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Start-up Singularity by ex-Nishith 2011-grad Prateek Bagaria aims to reinvent law firm universe with international focus

Exclusive

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Prateek Bagaria starts ambitious global law firm

Former [Nishith Desai Associates \(NDA\)](#) consultant and 2011 GLC Mumbai graduate [Prateek Bagaria](#) has started up law firm [Singularity Legal](#).

"Since the beginning of law school, I wanted to make a career in international law. I was fortunate to meet Mr Nishith Desai, as for the six years I worked with him I only handled cross-border deals and disputes. However, the focus there was still on India, like most law firms in here," explained Bagaria.

"The idea behind Singularity Legal is to break these shackles of India. Singularity Legal is an international law firm advising Asian clients in cross-border disputes and deals, across the globe. Since there was no such player existing in the market, I thought there was space to set-up a professionally managed international law firm in India."

Bagaria had begun his career at NDA in 2011 after graduating from GLC. In September 2016, he became a consultant at NDA on a tax arbitration project in Vienna, also completing his LLM in international disputes settlement at Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva.

He set up Singularity in August, after avid networking for a year (having spent only a month in Mumbai) in order to build a client base. The firm's clients currently included Singapore companies Mercator International Pte Limited, Oorja Holdings Pte Limited, and Israel's Xertive Media Limited and NovelSat.

NDA managing partner Nishith Desai commented: "He is trying some thing new and has all my blessings to succeed. NDA is a family and all our alumni are a part of our extended family."

Singularity currently consists of Bagaria, as well as one counsel and one trainee in Mumbai, he said. "In the next five years, I see a Singularity office in Singapore,

Some of the major cases include legal proceedings in Singapore. Legal does not follow the traditional law firm model. It's a cross between a law firm and a counsel chamber. Members are allowed to maintain their domestic practice and work under the brand for cross-border assignments only. We don't want to hire associates, we want to accelerate start-ups. We are looking to provide a platform to legal talent with a start-up bent to come and join the brand.

"Many exceptional lawyers across the globe are tired of the law firm culture," he added. "We are looking for such lawyers to join in as partners or counsels. They could be doing international tax, cross-border deals, international disputes, it doesn't matter.

"Getting them under one umbrella, we feel, can disrupt the legal market."

"Our vision is to achieve the point of singularity in international legal services by providing end-to-end international law advisory and consulting to our clients. Our mission is to be a Singapore headquartered go-to international law firm with pan-Asia presence," he said.

The firm would primarily focus on international dispute resolution, "strategic counsel" work to advise on cross-border trade and investment, and "radical technologies and businesses", which would "aspire to advise clients involved with radical tech and businesses such as artificial intelligence, quantum teleportation, augmented reality, virtual reality, drones, distributed ledgers, crypto-currency, space exploration industry, medical cannabis".

According to Bagaria's firm profile, the firm is currently handling the following matters:

- Advising a Singaporean Oil and Gas Company in a joint venture dispute in Nigeria and India.
- Advising a Singaporean Shipping Company in charter party dispute against an Italian Company.
- Advising a Singaporean Energy Company in shareholder dispute against local partners and director in Indonesia.
- Advising a Singaporean Shipping Company in charter party disputes against an American Company.
- Advising an Israeli Defence Company in a joint venture with an Indian partner.
- Advising an Israeli Travel Company in a joint venture with an Indian Company.
- Advising an Israeli Satellite Company in tenders for an Indian State-owned Telecom Company.
- Representing an Israeli Tech Company in insolvency proceeding against an Indian creditor.
- Representing an Indian Media Company in defending enforcement of a SIAC award by investment arm of Hong-Kong Bank.

Ongoing Singularity assignments, according to Bagaria's profile

Bagaria said that the name "Singularity" came from science, describing "a point at which the measure of the subject matter reaches infinity".

"When one can no longer compute the subject matter its known as the singularity point. For example, in cosmology when the density of gravity reaches a point of infinity its referred to as singularity," he said. "At singularity, time and space stop existing and when this is followed by a collapse we call it the big bang," he explained. "The idea here is to achieve a point of singularity in providing international legal services. Because once we achieve that, we can create a whole new universe. Hence the name singularity."

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