Mr Milon K. Banerji, Attorney General for India and other Law Officers, Mr P.H. Parekh, President of the Supreme Court Bar Association and other office-bearers of the Association, learned members of the Bar, ladies and gentlemen.

My Sister and Brother Judges join me in sharing your deep sorrow and grief at the very sad demise of Shri G.L. Sanghi, Senior Advocate. When this Court closed for winter holidays in December last, one never thought that Shri G.L. Sanghi who till then was regularly appearing everyday in large number of cases, will be no more on the reopening of the Court. Accompanied by his wife Mrs Prem Lata Sanghi, he left for USA on 20.12.2005 to meet the family of his younger son Mr Vivek Sanghi. The couple intended to return together, but Mrs Sanghi was persuaded by their younger son Vivek to stay back with him for some more time. During return flight all of a sudden Shri Sanghi vomited and a cardiac arrest followed, a doctor on board tried to revive him but couldn't. The flight was diverted to Winnipeg in Canada, where he was taken to a hospital and declared dead on 6-1-2006. Some say that departure from this world is easier and less painful when it is sudden and near and dear ones are not closeby. At that time, Mr Sanghi was as close to the sky as possible.

Son of Shri V.K. Sanghi, a leading Advocate of Nagpur, late Shri G.L. Sanghi was born on 3-4-1932 in Jabalpur. His family shifted to Nagpur in the year 1940, when a Bench of the High Court was set up in that city. After graduating in Law in the year 1955 and obtaining a Master's degree in Political Science in the year 1956 from Nagpur University, he entered the Bar on 25-11-1957 and joined the office of Shri A.S. Bobde, who later became the Advocate General of Maharashtra. It was at the persuasion of Shri Bobde that he shifted to Delhi in 1965.

Hard work, sincerity of purpose, sound knowledge of law and the legal acumen, which he possessed in abundance, soon enabled Shri Sanghi to develop a large practice and acquire a position of eminence at the Bar. It did not take long for this Court to recognise his all-round merit and designate him as Senior Advocate on 10-3-1975. We, the Judges of this Court, had occasion to see him appear before us in various cases and were deeply impressed by the manner in which he made his points, and the courtesy which invariably accompanied his forensic abilities. Late Shri Sanghi would make intensive preparations of the case and an incisive study of the relevant case-law. Always soft-spoken and very articulate, his conceptualisation of the real points involved in the case was expressed with admirable brevity.

He was able to score over his opponents by the sheer power of his logical reasoning, careful analysis and clarity of thought. We never saw him agitated and his appearance in the Court prominently exhibited his calm and cool temperament.

Late Shri Sanghi assisted the Court a great deal in the interpretation of several constitutional provisions. The learned Attorney General has referred to some of the prominent cases in which he assisted this Court. He also assisted the Court in Kesavananda Bharati case1 Other cases include Samsher Singh v. State of Punjab2 where it was held that the appointment as well as removal of members of subordinate judicial service is an executive action of the Governor to be exercised on the advice and advice of the Council of Ministers in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and that the members of the subordinate judiciary are not only under the control but also under the care and custody of the High Court; P.N. Eswara Iyer v. Registrar, Supreme Court of India8 in which this Court upheld the constitutional validity of the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951 and Section 3 of the Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Act, 1955 holding that they do not damage any of the basic essential features of the Constitution or its basic structure; and P.N. Eswara Iyer v. Registrar, Supreme Court of India8 in which this Court upheld nationalisation of stage carriages and contract carriages in the State of Tamil Nadu; D.S. Nakara case3 in which this Court recognised grant of pension as a matter of right; Calcutta Tanneries case4 in which closure of tanneries in the city of Calcutta was directed; State of Haryana v. Suman Enterprises5 where this Court held that the State Government by an executive order was competent to ban the sale of tickets of lotteries authorised by other States but not of lotteries organised by them; State of T.N. v. L. Abu Kavur Bai6 where this Court upheld nationalisation of stage carriages and contract carriages in the State of Tamil Nadu; Waman Rao v. Union of India7 in which this Court upheld the constitutional validity of the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951 and Section 3 of the Constitution (Fourth Amendment) Act, 1955 holding that they do not damage any of the basic essential features of the Constitution or its basic structure; and P.N. Eswara Iyer v. Registrar, Supreme Court of India8 in which this Court upheld the amendment of Rules 2 and 3 of Order 40 of the Supreme Court Rules, 1966, so as to provide for disposal of the review petition by circulation without oral arguments.

Late Shri Sanghi was not only a distinguished lawyer but also a good human being. He possessed a rare combination of unquestionable integrity, sterling character and high moral values. He maintained the highest standards in his professional as well as personal life. He was a symbol of courtesy and culture, both inside as well as outside the Court. Modest, simple and unassuming, he always tried to help those who sought legal assistance from him irrespective of whether they were in a position to pay the fee commensurate with his standing or not. He always encouraged young entrants and juniors in the legal profession.

