

**XV ENDOWMENT LECTURE ON  
'PROTECTION OF WOMEN AGAINST ATROCITIES:  
LEGAL REMEDIES AND JUDICIAL RESPONSE'  
- PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS BY HON'BLE CHIEF JUSTICE -  
07.11.2013**

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Respected My Lord Hon'ble Mr.Justice S.J. Mukhopadhaya and Hon'ble Mr. Justice F.M. Ibrahim Kalifulla, Judges, Supreme Court of India, my sister and brother Judges, learned Advocate General, Additional Solicitors General of India, Additional Advocates General, President and Secretary of Madras Bar Association, Trustees of S. Viswanathan & B.R. Dolia Lecture Endowment Trust, Senior Advocates, Advocates, ladies and gentlemen,

Good Evening to all of you,

I thank the organisers for having given an opportunity to speak a few words in this Lecture series,

I had an occasion to go through the contributions made by Mr.S.Viswanathan, who was a successful lawyer and a close associate of Mr.R.Venkataraman, former President of India. Mr.B.R. Dolia, a Junior to Mr.S.Viswanathan had made

commendable contributions for the development of labour law. They were founder Editors of Labour Law Journal.

The 15<sup>th</sup> Endowment Lecture on the topic 'Protection of Women Against Atrocities: Legal Remedies and Judicial Response' is well timed as the people, especially the womenfolk, should be made aware of their rights and ways to exercise their rights. Hon'ble Mr. Justice S.J. Mukhopadhaya is a pioneer in protecting the interest of the womenfolk in our country as His Lordship, sitting with Hon'ble Mr. Justice R.M. Lodha, had recently come down heavily on the recurrent acid attacks on women and directed the Cabinet to prepare a new scheme to curb attacks and provide support to victims. Coincidentally, it was on this day in the year 1893 that the State of Colorado in the US granted women's suffrage.

The tragic incident in Delhi 11 months back is still in our minds and the whole nation felt the pain suffered by the victim. That incident was in the front page and was in the centre of every discourse, college students' discussion etc. It brought in Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 amending provisions related to sexual offences. Unfortunately, crime against

women seem to be unabated and continues even thereafter as can be seen from the recent incident in Mumbai.

Lack of knowledge of their rights and the remedies available to them make most women suffer atrocities silently and what we are seeing may be only a tip of the iceberg.

The Government acted swiftly and formed Special Courts to try offences against women. In fact, the Government of Tamil Nadu has sanctioned 22 Mobile Courts, one in each district, to deal with cases relating to women. On 23.8.2013, the High Court issued directions to all the Presiding Officers of the Special Courts/Regular Courts to ensure that cases relating to women be fast tracked and be taken up for hearing and disposed of on priority basis. The results have been encouraging and disposal rate of these cases has increased.

Women have a special place in the society and they should be given proper protection against the perpetrators of heinous crimes. On the side of the Judiciary, what we can do is to expedite the trial of those cases and ensure that the culprits

are brought to book. Swift punishment is the only deterrent to guard against this type of offences.

Like all of you, I am also eager to hear what His Lordship has to say on this subject and I resume my seat,

Thank you once again,