on the Manali Peak of over 18000 ft. in height



In the field of law he was extremely active beyond the Court room and he had participated in and contributed to various international conferences

in different parts of the world. He was largely responsible for the success of the World Congress on Law and Medicine as its Secretary-General at New Delhi. He had wished the snow to be his eternal abode and though the Almighty seems to have fulfilled his wish, to those left behind it is an irreparable loss that the career of a versatile lawyer is abruptly cut short at the age of 41 by the icy hand of death.

A reference was held in the High Court to Late Mr. Taleyarkhan on 21st of June 1991.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice Mr. P. D. Desai speaking at the reference said:

"We are assembled here under the shadow of a tragic event — the unexpected and untimely demise of Firdauz Taleyarkhan, a leading lawyer and a versatile person. His passing away has caused great grief and anguish in all circles. The causes are not far to find. He died young, while still in early forties, with a bright future ahead of him. The end came in the distant mountains, in icy solitude, away from the members of his family and the vast circle of his friends. All were caught unawares and could do little to help or assist him. His mortal remains lie deep down in a crevasse entombed amid rocks and glaciers and his near and dear ones could not have even a glimpse of his face. The circumstances surrounding his sudden death have left everyone wondering as to how the mishap could ever have occurred in the case of an experienced mountaineer like him. It is indeed difficult to reconcile ourselves to the cruel fact that he is no more with us.

Late Firdauz Taleyarkhan was born on 12th September 1950 in a family which is well-known. He was educated throughout in Bombay. Having graduated with honours in politics and history from the St. Xavier's College, he joined the Government Law College and graduated in law.

In August 1973, he joined the Bombay High Court Bar on the Original Side. He soon made his mark and gradually rose to prominence and appeared in many leading cases. He was a member of the panel of the Senior Central Government Counsel. He appeared before me in many cases and I found that he was always thoroughly prepared on facts and law and never fumbled or faltered while presenting the case of his client. He had excellent Court manners and his winsome presence and persuasive advocacy were a great professional asset. He was deeply committed to the environmental movement and appeared in several important litigations in defence of the cause. Such was his conviction and commitment to the movement that he reportedly refused several lucrative briefs if the outcome of the litigation would conceivably harm the cause.

His interest in law was not confined to legal practice alone. He was the Secretary of the Bombay Bar Association and held the post for three years. He was an active member of the International Bar Association and also became the Vice-Chairman of its Committee on Administration of Justice. He read papers on diverse subjects in many International Conferences. He was the Secretary-General of the World Congress on Law and Medicine held in New Delhi in February 1985 and successfully organised the Conference.

Late Taleyarkhan was a multi-faceted personality. He was an ardent lover of mountains, an expert rider of horses, a connoisseur of western classical music, a keen student of ancient and contemporary history, art and culture, an accomplished landscape photographer and a zealous supporter of the youth movement. But amongst all his pursuits outside the field of law, the adventurous sport of mountaineering was his first love.

Brother Sukumaran has drawn my attention to a passage in Lord Hailsham's Autobiography — "A Sparrow's Flight" — in which he states — and I quote — "the almost sensuous experience of climbing good rock has never left me". (Unquote). He referred in the book to his permanent love of mountains, snow and ice, rock and glacier, storm and sunshine, and said that to become a member of the Alpine Club, was his great ambition and that he was extremely happy when it was fulfilled by the time of the Second World War. Much the same could be said about late Taleyarkhan. He underwent extensive and advanced mountaineering training; he undertook courses in climbing and in rescue operations both in India and abroad. He climbed many named and unnamed peaks and glaciers and organised numerous mountaineering expeditions and acted as Liaison Officer to quite a few of them. It is indeed tragic that a man who rescued the precious lives of several members of an Austrian Himalayan Expedition with which he was attached as Liaison Officer could not be saved when caught in a mishap.

Late Taleyarkhan has left behind grieving parents who have suffered great shock and distress at the sudden demise. No words can assuage the anguish of their sad bereavement. It may comfort them in some measure to know that by his genial temperament and *bon homie* he had gathered a large circle of friends in different spheres of life and had earned their love and affection, respect and esteem, and that their loss is widely shared. Although he is no more present in person, he will always remain in the thoughts and memory of all who knew him.

We, the members of the judicial family, offer our sincere condolences to the parents and other members of the bereaved family.

May his soul rest in peace."

A poignant reference was made to the various facets of Mr. Taleyarkhan's personality by Shri A. S. Bobde, Advocate General, Shri S. G. Page, Government Pleader, Shri I. M. Chagla, President, Bombay Bar Association, Shri M. V. Paranjape, President, Western India Advocates' Association and Mr. J. R. Gagrati, President, Bombay Incorporated Law Society.
