

MR. P. R. MRIDUL

Reference on the death of Mr. P. R. Mridul, Advocate, in the High Court.

On Thursday, September 27, 1984, the Hon'ble Mr. K. Madhava Reddy, Chief Justice, before starting the day's work, in His Lordship's Courtroom, addressing the members of the Bar and the Attorneys said:—

Mr. Advocate-General, Mr. Government Pleader, President, Western India Advocates' Association and President, Incorporated Law Society:

My colleagues and I have learnt with deep regret and profound sorrow the untimely demise of a former Additional Judge of this High Court, Shri Pushp Raj Mridul.

Born on August 15, 1931, Shri Mridul after his early education at Jodhpur, graduated from the Banaras Hindu University. He took his degree in law from the Bombay University. He was enrolled as an advocate on May 15, 1958 and Senior Advocate of the Bombay High Court on September 11, 1975. He practised both on the Original and Appellate Sides of the High Court.

He was an Additional Judge of this Court from January 3, 1976 to June 20, 1977. He later set up his practice in the Supreme Court of India. I had not known him personally.

We are told, he passed away on September 20, 1984, prematurely at a comparative young age of 53 years at Patna where he had gone on some professional work.

My colleagues and I convey our heartfelt condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

May the Almighty give them the strength to bear this irreparable loss.

Mr. A. V. Sawant, Advocate General said:

My Lord the Chief Justice, Mr. Justice Lentin and Members of the Bar,

It is with deep sorrow that I associate myself with the touching tributes paid by My Lord the Chief Justice to Shri Mridul who breathed his last at Patna last week.

Shri Mridul hailed from Jodhpur and was a self-made man. He qualified for the Master's Degree in Economics from the Rajasthan University in 1951 and later on he graduated in law from the Government Law College, Bombay, and started practising on the Original Side of this High Court in the year 1958. He soon made his mark in the profession and specialised in cases under the Constitutional Law, the Company Law, the Commercial Law and the Arbitration Law. He was in great demand not only in the Bombay High Court but also in other High Courts before his elevation as a Judge of the Bombay High Court in January 1976.

He soon relinquished the said office and joined the Supreme Court Bar and was flooded with briefs not only in the Supreme Court but also in other High Courts. In the Supreme Court also he made his mark in the fields of law in which he had specialised earlier and his contributions in the *Judges' case* is reflected in the judgment of the Supreme Court which makes a special reference to Shri Mridul's arguments. The law reports bear ample testimony to the contribution made by Shri Mridul in the different branches of law. He had rich

experience in connection with several International Arbitrations. He led delegation of lawyers to U.S.S.R., Vietnam and Campuchea.

Shri Mridul was a very lovable person and had not restricted his activities to the field of law alone but had evinced keen interest in the fields of literature, journalism and economics and political science. He was an activist both as a lawyer and as a Judge and both at the Bar and at the Bench he advocated his philosophy fearlessly. Within a short span of his assuming the office of a Judge, he had the courage to deliver a judgment dissenting from his senior colleague on a point under the Administrative Law and incidentally his views were upheld by the third Judge.

It is really unfortunate that such a brilliant career of such a pleasant person should have been cut short so suddenly. It came as a rude shock to everyone at Bombay and I am sure it must have been a greater shock for those at Delhi who knew Shri Mridul intimately in the recent past. Shri Mridul leaves behind him a large number of friends not only in the legal profession but also in other walks of life in the fields of literature, journalism, economics as also political science. In Shri Mridul's death the legal profession has lost a very brilliant lawyer and the society has lost a very charming personality.

May I join My Lord the Chief Justice in praying to the Almighty that may his soul rest in eternal peace !

Mr. M. R. Kotwal, Government Pleader said :

My Lord the Chief Justice and Mr. Justice Lentin,

It is with deep sorrow that I join My Lord the Chief Justice and the learned Advocate General to pay homage to late Shri P. R. Mridul on his premature and tragic passing away.

Born on August-15, 1931, Shri Mridul did his M.A. in Economics from Rajasthan University. Later he took LL.B. Degree from Government Law College, Bombay. Shri Mridul got himself enrolled at the Bar in 1958 and joined the Chamber of Shri M. H. Shah. Later, he set up his own Chamber. He soon made a mark in the profession. Shri Mridul started appearing in the Supreme Court in 1962 and argued his first major appeal in the Supreme Court in 1965. Shri Mridul had appeared in several other High Courts of India in Constitutional and Commercial matters. He appeared before the Full Bench of the Supreme Court constituted to review the *Keshavanand Bharati* case. He had been abroad in connection with several International Arbitrations.

With this rich experience of commercial litigations and constitutional matters, Shri Mridul was appointed a Judge of this Hon'ble High Court from January 3, 1976. This Hon'ble High Court was not fortunate to utilise his rich and vast experience for a long time and he resigned from this high office on June 19, 1977 and joined the Supreme Court Bar.

Soon Shri Mridul accumulated large practice and was always in demand in the Supreme Court and other High Courts. He appeared in the famous case *S. P. Gupta v. President of India* which is known as *Judges'* case.

Only a few days back when I had been to Delhi, I had an opportunity to meet him and enjoy his hospitality and I never thought that he will not meet me again.

His untimely death is a terrible blow to his whole family.

My Lords, in his death, we have lost a good and distinguished lawyer. Let us all pray to God to give peace to the departed soul.

Mr. J. P. Thacker, President, Bombay Incorporated Law Society said :

On behalf of the Bombay Incorporated Law Society and on my own behalf I wish to join Your Lordship and my learned friends in paying tribute to Shri Mridul.

We assemble today to mourn the sad and rather premature demise of Shri Mridul.

His amicable nature will be hard to forget. He was singularly kind and courteous to all he met. His clarity of thought was an asset not only for himself but to the Judges before whom he appeared.

As a Judge of this Hon'ble Court, though for a short spell of time, he gave satisfaction alike to the Bar and the litigating public.

It was to be expected that such a many sided personality could not sometimes escape controversy, but that was because he enjoyed being at the centre of debate.

Many friends, and I was one of them, will remember him with respect and affection.

In spite of his many activities and large practice, he always gave the impression that he had enough time to spare and he was always ready to help.

I conclude with a prayer to Almighty that the departed soul may rest in eternal peace and God may give courage and fortitude to the bereaved members of his family to bear this irreparable loss.