The great qualities of Shri Sanghi, including his warm, caring nature, deep commitments to the society, the causes he pursued were briefly narrated by my esteemed colleague Justice B.N. Srikrishna, Shri Soli Sorabji and Mr P.P. Rao at a prayer meeting. I may mention how he was instrumental in helping NALSAR in giving practical shape to a scheme being...
worked out to supply law books to lawyers practising at the Taluka level. In some connection Shri Sanghi met me and
discussion started on the aspect of lack of proper facility of law books to lawyers practising at the Taluka level and the
duties of affluent lawyers to pay back something to the profession. In no time, came from Mr Sanghi a cheque of rupees
five lakhs as contribution to the National Legal Aid Fund? Shri Sanghi was the first one to take lead.

Late Shri Sanghi is survived by his father Shri V.K. Sanghi, who is about 100 years old, his wife Mrs Prem Lata Sanghi,
eldest daughter Mrs Vasudha Rohatgi, who is married to Shri Mukul Rohatgi. Senior Advocate, younger daughter Dr.
Veena Agarwal, who is married to Dr. K.K. Agarwal, a renowned Cardiologist of Delhi, elder son Shri Vipin Sanghi, a
Senior Advocate and his younger son Shri Vivek Sanghi, who is a Computer Engineer settled in USA.

In the death of late Shri Sanghi we have lost not only a leading member of the Bar but also a very good human being.
His absence would be felt for a long time to come, both, by the Bench as well as the Bar. My Sister and Brethren Judges
endorse the feelings and sentiments expressed by the learned Attorney General for India and the President of the
Supreme Court Bar Association and join them in conveying our heartfelt condolences to the grief-stricken family. May
Almighty God give courage to them to bear this irreparable loss and may the departed soul rest in peace.

ADDRESS BY MILON K. BANERJI***

Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India Justice Y.K. Sabharwal; Hon'ble Judges of the Supreme Court; the President Shri P.H.
Parekh and members of the Executive Committee of the Supreme Court Bar Association; my colleagues, the Solicitor
General and Additional Solicitors General of India, ladies and gentlemen of the Bar.

We meet today to mourn the passing away of one of the most illustrious leaders of our Bar for several decades, Shri G.L.
Sanghi. It was indeed my privilege to have come into close touch and enjoy the friendship of Shri Sanghi from the very
time I shifted to Delhi as a Law Officer in the year 1979.

So much so that with regard to some private cases in which I had been appearing in the Supreme Court and on being
appointed a Law Officer which I was no long entitled to handle, I turned to Shri G.L. Sanghi for help, Shri Sanghi readily
obliged and successfully dealt with those cases. I was recently reminded about these events on the day of cremation last
week by Justice U.C. Banerjee who came from Kolkata for a few hours just to attend the cremation.

Shri Sanghi met his maker under most unfortunate circumstances while returning to India from a visit to see his newborn
grandchild. The plane in which he was travelling was diverted due to his illness, but could not land in time for him to be
taken to the hospital. One is reminded of the great poet John Donne's words: "Death be not proud, though some have
called thee mighty and dreadful for thou art not so."

Shri Sanghi was born on 3-4-1932. He obtained his degree of Bachelor of Law in 1955 from Nagpur University and
Master's degree in Political Science in 1956. Thereafter he taught Political Science in Nagpur. He enrolled as an
advocate on 25-11-1957. Soon he decided to practice in the Supreme Court and since then had been appearing in many
matters in different jurisdictions. He was appointed by the Government of India as Standing Counsel at the Supreme
Court of India in 1974 and designated as Senior Advocate by the Supreme Court of India in 1976, a rare early honour.
Shri Sanghi’s practice covered the Supreme Court of India and many High Courts in various branches of civil,
constitutional and commercial laws including intellectual property law, arbitration law and personal laws, maritime law,
matri monial laws, fundamental rights, Arbitration and Conciliation Act cases, etc. There are numerous reported leading
judgments of the Supreme Court and the High Courts â€“ argued by him which have appeared in almost every law journal.

Shri Sanghi, an excellent and popular lawyer, would forever be remembered for his unrelenting persuasive skill. This was
clearly demonstrated if one watched him in Court, exhibiting all the different facets of persuasion even if the Court would
not be easily persuaded by his unrelenting efforts. He never lost hope that there was some way in which he might
succeed in finding an argument which may appeal to the Court. I am informed that the search of data on SCC Online
would show that there are more than 700 cases decided by this Hon'ble Court in which Shri Sanghi had appeared â€“
a glorious record indeed. There is hardly any branch of law which has been left untouched by Shri Sanghi. His contribution
has been immense in the development of law.

