

#KConnect

News for, and, of Khaitan Alumni

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BENGALURU
OFFICE



**KHAITAN
&CO**
Advocates since 1911

2020: THE YEAR OF FIRSTS

Per aspera and astra: The past year and beyond ...

As the year passed by with its array of trials and tribulations, the sheer wonder of hope that the world held on to, was not lost on anyone. This past year's sojourn of unwavering resilience bears a striking testament to this very hope in the face of the pandemic. Everyone gradually experienced a wondrous adaption, with the 'work from home' regime in place. With homes now having dedicated workstations, families whispering and tiptoeing in the background during calls and meetings, greeting clients and colleagues over video meetings, celebrating birthdays and team parties with smiles in digital boxes on screens, we also discovered enhanced qualities of coordination, discipline, leadership, and team spirit within ourselves, while working from home.

As an establishment, the Firm also grew in tandem – our admin, IT and HR teams have worked tirelessly to ensure some semblance of 'normalcy'. 2020 proved to be a year of firsts in multiple ways

for the Firm – we inaugurated offices in NCR and Bengaluru and hosted virtual Townhalls, where 16 of our lawyers were inducted to the Firm's partnership! 2020 also marks an epoch in the Firm's journey – we are now 1000 members strong and hope that our century old heritage will be taken forward by an ever-growing Khaitan family!

The Firm mourns the loss of its valued members, Pratik Jain, Devansh Srivastava and Ganesh Raul, who will be deeply missed. We also extend our heartfelt condolences to members of the Firm and our Alumni, who have lost their loved ones to the pandemic.

We would love to hear your feedback and views on the Alumni Newsletter or the larger KConnect alumni programme. Please let us know by sending an email to alumni@khaitanco.com. For more information on the KConnect alumni programme visit our [website](#).

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE: SINGAPORE

We are delighted to announce that the Firm will be opening its very first international branch office in Singapore in April 2021. Our Partner, Anuj Shah, and Director, Jean Muller, will serve as the Firm's resident representatives in Singapore. In keeping with our philosophy of offering localised support, we look forward to working closely with our clients and international peers.

NEW OFFICES: BENGALURU AND NCR

We are pleased to announce the inauguration of new state-of-the-art office spaces with upscale workstations and various facilities in Bengaluru and NCR. In Bengaluru, we moved to a larger office with over 100 workstations and 18 conference rooms while in NCR, our new office comprises over 350 workstations.



Reception Area of our New Office in Noida, NCR

OUR FIRST L&D AWARD

As a recognition towards our continued efforts in the L&D space, the Firm was chosen as the 'Winner' under the 'Best Onboarding Category' by Inventicon's Learning & Development Leadership Award 2020. This Award only reaffirms that we are in the right direction and are committed to continue doing extraordinary work and set new benchmarks in the L&D domain.



Recipient of the Onboarding Programme of the Year Award

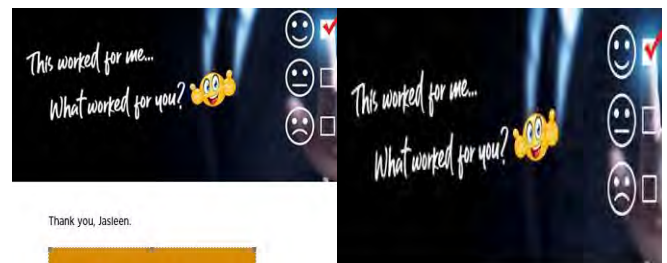
STAYING CONNECTED DURING WFH

To remain connected while working from home, the Firm launched a host of interesting engagements. 'Lockdown Diaries' is one such initiative, where members share their experiences during the lockdown - how they coped during the pandemic, what worked for them and what kept them going. Another initiative to remain connected was '60 Seconds with a Celebrity', where every Friday, members get an exclusive sneak-peek into the lives of the Firm's "celebrities" by way of well-curated and entertaining interviews – strictly 'no-shop talk'.



