

Manepalli Narayana Rao Venkatachaliah



M.N. Venkatachaliah was born on October 25, 1929 in the then Mysore State of South India. He began to perceive judicial behaviour standards only at the age of 21 years and Shri Venkatachaliah believed in human rights in a large philosophical context and upheld judiciary above corruption.

Shri Venkatachaliah took his early education in the old State of Mysore where he also completed his Bachelor's degree in Science and Bachelor's degree in law from the University of Mysore. His career as a lawyer commenced in the year 1951. Later on, he was appointed permanent Judge of the High Court of Karnataka w.e.f. November 6, 1975. After the completion of about twelve years of his excellent service, he availed himself a golden chance of becoming one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of India on October 10, 1987. As a judge of the Supreme Court he was very successful and became a very prominent figure in the state of Karnataka and at last his dream came true when he was appointed as Chief Justice of India on February 12, 1993 and he retired from this position on October 24, 1994.

After retirement, he continued to work on anti-corruption and human rights issues. He observed that there were glaring human rights violations in our country. Shri Venkatachaliah believed that "every Indian must have access to education, health sanitation and other fundamental rights which go into the making of a good citizen. If we are able to produce good citizens, there will be no human rights violations". In an interview by a journalist, while he was asked if Judiciary had also been affected by corruption, he gave a judicious reply that " by and large, the higher judiciary is above corruption. Some lapses in judicial behaviour standards we do find but we can't throw away the baby along with the bath water".

He was certainly an expert in matters of law and administration. While heading the state Anti-corruption body known as 'Lokayukta' he made noteworthy contribution in its functioning. Due to his continuous efforts on human rights issues and anti-corruption, he was awarded Padma Vibhushan on June 30, 2004.

During his tenure as the Chairperson of Human Rights Commission, he came to the Indian Statistical Institute to deliver its 32nd Annual Convocation Address on June 29, 1998 and he emphasized essential features of statistical science.

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