It is not simply possible to refer to or even categorise the important cases argued by Shri Sanghi. Nevertheless one may
mention a few recent ones. These are Sri Jayendra Saraswathy case â€“ Sankaracharya of Kanchi case9, Cow Slaughter
case10 â€“ (State of Gujarat v. Mirzapur Moti Kureshi Kassab Jamat), Noise Pollution case, In re11 â€“ the famous case in
which the Supreme Court has, inter alia, held that freedom from noise pollution is a fundamental right. This is one of
those cases by which the Supreme Court has attempted to regulate bursting of firecrackers, playing of loudspeakers, etc.
in public place, BALCO Employees’ Union case12 dealing with challenge to the disinvestment policy of the Government
and Steel Authority of India Ltd. v. National Union Waterfront Workers13 dealing with the abolition of contract labour law.
Apart from his excellence in Court, Shri Sanghi was associated with the well-known organisation LAWASIA of which he was the immediate past President; he was Vice-President of the Bar Association of India; President of the Indian Association of Lawyers (Delhi Chapter); President of SEARCH (an NGO consisting of retired High Court Judges, lawyers, medical practitioners and journalists), Vice-President of Heart Care Foundation of India; Vice-President of United Lawyers' Association and an Ex-Director, Punjab National Bank, Asset Management Company Ltd. Shri Sanghi has also been an author of many articles.

Upon his passing, the Bar has lost a kind and friendly person, a person, who was always smiling and saying good things about people, never a bad word, always encouraging youngsters. I remember his telling me quite often how well some young lawyers were doing and what a bright future they had. The Court has lost a lawyer of integrity and excellence. The city of Delhi and the country has lost an advocate of great eminence. A void which will be difficult to fill.

Of him, it can be truly said that his life was gentle and the elements so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all the world: This was a man!

Shri Sanghi leaves behind his father Shri V.K. Sanghi, Advocate, who has crossed his 100th year, a poignant situation indeed; his wife, his son Shri Vipin Sanghi, Senior Advocate; his elder daughter Smt Vasudha Rohatgi, Advocate; his son-in-law Shri Mukul Rohatgi, Senior Advocate; his younger daughter Dr. Veena Agarwal and his son-in-law Dr. K.K. Agarwal. We all join in their grief and of all other members of the family and pray for the peace of the departed soul.

ADDRESS BY P.H. PAREKH****

Hon'ble Mr Justice Y.K. Sabharwal, the Chief Justice of India, Hon'ble Judges of the Supreme Court of India, Mr Milon Banerji, the learned Attorney General for India and his colleagues, the Solicitor General and Additional Solicitors General, the office-bearers of SCBA, my colleagues at the Bar, ladies and gentlemen.

Mr G.L. Sanghi's karmabhoomi was this Hon'ble Court. He was enrolled on 25-11-1957 with the Bar Council and started practising in Nagpur. On 8-9-1959, he became a member of the Supreme Court Bar Association as he used to visit Delhi during those days. However, he shifted to Delhi in 1965. Mr Sanghi practised in this Court for more than 40 years and was a member of the Supreme Court Bar Association for more than 46 years. There are very few who come to this Court as junior advocates and reach the top. Normally, the members of the Supreme Court Bar Association who reach the top are those who have done very well in their respective High Courts or who practice here after retirement as Judges of High Courts or who come to Delhi as Law Officers. Mr Sanghi was an exception to this.

Soon after shifting to Delhi, Mr Sanghi started getting good work as a junior counsel. When I shifted to this Hon'ble Court in 1969, Mr Sanghi was much in demand as a junior counsel. I first met Mr Sanghi at the residence of my senior, the late Mr H.R. Gokhale, who was fond of competent junior members and used to encourage them. As Law Minister, Mr Gokhale appointed Mr Sanghi in the Central Government panel in this Hon'ble Court in 1974. In 1975, he was designated as a Senior Advocate by this Hon'ble Court.

Mr Sanghi came up by dint of sheer hard work. As a Senior Advocate, he used to prepare thoroughly and conferences held with Advocates-on-Record were only to clarify the doubts he had or to seek some additional information.

The veritable sea of humanity including his friends, admirers and well-wishers from the Bar, Bench and from several other fields, who were present at the Nigambodh Ghat to attend the cremation on the 9th of this month and at the prayer meeting at Neeti Bagh Club on the 12th of this month shows how much love, regard and affection he enjoyed with all.

Mr Sanghi and I used to interact with each other also as residents of Neeti Bagh. Mr Sanghi used to take very keen interest in the activities of the Neeti Bagh Housing Society and the Neeti Bagh Club. He was the President of the Neeti Bagh Society twice and even thereafter his guidance and help was always available to the Neeti Bagh residents.