60 Seconds with our Partner, Pradip Kumar Khaitan

'Chain of Positivity' is another initiative that is a literal manifestation of its nomenclature - a chain of positivity that involves members nominating one other to share ideas regarding what helped them get through these testing times. Such initiatives served as vibrant conduits between members of the Firm who are spread across locations and helped remain connected in the new 'virtual' world.



One of the toughest things during the lockdown is suppressing the eagerness to 'go out'. It is one of those things I surely took for granted to walk around on the beach or to grab a movie in the theatre like a distant memory. But at the same time, I am extremely grateful to spend time with my family at home which is what keeps me going, to keep life in perspective. As Dorothy in 'The Wizard of Oz' says, 'I place like home'.

To continue this chain of positivity, I would like to invite **Karan C** to share what has worked for him.

Thank you, Radhika.

Right before the lockdown started, I got my hands on a book called 'Book of Hygge - Danish secrets to happy living'. This book and its message, trying to understand what is meant by 'Hygge', has wondrous for me in the past few months. One of the thoughts from which 'worked for me' is:

'Hygge is about an atmosphere and an experience, rather than about it is about being with the people we love. A feeling of home. A feeling we are safe, that we are shielded from the world and allowing our let our guard down'.

To continue this chain of positivity, I would like to invite **Jasleen** to share what has worked for her.

Firm-wide Chain of Positivity E-mails

PROMOTIONS & RECRUITMENT

Despite the economic slowdown in the wake of COVID-19, the Firm announced 72 promotions at the Associate level (including Senior Associates and Principal Associates). As our partnership pool continues to expand, the Firm also promoted 16 lawyers to Partner and 8 lawyers to Counsel, across its 4 offices. We are indeed pleased to note that 25% of Partner / Counsel promotions comprise women lawyers.

It gives us immense pleasure to share that Sudipta Bhattacharjee (Indirect Tax), Akshay Malhotra (Energy, Infrastructure and Resources) and Tanu Banerjee (Technology, Media and Telecom) joined the Firm as partners in 2021 – we are thrilled to expand our partnership pool and strengthen these practice areas.

In October 2020, the Firm successfully onboarded 49 freshers in the ‘Batch of 2020’ across 20 law schools. We are truly excited to work with our young talent, who promise to be tomorrow’s leaders.

Partnership and Counsel
Announcement

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Advocates since 1911

PARTNERS

 ABHIRAJ GANDHI Real Estate MUMBAI	 ABHISHEK DADOO Corporate MUMBAI	 ADITI SHARMA Direct Tax MUMBAI	 ADITYA GANJU Dispute Resolution NEW DELHI
 ANKUR SANGAL IPR NEW DELHI	 ASHISH MEHTA Direct Tax MUMBAI	 ASIM CHOUDHURY Direct Tax KOLKATA	 MANAVENDRA MISHRA Dispute Resolution MUMBAI
 RAHUL DHANUKA Indirect Tax KOLKATA	 RAVITEJ CHILUMURI Dispute Resolution MUMBAI	 RUSHA MITRA Corporate KOLKATA	 SARTHAK SARIN Corporate NEW DELHI
 SHABNAM SHAIKH Direct Tax MUMBAI	 SHANTANU GUPTA Corporate MUMBAI	 SUBHRO CHATTERJEE Real Estate KOLKATA	 SWATHY RAMANATH EIR BENGALURU

COUNSEL

 ABHINAV CHANDAN TMT NEW DELHI	 AHANA SINHA Banking & Finance MUMBAI	 CHIRAYU CHANDANI Capital Markets MUMBAI	 JYOTI SINHA Dispute Resolution MUMBAI
 MALAV SHAH Corporate MUMBAI	 PRANAV SAMPAT Dispute Resolution MUMBAI	 ROHIT AMBAST Corporate NEW DELHI	 SNEHAL KAKRANIA Dispute Resolution NEW DELHI

Partner and Counsel Promotions 2020

2020: REACHING NEW HEIGHTS!

