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**ESTABLISHING A NEW NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY IN
INDIA: CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD**

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ABSTRACT

Justice is achieved when the legal system functions effectively, with legal education serving as its foundation by producing skilled professionals. In an era shaped by globalisation, modernization, and technological advancements, the demands of legal justice delivery are constantly evolving. This dynamic environment presents significant challenges for legal education, which must adapt to prepare professionals for the complexities of a changing legal landscape. This paper seeks to highlight the challenges in establishment of a National Law University (“NLU”), understood in light of the complex requirements of modern-day legal education. The first part elaborates on the structure of the education system as required to effectively foster the aims of constitutional justice. In tandem with this, the latter part showcases a trajectory of evolution of the legal education system in India, highlighting the challenges faced by the founders of new NLUs.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Reports on legal education are plenty.¹ They generally emanate from State appointed Commissions and Committees consisting largely of judges or law academics. These run into thousands of pages. Although, such reports have been subjected to partial implementation, the prevalent state of legal education in the country is far from satisfactory and leaves much to be desired in terms of the relevance of the content. The content often lacks connection with the political economy, the culture, the people of India or even the actual functioning of India's governance, its institutions and the reality of those managing these institutions. It is lamentable that no law paper in legal education exists on key factors dominating our lives like, development, agriculture, knowledge, creation and distribution, religion/custom, industry, trade and commerce regulation.

¹ Calcutta University Commission, 1917-1919 (Gov't of India); Bombay University Reforms Committee, 1925 (Gov't of Bombay); Report of the Legal Education Reforms Committee, 1935 (Gov't of India); Unemployment Committee, 1948-49 (Gov't of India), University Education Commission, 1949 (Gov't of India); Bombay Legal Education Committee 1951, All India Bar Committee Recommendations; 1954, XIVth Law Commission (Setalvad); 1955, Rajasthan Legal Education Committee; 1988-90, Curriculum Development Centre, UGC, Report ("**Baxi report**"), 1993-94; Fifteenth Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Subordinate Legislation, Chapters VI and VII, 1994; Justice A.M. Ahmadi Committee Report, 2001; Curriculum Development Committee, UGC's Model Curriculum; Nov. 2002; Recommendations of the First National Consultative Conference of Heads of Legal Education Institutions at NLSUI, Bangalore, Dec.2002; Law Commission 184th Report, 2002; National Knowledge Commission Report, 2007; Report to the Supreme Court and BCI by the three member committee constituted by the court consisting of Solicitor General, President of the Supreme Court Bar Association and Chairman of BCI, *in BCI v. Bonnie FdI Law College*, SLP 22337 of 2008.

More so, legal education also makes little ongoing contribution to the right to culture under Article 29, and, to legal services under Article 39A, or to nutrition and health care. It, therefore, emerges as a troublesome reality that present legal education cannot be called as constitutional justice education. This sentiment is not based on the whims or fancies of anyone, but, is shared by trained and experienced legal minds.² This crisis historically faced by Indian legal education may be characterized by credibility, outdated curricula, inadequate infrastructure, lack of emphasis on practical training, quality of faculty and ineffective regulatory supervision.³ Traditional law colleges often struggled with issues such as poor faculty quality, limited research opportunities, and disconnect between legal education and the evolving needs of the profession. Some of the challenges undermining the ability of law graduates to meet the demands of a globalized legal landscape, and to address pressing societal issues are elucidated further.

A. CONTEXT & CREDIBILITY

Law is understood in the context of the kind of society for which it is made and in which it is to function. Ignorance of these two components can guarantee the negation of laws, whereas recognition of the context increases the possibility of its success, vis-à-vis, its stated aims. This makes the context indispensable. This is so because everything is not

² Justice S.P. Mehrotra, *Re-Inventing Legal Education: Challenges & Opportunities*, INST. OF JUD. TRAINING & RES., <http://www.ijtr.nic.in/webjournal/6.htm>; Chandra Krishnamurthy, *Legal Education and Legal Profession in India*, 36 INT'L J. LEGAL INFO. 245, 253-54 (2008).

³ N.R. Madhava Menon, *The Future of Law Teaching Institutions*, THE HINDU, July 30, 2002, <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/edu/2002/07/30/stories/2002073000100200.htm> (India).

law, but law is everything. It puts some human beings in power to control and regulate the human behaviour in a society defined by those put in power. The author believes that the problem with legal education reports, discussions and the action thereon is stimulated by the neglect of the context in which the report, discussion, or action is placed. The kind of Indian society envisioned under the Constitution of India, and the kind of people for which the legal education is to be designed, form the essential context for the state of legal education.

The question now remains: *firstly*, what is the kind of Indian society already imagined under the Constitution of India for which legal education is to be designed? and *secondly*, what kind of India exists that constitutes the context for which we are talking of legal education?

