

FULL TEXT OF THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY
HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA SHRI JUSTICE N V RAMANA
AT THE FELICITATION FUNCTION ORGANISED BY SCBA
IN HONOUR OF HON'BLE VICE-PRESIDENT OF INDIA
SHRI JAGDEEP DHANKHAR
SUPREME COURT AUDITORIUM, NEW DELHI
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Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar has always had a deep connect with the people. He has lived shoulder to shoulder with the common man. He had humble beginnings. He is son of a farmer. He used to walk six kilometers from his village to attend his school. All through, he maintained live contact with his roots. Simplicity and hard work, which are synonymous with rural life, are his constant companions. It is on the strength of our democracy that Shri Dhankhar ji could reach the second highest office in the country, in spite of hailing from rural background and without political father or Godfather. His elevation is a tribute to our healthy democratic traditions and rich constitutional values. It is testimony to the fact that our progressive Constitution provides opportunities to all, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, region and financial status.

On every possible occasion I keep mentioning about the great contribution made by our legal community in our freedom struggle and in framing of the Constitution. In the constituent assembly and in the early days of our Parliament, the House was dominated by legal professionals. As a result, we got outstanding Constitution and flawless laws. Now a days the number of lawyers has dwindled and that space is taken by others. I do not want to comment any further. With Shri Dhankhar ji's experience and guidance from the Office of Hon'ble Chairman, I hope and believe that the quality of laws would certainly improve.

On behalf of entire judicial community and on my own behalf, I congratulate Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar ji on assuming the office of Vice-President of India.

It gives us immense joy that someone from the legal fraternity has reached such a position. Despite being a first generation legal professional, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar achieved great heights in the field. He made a prominent name for himself and made his presence felt in the court room. His talent was soon recognised, and he was designated as a senior advocate in the Rajasthan High Court in 1990. Shri Dhankhar became the youngest president of the Rajasthan High Court Bar Association.

I had the occasion to listen to his erudite arguments in the entry tax matter as a member of the 9 Judge Constitution Bench and a host of other matters. His passion and commitment to the causes he champions while assisting the court are remarkable. His rich legal experience brings with it the promise of upholding and furthering constitutional values while discharging the duties of high Constitutional Office.

Legal education, practice and acquaintance with justice system exposes one to many social realities and gives a deeper understanding of rule of law and equity. Someone with all these learnings entering high office is certainly a value addition.

Sri Jagdeep Dhankhar is known to have a proactive approach. Be it as a lawyer, as an elected representative, as a minister or as a Governor till recently, he made a mark through his proactive approach.

Unlike the offices he held so far, the high office of Vice-President comes with far greater responsibilities. During his tenure, Shri Dhankhar will have the unique and challenging opportunity to ensure smooth functioning of the Rajya Sabha as its ex-officio Chairman. This calls for harmonizing the interests of all sides of the House. I know, it is not easy to satisfy each Hon'ble Member of the House. But, I am confident that with his rich court craft and exposure in diverse fields, Shri Dhankhar ji will definitely manage to take along all sections of the House. His past experience as Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs in 1990s would greatly contribute during his new stint as the chairman of the Rajya Sabha. Very soon I am going to retire, and I hope to watch on television, quality debates in Rajya Sabha being presided over by Shri Dhankhar ji.

The streak of humbleness remains intact in Shri Dhankhar ji personality even today. This program to honour Shri Dhankhar ji was originally planned by the Supreme Court Bar Association for 16th of August after ascertaining convenience of all, including me. Subsequently, due to unavoidable circumstances, I asked SCBA to request Shri Dhankhar ji for change of date, if possible. He was very kind to readily agree for change as requested by me. Thank you, Vice-President Sir, for agreeing to accommodate us on a new date in your busy schedule.

I once again congratulate Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar ji on assuming the office of Vice-President of India and I wish him very best for his tenure and for logical career progression.

Thank you.