It is said that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, and the Firm has indeed proved this adage to be true, by achieving a significant milestone of building a 1000-member strong family. While the Firm became more fortified in 2020, we hope that the current year marks the advent of the Firm’s march towards greater heights!



Celebrating 1000 Members!

KEY CLIENT ENGAGEMENTS

As we continued to adjust to the ‘new normal’, we used the lockdown to nurture existing client relationships and also build new ones. Since July 2020, our Partners conducted several webinars, a majority of which were organised in collaboration with eminent external speakers. The webinars focused on a wide array of topics including:

- ‘Commercial Mediation: Simply the Smarter Way!’ conducted by Justice AK Sikri (Former Judge, Supreme Court of India), Sriram Panchu (Senior Advocate and Mediator), Laila T Ollapally (Mediator), Chuan Wee Mend (CEO, Singapore Mediation Centre) and Raj Panchmatia (Partner, Khaitan & Co);
- ‘Cryptocurrency in India: What the Future Holds’ conducted by Subhash Chandra Garg (Former Finance and Economic Affairs Secretary and Head of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Virtual Currencies), Jagdish Pandya (Founder, Block On Capital), Sidharth Sogani (Founder, CREBACO Global Inc.), Nischal Shetty (Founder, WazirX), and our

Partners, Rashmi Deshpande and Sanjay Khan Nagra;

- ‘Emerging Trends in Indian Insurance M&A’ conducted by Nina Zhou (Regional Head PI&A Asia, Swiss Re), Kamesh Goyal (Chairman, Go Digit General Insurance), Edwin Northover (Partner, Debevoise & Plimpton) and our Partners, Nikhil Narayanan and Aravind Venugopal; and
- ‘How to Manage Construction Delay and Risks in India’ conducted by Amba Prasad (VP & Head – Legal, L&T Construction), Ajay Kharbanda (CLO (North & West Sectors), GMR Airports Limited), Venkata Ramana (VP – Contracts & Legal, Tata Projects Limited), Rohit Singhal (MD, MASIN) and our Partners, Sudip Mullick and Raj Panchmatia.

Our Partner Anuj Shah was a panelist in the ‘Virtual Summit’ hosted by ALB, where our Partner Bharat Anand was the moderator.

Our webinars can be accessed [here](#).

L&D: A NEW BEGINNING

The pandemic left us little choice but to adapt to changing times and technologies and drove us to experiment with microlearning and gamification for all our L&D interventions. In October last year, our campus batch had to be onboarded virtually from different parts of the country, while they continued to work from home.

For the very first time, the virtual onboarding was conducted and delivered through an app – The Pathfinder, that was built on an engaging storyline

centered around travel. The objective of this exploratory virtual learning journey was to onboard the 49 young and brilliant minds by: (i) introducing them to the Firm, its inception, history, people and offices; (ii) helping them connect and develop as a cohort; (iii) getting them to participate in games and challenges curated on our policies and processes; and (iv) ensuring that they settle in comfortably in their new virtual working environment.

The seven-week long learning journey was complemented by a ‘Leaderboard’ which kept the competition on and an ‘Activity Feed’ which kept

the engagement high. Other tangible benefits that we witnessed were with respect to their preparedness before they joined the Firm. It also helped them get to know each other and their peers at a deeper level despite being caught in the virtual world.



Campus Batch 2020: Virtual Onboarding

VIRTUAL LEARNING TABLE

Despite the restrictions on travel and holding in-person group training sessions, we continued to upskill our lawyers in key functional areas. Five years ago, we launched the personal training programmes on Negotiation & Client Communication Skills, but last year, we conducted these sessions online. Claudia Winkler from the Negotiation Academy and our empaneled subject matter expert in this space, designed and conducted four virtual online sessions for us, all the way from Austria.