It seems that the best approach to answering this question is to examine the state of jurisprudence teaching in legal education. It is the subject that comes the nearest to the idea that in a society everything is not law but law is everything in terms of human beings regulating and controlling human beings in myriad ways.

If legal education does not recognize the society as it exists but teaches the high sounding ends of law enshrined in preambles or Statement of Objects and Reasons, then young and highly aware law students quickly see the gap between what is taught and the reality that exists. Legal education today faces this credibility gap. It loses the game for the minds even before the game has started.

Regardless of the non-contextual architecture and content of the legal education system, designed under the Advocates Act, 1961 pursuant to the Law Commission and UGC reports on legal education, the recommended system functions through the Bar Council of India (“BCI”), according to the society constructed already. Can such legal education succeed by ignoring the context of a failed constitutional society of three post-independent generations. Legal education is to be designed for excellence. But excellence for what? The answer to this determines whether the excellence is to be for all law students or for only a few, for a constitutionally prescribed society or for an advantage grabbing society after having managed to get power. The context is unconstitutional economics in the development of India as the foundation and the patronage of personalized constitutionalism cum corruption, as the twin pillars of a constitutionally failed society.

B. OUTDATED CURRICULUM

The curriculum in majority of traditional Indian law schools has long been criticized for its inability to meet international standards, limiting the global competitiveness of graduates. Rooted in outdated teaching methods and a traditional focus on rote learning, the curriculum often neglects critical areas such as interdisciplinary studies, practical training, and emerging fields like technology law, environmental law, and international dispute resolution.

Global legal education emphasizes skills like critical thinking, negotiation, and advocacy, alongside theoretical knowledge. However, in India, majority of law schools fail to integrate these aspects, leaving

students ill-prepared for the dynamic nature of legal practice in a globalized world. The absence of modern pedagogical tools, inadequate emphasis on research and internships, and a lack of exposure to comparative legal systems further widened the gap between Indian legal education and international benchmarks. The curriculum in Legal Education is highly centric around Domestic Laws, with limited inclusion of international laws. Additional courses like cyber law, international trade, intellectual property rights, and emerging areas in technology law were often neglected and have only recently started to gain importance. Reforming the curriculum to emphasize experiential learning, interdisciplinary approaches, and global perspectives is essential. By aligning with international standards, India's legal education system can better equip students for the demands of a rapidly evolving global legal landscape.

C. LIMITED FOCUS ON PRACTICAL SKILLS

Conventional legal education in India had been overly theoretical knowledge of law and does not provide sufficient knowledge to the law students about the functioning of law courts and the skill which is needed to resolve the technicalities of law which generally arise as and when they join as legal professionals. Very minimal emphasis was given on practical skills like drafting, negotiation, and client counselling, which are essential for success in the legal profession. Consequently, the students completing their law degrees would feel handicapped as they were not equipped to draft a sale deed, gift deed, or draw summons or draft a bail application.

This gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills has limited the employability of law graduates from many institutions. Similarly, the systems of moot court training, or court visits prevalent in the faculties of law of state or central universities or affiliated law colleges, were not adequate to give practical training to the law students.

D. TEACHING PEDAGOGY

Legal profession requires a deep-rooted understanding of application of law in a particular circumstance. While traditional pedagogy methods make the students/subjects well versed with the word of law, they fail to foster problem-solving skills required to deal with practical problems. Traditional law colleges often neglected the experiential learning methods such as moot courts, legal aid clinics, internships, and case-based studies, which are essential for developing advocacy and litigation skills. This deprived the students of the understanding of the circumstance where the law is applied.

Furthermore, limited use of technology and innovative teaching tools leaves students unprepared for modern legal challenges, including those arising from globalisation and technological advancements.

Another major drawback is the lack of interdisciplinary teaching, which is vital in understanding the intersection of law with economics, sociology, technology, and environmental science. The absence of structured mentorship and skill development programs further widens the gap between academic training and professional readiness.

E. INSUFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Majority of traditional Indian law colleges faced significant challenges due to insufficient infrastructure, which hampered the quality of education and student development. Basic facilities such as classrooms, libraries, and technological resources are often inadequate, outdated, or poorly maintained. These shortcomings not only affect the learning environment but also limit opportunities for research, skill development, and holistic academic growth.

Libraries, which are the backbone of legal education, often lack comprehensive collections of books, journals, and access to modern legal databases. These law colleges often fail to provide students with essential legal resources like commentaries, international case reports, and contemporary research materials, thereby restricting their exposure to diverse legal systems and global practices. The absence of digital libraries and access to e-resources further exacerbates the issue, especially in a digital-first era where technology is central to modern legal practice.

