

**ADDRESS BY
HON'BLE SRI JUSTICE RAJESH KUMAR AGRAWAL,
ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE,
IN REPLY TO THE WELCOME ADDRESS.
MADRAS HIGH COURT – 07.02.2013**

Vanakkam.

My esteemed Brother and Sister Judges, my colleagues from the Allahabad High Court, the Advocate General, the Additional Solicitors General of India, President and other Office bearers of the various advocates associations, Senior Advocates, members from the Bar, Judicial Officers, Officers and staff of the High Court Registry, ladies and gentlemen,

Let me begin by saying Mikka Nandri (Thank you) for welcoming me so warmly to Chennai.

I am reminded of a story associated with the settling down of Parsis in India. It is said that when the Parsis first arrived to the Court of King Jadi Rana in present day Gujarat and requested asylum, the King was not willing to accept them in his kingdom. Since language barriers prevented the King from properly communicating with the Parsis, he put forward a glass full of milk before the Parsis, to tell them he had no space for them. In response, one of the Parsis added a pinch of sugar to the milk, to show the King that they would not make his kingdom overflow but would add to its richness. It is said that this gesture won the heart of the King, who then permitted the Parsis to permanently settle in his kingdom.

I hope that you all will treat me as the humble Parsis, and give me a place in your hearts. During my tenure, I hope to imbibe your rich culture and conduct.

I am aware of the great heritage of the Madras High Court. Tallest leaders of the Bar have walked its corridors for more than 150 years; this Court has produced some of the greatest Judges India has ever had. But much as the past achievements give us great pride, they cast a greater responsibility upon us to continuously improve ourselves and lift those achievements even higher. Adding to the glory of this Court, not only maintaining it, is our collective responsibility. We all know that an institution is revered not because of the bald structure in brick and mortar, but because of the deeds of the persons who constitute it, and the manner in which those deeds serve the public at large. Each one of us must commit to add to the richness of this institution. We must ensure that the Madras High Court retains its pre-eminent position as a seat of justice, and for that, both the Bench and the Bar will have to work together.

I may remind my Brothers and Sisters on the Bench about what Socrates said is our bounden duty: that a Judge must hear courteously, answer wisely, consider soberly, and decide impartially.

But I must invite attention of the members of the Bar to a simple fact: all of what we do at the Bench is really dependent upon your work at the Bar. We hear and consider what you submit. Unless you, through your diligence and sincere work, give us the necessary assistance, we cannot answer wisely. Our wisdom is dependent upon your advice. Our judgments reflect the assistance we have received at the Bar.

I may only say that you have amongst you, some of the finest legal professionals in the country. When I read some of the judgments delivered by this Court in the law journals, I greatly admire the ingenuity of some of the arguments and appreciate the thoroughness with which they have been addressed in the judgments.

I only wish to play my part in upholding the high traditions of this Court, and hope that we will, together, continue on this path to progress.

Nandri. Vanakkam.
