



Celebrating the top 100 premier legal education institutes in India for their contribution in shaping the legal minds of the future
By Ashima Ohri

INDIA'S TOP LEGAL SCHOOLS



E DUCATION IS NOT THE FILLING of a pail, but the lighting of a fire, according to W.B. Yeats. Recognising that knowledge is power BW Legal World set out on the search for the premier educational institutes that have contributed toward igniting young legal minds and helped them in charting a career in law for themselves. To ensure—in the words of Abigail Adams—‘learning is not attained by chance, but is sought for with ardour and attended to with diligence,’ BW Legal World decided to launch its inaugural edition of BW Legal World Law School Rankings 2022 based on primary sources for institutes who shared

their data; secondary sources for those who did not respond to our postal mails; government rankings; jury assessments and inputs received from the industry as part of our due diligence. The rankings aim to capture the industry’s perception through the collective views of practitioners, academicians, general counsel, law firm partners, and legal experts represented by our Jury. The virtual Jury meet was held on June 11, 2022, where all the Jury members met between 11 am to 2 pm to share their insights and peer perception about the shortlisted colleges to guide and lend credibility to the process.

The intention of the publication is to celebrate the top 100 Colleges in India. The rankings are an indication of the progress, achievements, and potential of the legal institutions in the country and do not intend to show any institute in poor light. The BW Legal World Law School Rankings aim to become a catalyst for institutions to move towards excellence and should not be viewed as a critique of any institution in the field of legal education. To arrive at the rankings with a well-rounded assessment of the institutes, the colleges were scored on four key indicators of Infrastructure (100), Placements & Pedigree (100), Academic Excellence (100), and Peer Perception (100). Scoring for Peer Perception was based on intern-interactions, alumni-interactions, faculty-interactions, competitions and other such factors—by our Jury.

Our august Jury Board comprised of Pinky Anand, Senior Advocate, Former ASG Supreme Court of India; Hemant Kumar, Group General Counsel, Larsen & Toubro; Pavan Duggal, Advocate, Supreme Court of India and Founder, Pavan Duggal Associates; Annurag Batra, Chairman & Editor-in-Chief of BW Businessworld and Exchange4media Group; Vaibhav Kakkar, Partner, Saraf & Partners; Priyanka Walesha, Functional Head and Senior Manager – Legal, Yum Digital and Technology; Siddharth Batra, AOR, Supreme Court of India; Divyam Agarwal, Partner, JSA; Ashima Ohri, Managing Editor, BW Legal World; and Gareema Ahuja, Business Head, BW Legal World.

The launch of the rankings was heralded by BW Legal World Future of Legal Education in India Conference held at IIC, New Delhi on June 18, 2022. The conference was graced by distinguished lawyers, jurists, and professors of the country and culminated in stimulating discussions focused on the future of legal education in India in terms of keeping pace with the global law school curriculum, building legal minds of the future—verse, and nurturing talent for new-age careers in law. The conference came to a delightful close with the felicitation of the colleges present at the venue. **BW**

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A lawyer can succeed with a good grasp on regional languages and laws

Vaibhav Kakkar reflects on his journey at NLU Jodhpur as the alumnus of the founding batch of the institution By **Ashima Ohri**

How has been your personal experience studying at the college?

I graduated from National Law University Jodhpur in the year 2006 with the B.B.A. LL.B. (Hons.) degree and belong to the founding batch of the institution. The five years of college from 2001-06 to date remain some of the most memorable and significant moments of my life. Those five years at NLUJ established the foundation of my legal knowledge which has greatly contributed to the heights I have achieved in my professional career. More im-

portantly, NLUJ gave me a platform to develop my personality and helped me in meeting a lot of like-minded people that remain close friends till date. I take immense pride in the fact that I could witness the formative years of NLUJ and could contribute to the university expanding to become one of the premier law universities in India.

Subjects and professors you like the most.

I always had an inclination for corporate laws and ended up doing my honours in the same as well. My in-

terest in corporate law was inspired through professor Mitra, whose clarity of thought and skills in pedagogy are second to none. Not only did he allow me to understand corporate law in its truest sense, but developed a commercial bend of mind, which shapes my decision-making even today.

As the founding father, it was his vision and conviction that allowed generations of students and professors to make NLUJ a premier legal institute that it is today. He made sure to provide us students with all the required resources to transform us into quality lawyers and more significantly into quality human beings. My academic inclination towards corporate law also translated into my career choices and were a contributing factor in me getting due recognition at my internships and eventually me getting into a corporate law firm straight after graduating from NLUJ.

What would you say is the USP of the college?

At the time when I joined NLUJ, it was the first institution of its kind that offered integrated courses combining law with management and science. The USP of NLUJ has always been its academics with top quality professors from all across the country contributing in shaping the legal minds of the future. Also, in order to provide practical experience to students the university offers Court



“To provide practical experience to students the university offers Court Room Exercises (CREs) in various subjects”

Room Exercises (CREs) in various subjects as a part of the curriculum. The CREs assist the students in tackling a practical factual situation and building their legal thinking and arguing skills which forms the base for the start of their professional careers. These skills translated into students over the years, winning the choicest accolades in moot court competitions across India and the world. Apart from academics, the uUniversity has a state-of-the-art campus with spacious hostels and several sporting facilities for the all-round development of students.

What according to you are areas our colleges must focus on to cultivate the legal minds that the country needs?

Having spent over 16 years

as a corporate lawyer in premier law firms, I can say that the legal universities must focus more on teaching students on the application of legal principles to factual situations. While the universities may teach students regarding the basic principles of law and the texts of the bare acts, it is of utmost importance that the students are guided towards applying these legal principles to practical cases as well. A strong core of legal knowledge combined with practical knowledge will make the students well suited for starting in corporate jobs after graduating from a law college. I am delighted that NLUJ has recognised this need and has started implementing initiatives like the CREs, regular lectures with professionals, legal aid camps and emphasis

on internships, to help cultivate and prepare the future legal minds.

When it comes to the future of legal education in India, what needs our immediate attention and what are the ways we can improve?

I think the steps that have been taken to expand the number of national law universities and improve the standards of the existing ones have been steps in the right direction. By making premier legal education more accessible to diverse regions of India as well to more number of students is only going to improve the quality of legal minds that are produced in our country.

Can one make a good career in law with knowledge of regional language and laws? If yes, how?

Yes, a lawyer can succeed with a good grasp on regional languages and laws. A lawyer with such knowledge can be an excellent litigating lawyer in a district court or a high court where the use of these particular regional languages and laws is prevalent. Even the commercial disputes teams in corporate law firms, which have started to establish their offices in diverse regions of this country, are looking to recruit lawyers with knowledge of required regional language and laws. **BW**

✎ Vaibhav Kakkar is Partner at Saraf & Partners