Additionally, the lack of moot court halls, seminar rooms, and collaborative learning spaces limited students' ability to gain practical experience and engage in meaningful academic discussions. Insufficient hostel facilities, internet connectivity, and other amenities create further barriers to an enriching educational experience.

F. QUALITY HUMAN RESOURCE

The shortage of qualified faculty and the widespread practice of adhocism in traditional Indian law colleges had emerged as critical barriers to quality legal education. Many institutions struggle to attract and retain

experienced legal academics due to low remuneration, lack of career progression opportunities, and limited focus on faculty development programs. This results in a reliance on underqualified or part-time faculty who often lack the expertise to provide comprehensive legal education.

Adhocism, characterized by temporary and inconsistent teaching appointments, further exacerbated the problem. Visiting or contractual faculty members, while valuable for their practical insights, are often overburdened and unable to commit the time required for mentoring students, engaging in research, or updating curricula. This inconsistency disrupted the continuity of academic programs and left students without the stable guidance necessary for in-depth learning. Moreover, the absence of faculty with interdisciplinary expertise limited the ability to explore the intersections of law with economics, technology, and social sciences. A lack of focus on research and innovation by faculty members also restricted the academic rigor of traditional law colleges.

G. REGULATORY CHALLENGES

The enactment of the Advocates Act, 1961 by the Act of Parliament under its power under Entry 77 and 78 of the List I of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India,⁴ and the subsequent establishment of the BCI as a regulatory body,⁵ created a situation marked by ambiguous and dichotomous responsibilities in legal education. Section 4 of the Act, establishes the BCI as a Regulatory Body. Particularly, section 7(1)(h) provides for BCI to work towards promotion of legal

⁴ India Const. sch. VII, list I, Entry 77 and 78.

⁵ The Advocates Act, 1961, § 4, No. 25, Acts of Parliament, 1961.

education in the country and to lay down standards of such legal education in consultation with the other universities offering legal programs and with the Bar Councils of the states.⁶ The BCI is primarily tasked with regulating formal legal education to produce professionally competent and socially responsible lawyers. The Act empowered BCI to set minimum standards for legal education and prescribe norms for establishing new law colleges which are mandatory in nature,⁷ and oversees functions like inspection, recognition, and accreditation.⁸ The Bar Council of India Rules, 1965, enacted under the authority of the above Act,⁹ outline guidelines for legal education and degree recognition for enrolment as advocates.¹⁰ Particularly, Schedule I of the above mentioned rules have specified 21 directions issued by the BCI to the universities.¹¹ However, its role is constrained by the requirement to act in consultation with universities. Despite these mandates, the BCI has faced significant criticism, with many perceiving it as ineffective, contributing to a broader crisis in Indian legal education. Legal scholars increasingly advocate for freeing legal education from the control of the BCI to address these challenges.¹² Notably, it has been advocated that the *“BCI’s powers should be limited to regulating basic eligibility for practicing at the bar.*

⁶The Advocates Act, 1961, § 7(1)(h), No. 25, Acts of Parliament, 1961.

⁷ Bar Council Rules, Rule 21.

⁸ Bar Council Rules, Rule 8, ch. III.

⁹ The Advocates Act, 1961, § 49(d), No. 25, Acts of Parliament, 1961

¹⁰ Bar Council of India Rules, 1965.

¹¹ Bar Council Rules, Schedule I.

¹² The Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice, Chaired by Late Mr. Sushil Kumar Modi, *Strengthening Legal Education in View of Emerging Challenges before the Legal Profession* (Feb. 2024), <https://prsindia.org/policy/report-summaries/strengthening-legal-education>.

*Regulation of legal education beyond this should be entrusted with an independent authority. The Committee suggested that a National Council for Legal Education and Research be established under the proposed Higher Education Commission of India.*¹³

India witnessed an unprecedented rise in the number of law colleges over the past few decades, a trend often attributed to regulatory failures. In 1958, when the Law Commission raised concerns about legal education, there were only 43 institutions of legal education in the country.¹⁴ Over the next two decades, a significant surge occurred, with the number of law colleges increasing from 23 in 1940 to 298 by 1980—a 15-fold growth. By 2000, this number had risen to 550. According to BCI Vice-Chairman S. L. Gowda, there were approximately 1,200 law colleges in India by 2014, up from 800 in 2012. Between 2001 and 2008 alone, the Bar Council of India approved 586 new colleges. In 2014, the BCI approved around 92 colleges, nearly double the approvals in 2012, reflecting the accelerating establishment of legal institutions. While the BCI was tasked with overseeing legal education standards, the lack of stringent monitoring and enforcement led to the unchecked proliferation of substandard institutions.¹⁵ Many of these law colleges operated with inadequate infrastructure, unqualified faculty, and outdated curricula, failing to meet the minimum requirements for legal education. This deep-seated corruption and unethical practices in the affiliation and approval

¹³ The Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice Chaired by Late Mr. Sushil Kumar Modi, *Strengthening Legal Education in View of Emerging Challenges before the Legal Profession*, (Feb. 2024).

