



**SUPREME COURT OF INDIA**

The Supreme Court Collegium has recommended the names of three Advocates for appointment as Judges of the High Court of Delhi in the following terms:

- (i) Shri Ajay Dignpaul,
- (ii) Shri Harish Vaidyanathan Shankar, and
- (iii) Ms Shwetasree Majumder.

On 25 October 2023, the Chief Justice of the High Court of Delhi in consultation with his two senior-most colleagues recommended the names of the above Advocates for appointment as Judges of that High Court.

In order to ascertain the fitness and suitability of the above-named Advocates for elevation to the High Court, we have consulted our colleague conversant with the affairs of the High Court of Delhi.

For the purpose of assessing the merit and suitability of the above candidates for elevation to the High Court, we have scrutinized and evaluated the material placed on record. We have also perused the observations made by the Department of Justice in the file.



**(i) Shri Ajay Digpaul**

Our sole consultee-Judge has given a positive opinion on the suitability of the candidate for appointment as a Judge of the High Court. The inputs provided by the Department of Justice in the file indicate that his professional competence is viewed to be good and there is nothing adverse regarding his integrity. The candidate has a good practice and considerable experience of 31 years in several branches of law including civil, criminal, constitutional, labour, company, service and commercial law with specialization in civil and criminal cases. He has argued a number of cases which is reflected by his appearance in 42 reported judgments delivered by the High Court. Bearing in mind all the relevant facts and circumstances, the Collegium is of the considered view that the candidate is fit and suitable for appointment as a Judge of the High Court.

**(ii) Shri Harish Vaidyanathan Shankar**

Our consultee-Judge has given a positive opinion on the suitability of the candidate for appointment as a Judge of the High Court. The inputs provided by the Department of Justice in the file indicate that his professional competence is viewed to be good and there is nothing adverse about his integrity. The candidate has extensive practice which is reflected in 180 reported judgments delivered in the cases in which



he appeared / argued and his average net professional income is Rs. 162.16 lakhs per annum during the last five years. Bearing in mind all the relevant facts and circumstances, the Collegium is of the considered view that the candidate is fit and suitable for appointment as a Judge of the High Court.

**(iii) Ms. Shwetasree Majumder**

Regarding the suitability of the candidate, our consultee-Judge is of the opinion that the candidate is suitable for being elevated as a Judge of the High Court. The inputs provided by the Department of Justice in the file indicate that the candidate is a competent lawyer in the field of Intellectual Property Rights. The candidate has extensive practice of more than 21 years and vast experience in civil matters, particularly intellectual property rights, technology, advertising and trade secret matters, which would be a valuable addition to the Bench of the High Court of Delhi. Besides, her elevation would promote diversity and inclusivity on the Bench of the High Court. The expertise of the candidate in the area of Intellectual Property Rights is of significant importance in view of the pendency of such matters in the High Court which are being dealt with by a dedicated IP Division. The candidate has substantial practice which is reflected in 35 reported judgments delivered in the cases in which she appeared/argued and her average net



professional income is Rs. 183.56 lakhs per annum during the last five years. In terms of the observations of the Department of Justice, the candidate is the founder of a Law Firm. As far as the observation regarding age of the candidate is concerned, we are of the view that the candidate fulfils the threshold age criterion of 45 years as on the date of recommendation by the Collegium of the High Court.

Bearing in mind all the relevant facts and circumstances, the Collegium is of the considered view that the candidate is fit and suitable for appointment as a Judge of the High Court.

In view of the above, the Collegium resolves to recommend that S/Shri (i) Ajay Digpaul, (ii) Harish Vaidyanathan Shankar, and (iii) Ms Shwetasree Majumder, Advocates, be appointed as Judges of the High Court of Delhi. Their *inter se* seniority be fixed as per the existing practice.

(Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud), CJI

(Sanjiv Khanna), J

(B R Gavai), J

21 August 2024