

# Rising in the East

The Indian Legal Fraternity, especially the Law Firms segment has been going through waves and horizons in terms of the structural as well as business paradigms. Amongst several undercurrents, is a rush of the aspiring law firms who have definitely managed to create an attention amongst the already established one. Lex Witness speaks to one of the many such successful establishers, S. K. Singhi, Founder, S. K. Singhi & Co., Advocates a firm based out of Kolkata, India.

## BRIEFLY TELL US ABOUT YOUR DECISION OF LAW AS A PROFESSION

The most intuiting aspect of “Law” is its dynamics and radicalness. It keeps on changing from time to time, from situation to situation and it also gives an individual person an opportunity to update himself and learn something new everyday. Though the substantive portion of Law is static, but its application in every matter is different. This is the most exciting thing about law. Before coming into the profession I had exposure of corporate world and dealt with varied matters. Each matter had a certain special degree of complexity which required aggressive strategy and thinking out of the box. This made me consider Law as a profession.

## WHAT HAS BEEN THE INSPIRATION BEHIND SETTING UP SINGHI & CO.?

I have a Commerce background with finance and started my career as an executive- finance in a corporate in 1984. My mind was set to become a Company Secretary and be at top of and amongst the board members as one of the policy

decision makers and persuaded the said line. I was successful in achieving the said vision and became qualified Company Secretary and became known amongst the merchant bankers and the corporate World. As a Company Secretary I was entrusted to look after the legal matters and was asked to provide litigation support to the group even without having a law degree. Initially I was reluctant to do any legal work as I considered legal not to be my cup of tea but the responsibility to provide litigation support to the group made me go deep into the legal arena to provide results and that was the turning point of my career switching from Company Secretary to Legal advisory and support. In that length and spirit I went on to become a Law graduate. I owe my law degree to my ex-boss and chairman of the group where I was working and whom I consider as my mentor and idol.

As a general counsel and head of the legal department, there were limitations in implementation of legal strategies and provide litigation support. This inspired me

## Strength

Experience and Team Members

## Weakness

Inability to sit idle

## Most Prized Possession

My Family

## Your HumbleAdvice

Don't Compromise with your Professional Ethics

## Favourite Food

Vegetarian Jain Food

## Favourite Sport

Cricket

to set up a full service law firm and to have complete freedom to implement the strategies that may give best results to the prospective clients and that's how M/s S.K. Singhi & Co. Advocates, the law firm came into existence.

## HOW STRONGLY DO YOU BELIEVE IN A FAMILY RUN FIRM SETUP?

I strongly believe in a family run law firm



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setup compared to any other setup. In a family run setup one has the authority to implement its plan of action without any conflict or difference of opinions amongst the professionals/ associates. In a family run setup the decisions can be taken a bullet speed and can be implemented in a fraction of second, which are essentials in any legal strategy or any litigation support. This helps clients take their business decisions in no time. The current business environment globally demands quick decision-making and implementation to compete with National and International peers. In a family run setup it is easier to achieve the same at its own will and speed. The economy and cost effectiveness is another important aspect that goes in favour of family run setup.

**WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE ENTRY OF FOREIGN LAW FIRMS?**

The expansion and sustainability of any profession depends upon healthy

competition and constant review of the present setup to walk along the present scenario. Today’s era is of globalization and opening of the world economies to meet the challenges in the International market. Service sector in my view should be the first to adopt the changes. Legal professionals constantly requires learning and enriching their knowledge in the expanding globalization and technological changes. Thus, I feel the entry of foreign law firms will enhance the knowledge of the legal professionals in India if taken in right spirit and healthy competition. Every sovereign state has its own limitations and responsibilities towards its citizens and constitution. Within the said limitations I feel the phased out entry of foreign law firms in India will only add value, enhance the recognition and reputations and will provide level playing field internationally to the advocates and law firms in India. I am strongly in favour of phased out entry of foreign law firms.

**HOW DO YOU FEEL SK SINGHI & CO. AS A FIRM HAS SEEN A DIVERSIFIED GROWTH?**

The firm started out in 2008 with its base in Kolkata and since then there is no turning back. Over a period of 6 years, it has ventured into various fields and expanded its operations not only in east India but also in West and Northern parts and even abroad. With the gradual development there has been development on the personal front as far as our team is concerned. It now provides advisory on various fronts under one roof. The clientele base of the firm is also diversified starting from individuals to corporates requiring legal advisory both at personal and professional level. Hence we have seen an overall growth of the organization wherein not only the activities have grown but the team as a whole has also grown.

**YOUR MESSAGE TO THE NEXT GENERATION LAWYERS**

Legal profession is a serious and noble profession. Clients look up to their advocates and lawyers as their savior. The faith and confidence that emerges on the face of the client after seeking advice and consultation describes the quality of a Lawyer. My advice to the young generation lawyer is to work hard, be honest towards their profession, loyal to their client, work in a team, focus on achieving the vision and always aspire to become good human being. That is the key to every success.

**YOUR FUTURE PLANS**

Initially we started with three advocates as a regional law firm at Kolkata with less than 10 clients. Today we have 20+ advocates in our firm, with two offices in Kolkata and 100+ clientele base. We have plans to have our presence in Delhi, Mumbai and Singapore in the next 12 months. We have a vision to be amongst the top 10 law firms of the country in the near future. 