¹⁴ Law Commission of India, *14th Report*, MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE, https://lawcommissionofindia.nic.in/report_first/ (1958).

¹⁵ Bar Council of India, <http://www.barcouncilofindia.org>.

process have devastated legal education maximum. The absence of rigorous accreditation and periodic evaluations allows such institutions to persist, undermining the credibility of India's legal education system. The commercialization of education further exacerbated the problem, with private players exploiting the demand for law degrees without ensuring academic excellence. National Knowledge Commission in its report has mourned that law institutions are far from standards with hardly any infrastructure and any regard to quality of legal education. Bar Council has failed dejectedly to develop a mechanism to check all these malpractices involved in the affiliation process.¹⁶

II. BEGINNING OF REFORM AND THE BIRTH OF NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA UNIVERSITY, BANGALORE

The emergence of National Law Universities (“NLU”) marked a transformative shift in legal education in India. Established with the vision of promoting excellence, NLUs introduced a five-year integrated law program that combined theoretical knowledge with practical skills. The evolution of this NLU concept began with the establishment of National Law School of India University, Bangalore (“NLSIU”), being the brain child of Justice VR Krishna Iyer and other legal luminaries of the time who envisioned a premier institution that would provide high-quality legal education comparable to the best law schools in the world. These institutions pioneered interdisciplinary approaches, rigorous academic standards, and a focus on research and experiential learning. However,

¹⁶ Bar Council Rules, *supra* note 8.

challenges such as limited accessibility, high fees, and uneven distribution of resources across NLUs persist.

The university introduced the five-year integrated B.A., LL.B. (Hons.) program, which combined legal education with a liberal arts curriculum, providing students with a broader perspective on the law. NLSIU also emphasized moot court competitions, internships, and clinical legal education, giving students hands-on experience in the legal field.

III. THE SUCCESS OF NLSIU PROMPTED OTHER STATES TO ESTABLISH NLU

The success of NLSIU set a new benchmark for legal education in India and paved the way for the establishment of other NLUs across the country, by way of state legislations. Based on the same blueprint, government of Andhra Pradesh,¹⁷ Government of Madhya Pradesh,¹⁸ Govt. of West Bengal,¹⁹ and Govt. of Rajasthan,²⁰ passed enactments in their legislative assemblies to establish an NLU. These NLUs succeeded in producing graduates who were highly sought after by top law firms, corporations, and public sector institutions. They set a new standard for legal education in India.

¹⁷ The National Academy of Legal Studies and Research University Act, 1998, No. 34, Acts of Legislative Assembly of State of Andhra Pradesh.

¹⁸ Rashtriya Vidhi Sansthan Vishwavidyalaya Adhiniyam, 1997, No. 41, Acts of Legislative Assembly of Madhya Pradesh, 1997.

¹⁹ The West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences Act, 1999, No. 11, Acts of Legislative Assembly of the State of West Bengal, 1999.

²⁰ The National Law University, Jodhpur Act, 1999, No. 22, Acts of Legislative Assembly of State of Rajasthan, 1999.

In order to further promote the quality of legal education in all states, the Chief Justices' Conference, 2016 held on 22 & 23 April 2016,²¹ made resolutions to either set up an NLU in a state where it is absent or to strengthen the existing law schools in such states. This was followed by Joint Conference of Chief Ministers of State and Chief Justices of the High Courts on 24 April 2016 where under agenda "Review of Quality Legal Education Programmes in the State" it was resolved that:²² (i) An endeavour be made in the states where there is no National Law University for the setting up of such law schools with the aid and assistance of the state Governments; (ii) State Governments will endeavour to support National Law Schools in their territories within their economic means and (iii) As the National Law Schools which are already functional are equipped with latest technological equipment and in order to ensure optimum and proper utilization of the already existing facilities and the huge investment made it was agreed upon that the same shall be utilized for training all the stakeholder involved in the dispensation of justice.

IV. ESTABLISHING A NEW NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY: THE CHALLENGES

The establishment of a law university in India is not just an academic exercise but a critical step in shaping the future of legal education and, by extension, the legal profession. India, with its diverse

²¹ *Minutes of the Chief Justices' Conference*, SUPREME COURT OF INDIA (Apr. 22–23, 2016), <https://www.sci.gov.in/important-links/chief-justices-conference/>.

