

# ALL INDIA LAW DIGEST

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## (STATUTORY DIARY)

### BOOK REVIEWS/JOURNAL

#### A HOMAGE TO OUR FOUNDER EDITOR LATE SRI K.V. RAMANA RAO

*By*

—V. VENKATESWARA RAO,  
on behalf of himself and  
other Members of Editorial Board, ALD

Sri Koka Venkata Ramana Rao Garu, our beloved Founder Chief Editor is no more. He has gone to the bourne from which no traveler returns.

By a strange concatenation of circumstances I became his editorial colleague about four years ago. I owe my initial appointment in the journal office to the good offices of my esteemed friend Sri G. Dharma Rao, a highly respected Senior Advocate of the High Court. It was he who suggested my name to Sri K.V.R. To prove my credentials, I had given Sri K.V.R. a sheaf of my English and Telugu articles and skits written in a lighter vein and published in several journals since 1966. He was then recuperating after a major operation. He read the English articles at a stretch and complimented me on my “keen sense of humour and good command of language”. He particularly liked two articles captioned “A Comedy of Errors and the Mofussil Lawyer’s Clerk”. When are you joining?” he asked me in a low voice. A couple of days later I joined the office as an Editorial Assistant.

It is said that no man is a hero to his valet since familiarity breeds contempt. But it was not so in the case of Sri K.V.R. I was closely associated with him for about 4 years. My admiration for him grew with each passing day and not for nothing. Every day I used to meet him. I have always found him deeply absorbed in his work oblivious of the surroundings or the passage of time. In fact many times I had to wait to catch his attention when I went to him for clarification of a doubt or elucidation of a point. He not only believed in the saying mouthed by many but practiced by few, that work is worship. He worked almost till his last conscious moment. Once when he was in a communicative mood, I said in a puckish vein that his only regret in life might be that a day consisted of twenty four hours only.

Twice or thrice I went to his residence at Nagole which is far away from the hustle and bustle of the crowded city. I was delighted to find the area blissfully free from the deafening cacophony of the ubiquitous microphones and the maddening rush and

blare of horns of city buses, autos and scooters. There was nothing in the vicinity to break the serenity of the surroundings except the occasional chirpings of lovely birds perched on distant trees as if to remind the residents that they need not feel lonely. The milieu was in tune with the man. My visits were on holidays only. I found him working on his computer. Office or home, working day or holiday, rain or shine there was no relaxation in his regimen. It looked as though he found rest in work. That was the man.

Here I am reminded of a recorded incident in the life of the legendary lawyer, the great V. Bhashyam Ayyangar. Once Ayyangar was bed-ridden. He was deeply poring over a legal tome. His wife gently reminded him that the doctor advised him to take absolute rest. Ayyangar's impatient outburst was "How am I to spend my time without a law book?" Sri K.V.R. also belonged to the same class.

Sri K.V.R. had no vices unless one would call excess of addiction to writing law books and making head notes a vice. It was not merely his profession; it was his sole passion. Indeed it was an obsession with him. It was a pleasure to watch him at work. With effortless ease, he used to dictate headlines. It is said that a good speech should be like a woman's dress; short enough to be attractive but long enough to cover the subject. It applies on all fours to making of headlines, either in a newspaper or a journal. Headlines should be catchy, crisp and self contained. In a line or two they should give the gist of the matter. It is a delicate and difficult exercise. If not deftly done there is, every likelihood of headlines sinking into headless lines. Sri K.V.R.'s headlines were crisp and comprehensive.

Sri K.V.R. was a typical legal savant who combined in himself the practical experience of a lawyer and the learning of an academician. His vast knowledge and varied

experience sat very lightly on him while in the case of many a little learning sits heavily on their shoulders. His kindness and cultured conduct, absolute freedom from prejudices of any kind and utter lack of vanity, his simplicity and sobriety, his balanced outlook and philosophical detachment, his frankness and fairness made an indelible impression on mind. A gentleman need not be a gentle man and a gentle man may not be a gentleman. Sri K.V.R. was both a gentle man and a gentleman. He was a shrewd judge of men and matters as borne out by his occasional comments. He had high regard for Mr. Justice M. Jagannadha Rao, presently Chairman of the Law Commission of India, Sri T. Anantha Babu, Ex. Advocate General of A.P. and Sri C. Padmanabha Reddy, a doyen of the criminal bar in the State.

