

REFERENCE MADE BY THE HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE SHRI M.B. SHAH TO LATE SHRI NIJAGUNI BABANNA NAIK AND LATE SHRI PANDURANG VISHNU NIRGUDKAR, FORMER JUDGES OF THE BOMBAY HIGH COURT, ON FRIDAY, THE 17TH OCTOBER 1997.

Brother Gundewar, Mr. Bal Apte, Additional Advocate-General of Maharashtra, and Chairman of the Bar Council of Maharashtra and Goa, Mr. I.M. Chagla, President of the Bombay Bar Association, Mr. Dilip Bhosale, President of the Advocates' Association of Western India, Mr. A.A. Kajiji, President of the Incorporated Law Society, learned Members of the Bar, Ladies & Gentlemen,

We are assembling again within a few days to mourn the untimely death of yet other two Judges of this Court, Shri Justice Nijaguni Babanna Naik, who passed away on the 12th October 1997 at the ripe age of 80 years and Shri Justice Pandurang Vishnu Nirgudkar, who passed away on 9th October 1997 at the age of 69 years. Both have served the Judiciary and the society for number of years.

Late Justice Naik was born on 10th May 1917. He had his school and college education at G.A. High School, Belgaum, Lingra College, Belgaum, Saiks Law College, Kolhapur, and Raja Lakhamagouda Law College, Belgaum, respectively. He was enrolled as a District Pleader on 7th September 1940. Justice Naik was selected as a Civil Judge, Junior Division, on 23rd December 1944 by Justice Leonard Stone, the last pre-independence Chief Justice of this High Court. Shri Naik served as a Judge of the Court of Small Causes at Bombay from 15th December 1954 to February 1955; was appointed as Assistant Judge in July 1956; served as a Special Officer in the Inspection Branch of this Court from 6th April 1960 to 9th August 1960.

Late Shri Naik was appointed as District & Sessions Judge in August 1960; he served as Judge, City Civil & Sessions Court for Greater Bombay from 4th April 1966 to 10th July 1967.

Shri Naik was appointed as an Additional Judge of this Court on 14th December 1972 and, after an illustrious career of seven years, retired on 10th May 1979. Justice Naik was known as a very disciplined man with firm principles and had keen desire to do social justice.

After retirement, Justice Naik led an active life. In 1979, he headed the Commission of Enquiry, Deonar Govandi Slum Riots; in 1980-81 he headed the Pay Commission known as Naik Pay Commission; and during 1979-92 he was on the Advisory Board under the Slumlords and Bootleggers Act.

After a brief illness, Justice Naik has now departed for his heavenly abode. In the death of Justice Naik, the legal world has lost an eminent person who was widely respected and loved by all those who came in contact with him.

Justice Naik is survived by his wife Smt. Prabhadevi, sons Bhimrao Naik, Madan Naik and Dr. A.N. Naik and daughters Geeta, Sobha and Sheela. His eldest son Bhimrao and grandsons Vineet and Amit are practising lawyers and are continuing the legal tradition.

Late Justice Pandurang Vishnu Nirgudkar was born on the 11th August, 1928. He had his school and college education at New School, Junnar, District Pune, Khalsa College, Bombay, and Law College, Pune, respectively. He was enrolled as an Advocate of this

High Court in November 1950; he started his practice at Junnar and Pune; he was appointed as Civil Judge, Junior Division, on 9th October 1958; was promoted as Assistant Judge in 1968 and worked in that capacity upto June 1973. He was appointed Joint Judge at Aurangabad on 1st May 1975 and became the District Judge at Satara in the year 1977. Later, in 1979, he was appointed as the Commissioner to inquire into the Kopara Dam Police Firing.

~~Late Shri Nirgudkar was appointed as an Additional~~
Judge of this Court on 21st November 1986 and a permanent Judge on 2nd November 1989. Justice Nirgudkar retired on 11th August 1990. I am told that his judicial career manifested independence of thought and an untiring capacity for hardwork. During his relatively short span of four years as a Judge of this Court, with his industry and legal attainment, Justice Nirgudkar earned the goodwill of the members of the Bar and the Bench.

On behalf of my Brother Judges and myself, I extend our heart-felt condolences to the members of both the bereaved families.