²² *Minutes of the Joint Conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices of the High Courts*, HIGH COURT OF MADHYA PRADESH (Apr. 24, 2016), https://mphc.gov.in/PDF/web_pdf/JJC/14.%20CM-CJ%20Conference/MINUES%20OF%20CM-CJ%20CONFERENCE,%2024TH%20APRIL,%202016.pdf.

legal needs and growing demand for qualified legal professionals, has seen an increasing number of law universities being established in recent years. However, the journey from conception to the operationalization of a law university is fraught with challenges that require careful planning, strategic vision, and substantial resources. This paper explores the multifaceted challenges faced in the process of setting up a new law university in India, examining both the systemic issues and the specific hurdles that need to be overcome to create a successful institution of legal education. They range from the lack of proper planning, budgetary constraints, vision and outlook of Chief Justice and the Chancellor, state bureaucratic resistance, faculty recruitment and students' admission etc.

A. LACK OF PROPER PLANNING

The establishment of NLUs in India was envisioned to revolutionize legal education by setting high academic standards and fostering excellence. However, the rapid expansion of NLUs, often without adequate planning and funding, has raised significant concerns about their sustainability and effectiveness. Many NLUs are launched with ambitious goals but without proper planning, the financial resources and infrastructure required to deliver on their promises. Insufficient funding led to inadequate facilities such as libraries, classrooms, and hostels, undermining the quality of education. Faculty recruitment suffers due to limited budgets, resulting in a shortage of qualified and experienced teachers, which directly impacts the academic experience of students.

Moreover, the absence of comprehensive planning often results in NLUs being established in remote locations without basic amenities, making it challenging to attract top-tier faculty and students.

On September 9, 2022, the Education Minister of Tripura announced the state government's decision to establish a National Law University in Tripura,²³ pursuant to which the Council of Ministers approved the allocation of 9.23 acres of land for the construction of the premises of National Law University, Tripura at Narsingharh, Agartala²⁴ and the government had exempted the authority concerned from paying the premium of the land. The minister also informed that the government has decided to spend Rs 50 Crores for five years and an amount of Rs 21 core has been allocated for establishment of the National Law University in the current fiscal budget with the commitment of immediate beginning of postgraduate courses.²⁵ He added that the Tripura government wants to make this university an institution of national importance for producing quality lawyers.²⁶

The search committee for selection of founding Vice-Chancellor was constituted by the Chief Justice of High Court of Tripura in May

²³ *Tripura's First National Law Univ. Set to Start from Mar.–Apr. 2023*, TIMES OF INDIA (Jan. 6, 2023), <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agartala/tripuras-first-national-law-univ-set-to-start-from-mar-apr-2023/articleshow/92942456.cms>.

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ *National Law University to Be Established in Tripura Soon*, INDIA TODAY (Feb. 5, 2022), <https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/news/story/national-law-university-to-be-established-in-tripura-soon-official-1909174-2022-02-05>.

2022²⁷ which recommended three names to Chief Justice in August 2022. I received notification of my appointment on September 08, 2022 through email. Same day, I got a call from the then Chief Justice who is also Chancellor of NLU Tripura suggesting that I join at the earliest so that academic activities of NLU Tripura could be started from Academic Year 2022-23. I informed him that annual convocation of my parent University i.e. NLU Odisha is scheduled on 17 September 2022 and leaving University before that would not be possible. He agreed to that and suggested that I join after convocation. However, the Executive Council of NLU Odisha decided to relieve me only on 30 September 2022.

I joined as the founding Vice-Chancellor of NLU Tripura on 30 September 2022 and the same day I met the Chief Justice, Tripura High Court and other Hon'ble Judges of the High Court. Hon'ble Chief Justice instructed me to start the admission process immediately by writing to CLAT authorities. Hon'ble Chief Justice also informed that hostel space has already been finalized and only furniture needs to be procured along with some maintenance. Classrooms and offices for the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and other staff have been demarcated in the newly constructed building of Tripura Judicial Academy Campus at Narsingarh. On 30 September 2024, I met Hon'ble Minister, Higher Education Mr. Ratan Lal Nath and the Secretary, Higher Education in Secretariat and the Hon'ble

²⁷ The interview for the purpose of selection of Vice-Chancellor, National Law University, Tripura was conducted on Aug. 07, .2022. Dr. Nachiketa Mittal, *National Law University Tripura gets Founding Vice-Chancellor*, SCC Online (Sept. 9, 2022).

Minister also suggested to start the admissions from current academic year 2022-23.

Pursuant to this, a note was prepared and formal approval was taken from the Chief Justice of the High Court of Tripura and Chancellor of NLU Tripura to start admission process with details like fee structure and schedule of admission and appointment of some contractual teaching and non-teaching staff to start the academic activities. However, Department of Higher Education suggested that even for contractual appointment posts needs to be created by the government and it can be done only through cabinet's approval. Accordingly, requirement of faculty and support staff was submitted in the prescribed format.