Sri K.V.R. was enrolled as an Advocate in 1954. He told me that immediately after enrolment he joined the office of the High Court, then at Guntur on a princely salary of Rs.80/- per month. But the Lawyer in him could not brook the hardship of clerkship. Without a second thought he resigned his job and set up a practice at Kakinada. When the Munsif Magistrate Court was established at Pithapuram in 1966 he shifted there. He became Assistant Government Pleader, Public Prosecutor, Standing Counsel for Endowments and some other institutions. While pursuing the profession he started writing commentaries on Sales Tax Act, Essential Commodities Act, A.P. Panchayat Samithi and Zilla Parishads Act, A.P. Co-operative Societies Act and Andhra Tenancy Act etc. In 1969 he started publishing Andhra Pradesh Law Journal from Kakinada itself. In 1972 he shifted to Hyderabad and continued publishing the journal while actively practising in High Court. It became the top most journal in the State. His connection with the journal ended in 1982. Sri K.V.R. continued writing commentaries on Acts like Land Acquisition Act, Indian Stamp Act and

A.P. Motor Vehicles Manual etc. It is not my purpose to give a catalogue of his several publications which are more than 50. He called it a day in 1994 when he gave up practice altogether.

The year 1995 saw the birth of a new journal in the legal firmament. The business acumen of Sri Hasin Ahmed and the editorial expertise of Sri K.V.R. took shape in the Andhra Legal Decisions. Sri K.V.R. nourished the journal single handed with his life blood from the inception till his last conscious moment. He was indeed lucky to have a generous proprietor who gave a free hand to him and never interfered with the editorial work. Sri K.V.R. devoted every minute of his time and every ounce of his energy to make the journal what it is today. Sri Waseem Ahmed, the enterprising son of Sri Hasin Ahmed is leaving no stone unturned to keep aloft the standard of the journal. Under the aegis of the Andhra Legal Decisions Sri K.V.R. brought out handy editions of almost all the bare acts with upto date case law and latest amendments. Deep study and concern for accuracy are the hallmarks of his books. His two volume Case Guide of Andhra Pradesh High Court is a very useful publication. Sri K.V.R. told me Civil Pleadings was his best book. It proved to be a very helpful practical guide to practicing lawyers especially junior lawyers.

Sri K.V.R. never sought publicity. In fact he shunned it. Chief Editorship of a premier Law Journal is a vantage ground for

cultivating useful contacts in high circles. To our knowledge never even once did K.V.R. stray out of his sanctum sanctorum to make use of his position for personal ends. If we are asked to describe his qualities in five words we would say DISCIPLINE, DEVOTION, DEDICATION, DETERMINATION AND DIGNITY". If we admired Sri K.V.R, the Editor and Writer, we liked and loved K.V.R., the MAN for his many admirable qualities.

A man of frail physical frame.

Sri K.V.R. achieved enduring fame.

Daily when we enter the office and look at his vacant chair we feel 'His Presence'. May be it is trick of memory or an optical illusion but there it is. As a mark of respect for him his seat is kept vacant.

Now the journal has the inestimable advice and guidance of Sri R. Swaroop, a gifted multi-faceted personality and a reputed author of several standard and popular law books. Sri Swaroop whose youthful looks belie his mature counsel is now the Consultant Editor. His brilliance and learning allied to a pragmatic approach are an asset to the journal. We are anxious to maintain the immaculate standards set up by our illustrious predecessor. We earnestly assure all our esteemed patrons that we spare no pains to keep the standard of the journal as high as when Sri K.V.R. left it in our hands. We shall feel immensely gratified if at the end of the day it is said that the high quality of the journal did not suffer "a steep descent from the sublime to the ridiculous".



"Faith and belief cannot be judged through any judicial scrutiny. It is a fact accomplished and accepted by its followers. [A.P. Misra, J., in *Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee, Amritsar v. Som Nath Dass*, (2000) 8 SCC 278 (Para 43)]"