In the year 1991, Chief Justice M.N. Venkatachaliah inaugurated the Delhi Centre of Kaivalyadhama Lonavala at the Neeti Bagh Club and yoga classes were conducted in the Neeti Bagh Club. Mr Sanghi used to attend yoga classes at the Neeti Bagh Club in the year 1991 on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. In 1996, Mr Sanghi told me that he would like to have a yoga teacher to teach him yoga everyday at his house. I requested my yoga guru Shri J.P. Dauneria of Kaivalyadhama to teach Mr Sanghi and he did continue learning for about 6 months.

After being elected as the President, I had requested Mr Sanghi to make some contribution to SCBA. Mr Sanghi readily sent a cheque of Rs 1 lakh on 17-8-2004. When I asked him to give some indication as to for what purpose he would like the contribution to be utilised by SCBA, he told me that he wanted it to be utilised for replenishing the Bar library,
especially for purchasing bare Acts and we used it accordingly.

Mr Sanghi had been elected as the President of LAWASIA in the LAWASIA Council meeting held at Bangkok on 14-10-2002. Each country has one vote. As the Country Councillor from India, I was the voter and proposed his name for the post of President. He became President elect one year before taking over as the President.

He took over from Mr Gordon Hughes of Australia as the President of LAWASIA at the 18th Biennial Conference of LAWASIA held from 1.9.2003 to 5-9-2003 in Tokyo, Japan and relinquished the charge at the 19th Biennial Conference held at Gold Coast, Australia from 20.3.2005 to 24.3-2005 to Mr Jung Hoon Lee of South Korea. Mr Sanghi was the last President of LAWASIA to hold office for a two years' term as thereafter, the term has been reduced to one year.

Mr Sanghi devoted a lot of time, money, energy and attention to the activities of LAWASIA. He visited a large number of countries including places where LAWASIA was not there and created an awareness and enrolled more members. During his term some new countries joined LAWASIA. I had the opportunity of travelling with him for many international conferences, the last one being in Vietnam on 7-10-2005 and 8.10-2005 and before that to attend the XVIth Congress of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers held from 7-6-2005 to 11-6-2005 in Paris, where Mr Jitender Sharma a senior member of our Association was re-elected as the President of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers.

Mr G.L. Sanghi and Mrs Prem Lata Sanghi have been generous hosts and whenever they went abroad they took enough vegetarian food not only for themselves but for all of the Indian delegates. Mr Sanghi used to invite us to his room and Mrs Sanghi used to serve us vegetarian food with great love and affection to make us feel at home. The food used to be so good that even non-vegetarians used to partake of it and I used to register my mild protest at the entry of the non-vegetarians. In the achievements of Mr Sanghi, Mrs Sanghi has contributed a lot. She is competent, dedicated and affectionate.

Mr Sanghi had a good academic interest at heart and used to attend and organise lectures, deliberations and discussions on topics of current importance not necessarily related to law. As the President of SEARCH, he used to invite leading persons from public life and arrange regular lectures on various important current topics.

Mr Sanghi was very much attached to his father Mr V.K. Sanghi whom he used to refer as Babuji. In the midst of his busy life, he always used to spare some time to be spent with his father every single day. On two occasions Mr Sanghi cancelled his trip to attend LAWASIA functions abroad, since Babuji was unwell. He celebrated on 20-7-2005 the completion of 99 years by his father and the entering of the 100th year. The function was held at the India Habitat Centre and Mr Sanghi had requested me to accompany him on 17-7-2005 to the India Habitat Centre as he wanted some suggestions from me about the function. Mr Sanghi's father continues to be a member of SCBA even today.

The Delhi High Court gave a Full Court Reference to Mr Sanghi. The Supreme Court Bar Association convened a special General Body Meeting to condole his death on 12-1-2006. The United Lawyers Association, the Indian Association of Lawyers and the Criminal Justice Society of India also joined in that condolence meeting. The Bar Association of India also held a condolence meeting.

Mr Sanghi had a good temperament and was of an obliging nature. We pray to God Almighty that his soul may rest in eternal peace and to give courage to his family members to bear this grave and sudden loss.

* At the Supreme Court on 18-1-2006. Return to Text
Â Â ** The Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India Return to Text

- (1974) 2 SCC 831 : 1974 SCC (L&S) 550 Return to Text
- M.C. Mehta v. Union of India, (1997) 2 SCC 411 Return to Text
- (1994) 4 SCC 217 Return to Text
- (1984) 1 SCC 515 Return to Text
- (1981) 2 SCC 362 Return to Text
- (1980) 4 SCC 680 Return to Text
** Attorney General for India Return to Text

- (2005) 8 SCC 534 Return to Text
(2005) 5 SCC 733
- BALCO Employees' Union (Regd.) v. Union of India, (2002) 2 SCC 333
- (2001) 7 SCC 1 : 2001 SCC (L&S) 1121

**** President, Supreme Court Bar Association

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