Pursuant to the approval of the Chancellor, CLAT Consortium was approached to allow NLU Tripura to take admissions based on CLAT 2022 scores. The permission was granted by the CLAT Consortium to use CLAT score. Later Rs 5,00,000/- was also paid to obtain the membership of CLAT Consortium. Admission process was started for the Academic Year 2022-23. This was also informed to the Higher Education Department and money was also claimed for this purpose. The admission notification was prepared and the Registrar (I/c), NLUT sent it to the Higher Education Department and it was published by the Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Govt. of Tripura in the newspapers. I had been persistently writing to the Higher Education Department for funds, hostel furniture for 70 students with specific request that academic session will start from December-January 2023 but no development happened. Seeing not much progress, I

requested the then Chief Justice (i.e. Chancellor NLU Tripura) to intervene once again and pursuant to that a meeting was convened in the High Court on 02 November 2022. The learned Chief Secretary, Finance Secretary, Law Secretary and officials of Public Works Dept. attended the meeting. Due to bad health of Chief Justice the Meeting was chaired by Hon'ble Justice Arindam Lodh, Judge, High Court of Tripura who was also part of Governing Council and Executive Council of NLU Tripura. It was promised by the officials that all the work will be done on priority and keeping in mind the schedule of classes i.e. January 02, 2023. All the officials graciously agreed to expedite the work with respect to maintenance of the hostel and procurement of furniture, so that classes can be started from 02 January 2022.

Pursuant to this meeting and as a follow up, we met again in the office of the Finance Secretary, Govt. of Tripura on November 02, 2022. The Higher Education Secretary, Director Higher Education and Law Secretary were also present in the meeting. As suggested by the Higher Education Department we submitted in the prescribed format for creation of posts. The Dept. agreed to expedite this process so that appointments can be made before 02 January 2023. And only after these meetings and promises made by the secretaries, we published the admission schedule and notice to deposit fees on the University website. It appeared from all the meetings that everyone is on board to start the NLU in Tripura from Academic Year 2022-23. All the important meetings were minuted in order to ensure accountability. As a follow up meeting, we along with the Law Secretary and PWD officials made a visit to the

proposed hostel building on 03 November 2022. As suggested by the Law Secretary, I once again wrote letters to the Higher Education Department to give approvals to PWD to start the work. The Higher Education Department gave administrative approval and some funds were also transferred to the University in the first week of December 2022.²⁸ I also requested the Law Secretary to convene a meeting with Hon'ble Chief Minister with a view that work related to NLU Tripura is expedited. The Meeting was tentatively scheduled on 17 November 2022 at 6 PM but later it was postponed on the ground of non-availability of the finance minister and finance secretary.

Separate written communication was made to the Chief Engineers of PWD and Chief Engineers (Rural Development) to expedite work keeping in mind the 02 January 2022 deadline. Some progress was made and a tender was issued in this regard in the first week of December 2022 and the Chief Engineer promised me that he will start the process of procurement of furniture also. In the meantime, I also drafted some essential Rules such as Examination Rules, Hostel Rules, Anti-Sexual Harassment Rules etc. which also received approval from the Chancellor and it was uploaded on the University website.

The Chief Justice and Founding Chancellor NLU Tripura superannuated from office on November 11, 2022 and with his departure from the office, the accountability of all concerned to start academic session by 2022-23 also departed. All the work related to procurement of furniture, hostel maintenance etc. got slowed down. On December 07,

²⁸ Rs.33 Lakhs were given to NLU Tripura in first instalment.

2022 a review meeting was conducted by the Minister, Higher Education, Govt. of Tripura. Meeting was attended by learned Advocate General, Chief Secretary, Finance Secretary, Law, Secretary, Director Higher Education and other officials of the Govt. The Govt. in the meeting expressed its inability to start the academic session from AY 2022-23. It was resolved that the admission process started for academic year 2022-23 by NLU Tripura must be cancelled on the technical ground of state domicile and fee must be refunded to students. It was decided to commence academic session from AY 2023-24 by conducting its own admission test. I cautioned members about litigation as students have already deposited fee but it was suggested that law department will take care of any litigation.

It was very clear from entire episode that due to pressure of Founding Chancellor and Chief Justice; High Court of Tripura the University was started in hurry. Even the NLU Tripura Act 2022 was passed with so many mistakes and errors. Once the Chief Justice retired from office the government became reluctant. It is also pertinent to mention that State Assembly Elections in Tripura were due in February 2023 and government was completely in election mode which diluted the entire process of creating infrastructure for NLUT.