Negotiation Session with Claudia Winkler

OTHER L&D INITIATIVES

We have seen a significant rise in the making and recrafting of new technology related laws in India as well as globally. Undoubtedly, technology has far surpassed our existing laws. With this in mind, the Firm has recently launched a 'TechReg Initiative' to focus on knowledge, awareness and capacity building in this space. A series of Tech Law Virtual Learning Table sessions have been conducted since September, by external subject matter experts in areas of e-contracting, e-stamping, digitisation, cyber security and many more.

Being financially literate and adept is an important skill set for all commercial lawyers - it is what makes us stand out and demonstrate that we are better equipped to handle commercial conversations, negotiations and advise on basic financial and investment decisions, if the situation so demands. With this in mind, in October last year, the Firm signed up with AFCL Training Solutions Private Limited, to run 8 exclusive webinars on 'Applying Principles of Financial Statements and Corporate Finance to Structuring, Drafting and Negotiation'. The sessions were very well received, and we hope to do more of these during this year.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION INITIATIVE

arise (our D&I initiative launched in December 2019), completed its one-year mark by taking a pledge on World Disability Day to continue to create and work towards a positive and supportive work environment for members with disability and raise awareness on disability inclusion. We dedicated this month to learning more about challenges faced by the differently abled, and hosted a virtual fireside chat between Madhavi Latha Prathigudupu, a banker, wheelchair basketball player and a former Paralympic swimming champion and our Partner, Nandini Khaitan. It was fascinating to hear Madhavi's journey as a banker and sportsperson as she discussed her challenges with Nandini and her goals for the 'Yes We Too Can' movement for persons with disabilities.

It is a matter of great pride for us that our Firm was chosen by the Women in Business Law Awards 2020 (Asia) as winner for the following categories '**Best National Firm Mentoring Programme**' and '**Best National Firm for Talent Management**' and our Partners, Manisha Shroff and Vanita Bhargava, were selected as '**Lawyer of the Year for Banking & Finance**' and '**Lawyer of the Year for Litigation**' respectively.



Madhavi Latha Prathigudupu, Speaker, Fire-side Chat

MARQUEE TRANSACTIONS

Despite the ramifications of the pandemic, the Firm continued to be involved in several marquee transactions in 2020 – we are thankful to our clients for choosing us as their trusted advisors.

In the M&A space, the Firm advised **Reliance Retail Ventures** on acquisition of Future Group's logistics and warehousing business, **Embassy Group** on sale of Embassy Tech Village to Embassy Office Parks REIT, **Siemens Group** on sale of shares of Siemens India Limited through a block deal, **Edelweiss Financial Services** on structuring and regulatory aspects of PAG's investment in Edelweiss Financial Services and **Nuvoco Vistas Corporation** in relation to investment by Kotak Special Situations Fund.

On the Private Equity front, the Firm advised on **Brookfield's** acquisition of certain assets of RMZ Group, **Advent's** acquisition of RA Chem from its promoters, **British Columbia Investment Management Corporation** on co-acquisition (with

Brookfield) of Reliance group's Tower Infrastructure Trust, and **Softbank's** investment in Unacademy and MindTickle Inc.

We are pleased to report that the Firm continued to be at the forefront of several marquee transactions in the first half of 2020. We are indeed grateful to our clients for continuing to repose faith in us.

Despite the economic recession, the Firm represented the managers of **Digital Fibre Infrastructure Trust** (InvIT sponsored by **Reliance Industries**) in its private placement of units – the largest offer by an unlisted InvIT in India, **Gland Pharma** on its proposed listing – touted to be the largest listing in the pharma sector, and **UTI Asset Management Company** on its initial public offering. The Firm also advised **K Raheja Corp Investment Managers** (investment manager of Mindspace Business Parks REIT) on issue of units of Mindspace Business Parks REIT and offer for sale by certain unitholders.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

We are pleased to note that the Firm was recognised as a **‘Tier 1 Firm’** for M&A by Asian Legal Business 2020; **‘Private Equity Team of the Year’** by IFLR1000 India Awards 2020 and our Private Client Practice was recognised as **‘Leading Firm – Band 1’**.

