

# Luxury Retail Lawyer of the Year 2023 (India): Stuti Galiya, Partner, Khaitan & Co.

Stuti Galiya is a Solicitor and Partner in the Corporate and Commercial Practice Group of Khaitan & Co's Mumbai office. This firm is one of India's oldest and most well-known full-service law firms, with a practice area that covers full gamut of services, including mergers & acquisitions, private equity, joint ventures, capital markets, regulatory, real estate, banking & finance, projects, tax, competition & antitrust, employment and intellectual property rights.

Khaitan & Co is one of India's oldest and most recognized full-service law firms with various offices across India and providing wide range of legal services. Award winning solicitor & advocate, Ms Stuti Nemji Galiya works within the Mumbai office of Khaitan & Co. Her primary areas of practice include India entry,

mergers & acquisitions, joint ventures, private equity investments, foreign investments, technology collaborations, commercial contracts, regulatory and general corporate laws.

Her M&A and private equity work has been focused on areas such as retail,

hospitality, construction & development, financial services, manufacturing industries, automobiles, service industries and the like. Most of her expertise involves cross-border work. She works predominantly with international clients including the luxury retail sector. Her prestigious list of clients includes some of the foremost luxury fashion and retail brands in the world.

***"Our expertise across diverse practice areas and sectors covers varied and nuanced needs. Backed by more than 100 years of legacy, delighted clients from across the globe, and topical, commercial and specialised services, we deliver the best legal solutions for our clients."***

According to Stuti, the biggest challenges as far as the M&A practice and for that matter any area of law is concerned, which also makes the practice exciting and interesting is that it is dynamic and continuously changing. Hence, it is imperative that lawyers keep

themselves updated with all the latest regulatory and legal developments.

With increasing globalization, there has been considerable rise in both the number and size of cross border deals. Apart from legal expertise, a lawyer also needs to have significant understanding on current happenings in other countries, including international relations, trade barriers, critical regulations, like foreign investment regime, privacy regulations, anti-bribery and foreign corrupt practices regulations which could have significant impact on the entire cross border dealmaking.

Stuti feels that today clients want their legal advisors to have an eye on the horizon, anticipating and mitigating risks around the corner before they materialize. Clients appreciate their legal advisors provide innovative solutions and put forth on the table newer, simpler and better ways for execution.

Stuti believes that a lawyer needs to continuously work towards solutions that work best, keeping the client's commercials in mind. This requires thinking ahead of the future, which according to her makes it challenging and exciting at the same time.

Apart from this, as we are moving to a digital era, newer technologies like artificial intelligence are transforming ways in which deals are being conducted. New digital tools are completely changing the

M&A landscape and process. It is imperative for lawyers to focus on their technological capabilities apart from all the other skills.

***"Apart from providing quality legal services, lawyers must learn the art of creating a great experience for the client while working together. It is all about exceeding expectations – go that extra mile. At the end of the day, great service would build great relationships."***

As far as providing exceptional services to clients is concerned, Stuti explains that it is about being always available, being well-prepared, proactive, anticipating potential issues, providing prompt and pragmatic solutions and going beyond the call of duty. Most lawyers can offer legal solutions, but few go the extra mile. When you go beyond what is expected, clients notice and appreciate it. Sometimes, clients count on the smallest of gestures. It does not have to be business every time. Going the extra mile would go a long way in building long term trust and healthy professional relationship with the clients.

Stuti says that working on cross border deals and servicing clients from various countries is exciting of course, but the road is not without challenges. Apart from legal considerations, a lawyer will need to work across various time zones and legal systems depending on the matter, apart from handling softer issues, such as, language, cultural barriers, etc. At any given point of time, a cross border M&A lawyer is working alongside leading companies, law firms and renowned institutions across the globe. Everybody brings different skills and experience to the table. All this helps a lawyer to stay ahead of today's

trends and demands, enhances global perspective and expands horizons. In the process, a cross border lawyer builds strong international connections, where people build trust on them. All of this is extremely rewarding!

When Stuti started her cross border M&A practice, it was a time when the regulations relating to foreign investment in India were highly regulated and restricted.

Over the years, Stuti has gained significant expertise in luxury retail sector, which is a niche practice requiring considerable degree of sophistication and handholding. She has reached several milestones whilst servicing these luxury clients for the past 18 years, where she had the distinction of procuring one of the first kind of regulatory approvals and concluding M&A, JV transactions in sectors which were regarded as sensitive and which required considerable complexities and coming up with practical and bespoke solutions. This helped her clients to be one of the first few foreign players in the country, as far as luxury retail sector is concerned.

As the Luxury Retail Lawyer of the Year 2023 (India): Stuti Galiya, Partner, Khaitan & Co., she is increasingly sought out by luxury retail clients across the globe for their various Indian legal matters such as, setting up, M&As, joint ventures, commercial contracts, regulatory and day to day advisory. As far as luxury retail in India is concerned, whilst the future is promising, but the issues and challenges faced by luxury brands are complex and require handling with sensitivity. They cross various areas and require a lawyer to take a holistic approach. With the super-specialisation Stuti has achieved in the luxury retail sector, she is experienced in coming up with practical and bespoke solutions to deal with the many complexities luxury clients face. Her future desire to continue offering quality and exceptional services to clients is therefore surely in no doubt.



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