Later, a petition was also filed in the High Court of Delhi and Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. Delhi High Court petition was disposed of on the ground that candidate once got admission back in her original place. However, the Supreme Court criticised the National Law University, Tripura and the government of Tripura and rightly so on the

manner in which it cancelled admissions for its 2022-23 academic session for want of domicile quota which was in reality not a reason.²⁹ The reason was that government could not provide furniture for 60 students and some other required infrastructure. Justice Kaul remarked, *“People have chosen to seek admissions... What is this? This is a mockery of the NLU setup... you should not have advertised that such a college exists. Please file an affidavit. You can’t play with children’s careers.”* Justice Dhulia added, *“The reason which you gave earlier is hardly any reason...No domicile quota... What is this? You could have stated that there is no proper teaching staff.”* The Court finally disposed of the case with this condition that the candidates who are left and are desirous of seeking admission, be accommodated for the admission of 2023- 2024 provided that they show that they had got admission. The critical observation of the apex court played a critical role in getting minimum infrastructure to commence academic session from AY 2023-24.³⁰ With much difficulty we could start academic session for the AY 2023-24 from 17 November 2023.

B. BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS

NLUs, being the state universities,³¹ as they established under the State Act, face shortage of funds. The crisis is more in states with limited resources like Tripura. NLUs do not get regular grants from the UGC due to which they have to independently raise funds to manage affairs. However, that too has its own limitations in terms of limited grants offered by the respective state governments, lack of uniform structure for

²⁹ Somya Sanjay v. National Law University, Tripura, 2023 SCC OnLine SC 1257.

³⁰ *Id.*

the same and fees increment. Some states gave support for capital grant and some initial support and then leave it to run on its own resources. Some states consider recurring expenditure also but only in limited way leaving NLUs to run with market-oriented approach. Rising fee in universities are now a new phenomenon especially in NLUs but despite that Universities are facing financial crunch.

The construction of the first phase of the Maharashtra National Law University Nagpur which includes 13 buildings, has remained incomplete due to lack of funds. This is despite of sourcing funds from various modes such as cutting down salary,³² a block grant of INR 7 crores approved by the Maharashtra Cabinet and a loan of INR 50 crores.³³

Dharmashastra National Law University, Jabalpur, MP (“DNLU”) was established in the year 2018 by the Madhya Pradesh Dharmashastra National Law University Act. The Madhya Pradesh government allotted 125 acres of land and 99.85 crores for the first phase of campus construction. However, even after five years of its establishment, it runs on a Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited-rented campus as students await the sanctioned funds to be released by the government of Madhya Pradesh for construction.³⁴ The Students of the DNLU,

³² *MNLU Nagpur Faculty Write to VC, Paid Only Half Salary amid Funds Crunch at University*, BAR AND BENCH (Jan. 6, 2023), <https://www.barandbench.com/news/mnlu-nagpur-faculty-write-vc-paid-only-half-salary-amid-funds-crunch-at-university>.

³³ *MNLU Receives Rs. 7 Cr Grant from State Govt.*, TIMES OF INDIA (Jan. 5, 2023), <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/mnlu-receives-rs7cr-grant-from-state-govt/articleshow/113644088.cms>.

³⁴ *Reimagining the National Law Universities as Truly Being National*, THE LEAFLET (Jan. 5, 2023), <https://theleaflet.in/education/reimagining-the-national-law-universities-as-truly-being-national>, Visited on 22 November, 2024.

Jabalpur made a representation before Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shivraj Singh Chauhan, urging him to release the funds allocated by the State Government for construction of a Permanent University Campus.³⁵ There are numerous and continuous instances of protest by students demanding very basic facilities in various NLUs. NLU Odisha saw protests over a girls' hostel with proper amenities, a "world-class" library that was promised to them, and an affordable fee structure. The Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law ("RGNUL"), Patiala, Himanchal Pradesh National Law University Shimla and National Law University and Judicial Academy Assam all witnessed strong students protest against basic infrastructural facilities.

Barring few NLUs which get some regular financial help from state governments, many including NLSIU have faced budgetary constraints at some point of time. Given straitened circumstances, many national law schools have been forced to work harder to make ends meet, partly by beginning to think more like businesses. The prevalence of financial constraints in many NLUs in India has led to a staffing pattern that heavily relies on Assistant Professors and Research Associates, while appointments at higher academic ranks such as Associate Professors and Professors remain relatively rare.

The story of NLU Tripura is not different.³⁶ The President of India Her Excellency Smt. Draupadi Murmu laid the foundation of NLU Tripura on October 12, 2022 in presence of Chief Minister, Education &

³⁶ NLU Tripura Act, 2022, § 33, No. 3, Acts of Tripura Legislative Assembly, 2022.

Law Minister, Chief Justice of High Court of Tripura.³⁷ The architectural model which was presented before Her Excellency was a state of art campus with all modern facilities and with an estimated cost of INR 350 Crores.