The pandemic was interspersed with small wins as several of our Partners have been recognised for their continued efforts – **Haigreve Khaitan** was recognised as **‘Market Leader’** and one of the **‘Best Lawyers’** while 8 Partners were recognised as **‘Highly Regarded’** and 31 Partners were recognised as **‘Notable Practitioners’** by IFLR; **Haigreve Khaitan, Siddharth Shah, Rabindra Jhunjunwala, Abhimanyu Bhattacharya, Ajay Bhargava,** and **Manas K Chaudhuri** bagged the IBLJ **‘India’s Top 100 Lawyers – A List’** award; **Haigreve Khaitan, Rabindra Jhunjunwala** and **Bharat Anand** were recognised as **‘Recommended Lawyers’** by Who’s Who Legal’s M&A and Governance Global Guide; **Shailendra Bhandare** was recognised as **‘Recommended Lawyer’** by Who’s Who Legal’s Trademark 2020 Guide; **Anisha Chand** and **Pranjal Prateek** were recognised as **‘Future Leaders’** of

International Competition practice by Who’s Who Legal 2020; **Manas K Chaudhuri** and **Arshad Paku Kan** were recognised as **‘Recommended Lawyer’** in Who’s Who Legal’s Competition 2020 Guide; **Ayush Mehrotra, Prasenjit Chakravarti** and **Sahil Narang** were recognised as **‘40 under 40 Rising Star’** by Legal Era; **Tomu Francis** was recognised as a **‘Top Disputes Lawyer in India’** by ALB India; **Adheesh Nargolkar** featured in Asian Legal Business **‘Top 15 IP Practitioners 2020’**; **Bijal Ajinkya** and **Sanjay Sanghvi** were recognised as **‘Leading Tax Practitioners (Asia Pacific)’** by Euromoney’s Tax Expert Guide 2020.

The Firm bagged the **‘Merger Control Matter of the Year’** award for GSK’s acquisition of Pfizer’s global consumer health business at the Global Competition Review Awards (2020) and 4 of our Infrastructure deals were recognised as **‘Winning Deals’** at the Asset Triple ‘A’ Asia Infrastructure Awards (2020). We also received the **‘M&A Deal of the Year’** and **‘Equity Capital Markets Deal of the Year’** awards for our role in the L&T / Mind Tree deal and Sterling and Wilson Solar IPO.



Asialaw Profiles 2021

Outstanding
Capital Markets, Competition, Corporate & M&A, Real Estate, Investment Funds, Dispute Resolution, Private Equity, Tax and Regulatory
Highly Recommended
Banking & Finance, Energy, Insurance, Construction, Restructuring & Insolvency, Labour & Employment
Recommended
Technology & Telecommunications, Infrastructure and Media & Entertainment
Other Notable / Recognised Practices
Aviation, Pharmaceuticals & Life Sciences and Intellectual Property



Tier 1

Capital Markets (Equity), Corporate M&A, Restructuring & Insolvency

Tier 2

Banking & Finance, Capital Markets (Debt), Investment Funds, Projects, Energy & Infrastructure, Private Equity, Project Finance, Project development – Telecommunications Network, Project Development – Transport

Tier 3

Project Development – Infrastructure, Project Development – Oil & Gas



IP Prosecution Firm of the Year and Mumbai Firm of the Year



Tier 1

Capital Markets Equity Corporate & M&A Restructuring and Insolvency



Tier 1

Dispute Resolution and Corporate & M&A (Global); Competition, Real Estate, Dispute Resolution and Private Equity (Asia Pacific)

Band 2

Banking Finance, Capital Markets and Competition (Global); Projects, Energy & Infrastructure, Restructuring & Insolvency and White-Collar Crime (Asia Pacific)

Band 3

Projects, Energy & Infrastructure (Global); Intellectual Property and Technology Media & Telecom (Asia Pacific)

Band 4

Insurance and Employment (Asia Pacific)



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