Later, detailed plan was prepared by the Vice-Chancellor and got approval of the Building Committee, Executive Council and Governing Council headed by the Chief Justice. The work was to be executed by the PWD Tripura. In the First phase the tenders for Academic and Administrative Block were floated in February 2024 with an estimated cost of INR 120 Crores. After several requests, reminders and meetings of the building committee, the tender was finalized and agency was shortlisted in August 2024. However, PWD expressed its inability to give work order to the shortlisted agency because of lack of sanction letter from Higher Education Department. It was then informed that government did not have requisite funds in the name of the University. In the second Governing Council Meeting held on 28 August 2024, the Chief Secretary promised and committed that funds will be arranged at the earliest. It was also resolved in the meeting that Hostels must also be constructed on priority basis and construction of Academic Block and Hostels must be started immediately. The tender for the Hostel was also floated in October 2024. However, construction work could not commence due to unavailability of fund until November 2024. University

³⁷ *President Droupadi Murmu Unveils First National Law University Centre in Tripura*, HINDUSTAN TIMES (Jan. 5, 2023), <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/president-droupadi-murmu-unveils-first-national-law-university-centre-in-tripura-101665572169122.html>.

once started its academic activities cannot stop and will keep on adding students every year. This will lead to lack of basic amenities and infrastructure in the university. This is one of the biggest challenges which every NLU has faced at some point of time.

C. VISION AND OUTLOOK OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF HIGH COURT AS CHANCELLOR OF A NEWLY ESTABLISHED NLU

The role of the Chief Justice of the High Court as Chancellor of a newly established NLU carries a significant weightage. His/her vision and outlook aimed at shaping the institution is at a centre of legal excellence. As Chancellor, the Chief Justice brings a wealth of legal acumen and a high ethical standard to the university's administration, helping to set a foundation for the institution's values, educational quality, and strategic direction. However, when the Chief Justice of the High Court, serving as Chancellor of a newly established NLU shows limited interest in the institution's development, it can have several implications for the NLU's growth and effectiveness. Such lack of engagement may stem from various factors such as overwhelming judicial responsibilities, limited administrative support, or unfamiliarity with academic administration. Regardless of the cause, the impact can be significant:

1. With the Chief Justice's primary focus on judicial duties, NLU-related administrative decisions may be delayed. This can affect the university's ability to make timely policy changes, fill key faculty positions, allocate budgets, or implement new programs, hindering its overall growth and responsiveness.

2. The Chancellor often plays a crucial role in securing funding, partnerships, and resources necessary for the NLU's growth especially in its establishment phase. With minimal involvement, the NLU may miss out on critical opportunities to secure government or private sector funding, grants, or other institutional support, affecting infrastructure, faculty recruitment, and student facilities.

D. STATE BUREAUCRATIC RESISTANCE

Establishing an NLU in a state is an ambitious and transformative endeavour aimed at elevating legal education and research. However, such an initiative often encounters bureaucratic resistance, rooted in structural, procedural, and cultural dynamics. Resistance typically stems from concerns about resource allocation, overlap with existing institutions, and the disruption of entrenched administrative norms. Bureaucratic inertia, compounded by inter-departmental silos, may delay crucial decisions regarding land allocation, funding, or infrastructure development.

As the nodal department, Higher Education is responsible for formulating the university's vision, drafting legislative proposals, and securing administrative approvals. The Finance Department plays a pivotal role in allocating and approving the required budget. This includes funding for land acquisition, construction, salaries, scholarships, and operational costs. Timely release of funds, efficient financial planning, and cost management are essential to avoid delays. The Law Department ensures that the legal framework for the establishment of the NLU is robust and in compliance with constitutional mandates. Department of Public Works (“**PWD**”) oversees the construction of the university's

physical infrastructure, including classrooms, libraries, hostels, and residential quarters. This involves preparing detailed project reports, coordinating with architects and contractors, and ensuring adherence to timelines and quality standards. PWD also collaborates with local authorities to address utility requirements such as electricity, water, and roads. Coordination with these department and outlook of secretaries heading these departments is of the crucial challenges in the establishment of university.

E. FACULTY RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The success of a law university largely depends on the quality of its faculty, who are responsible for not only teaching but also mentoring students, conducting research, and contributing to the academic community. However, attracting top legal scholars and practitioners can be difficult, especially in a new institution and that too established in a remote location which does not have good road, rail or air connectivity. It must also be emphasised that number of Professors and Associate Professors in majority of NLUs in India are very less. No teacher at the level of Associate Professor and Professor is willing to join any new National Law School especially those in remote places and therefore majority of law schools are making contractual appointments as Assistant Professors, Research Associates, Teaching Assistants and guest faculties to engage classes. Some of the senior law schools have managed to get Professor on their roll but they were those who worked for the institution right from its foundation days. Many law universities are appointing retired professors as adjunct professor to meet the minimum mandatory

requirement of UGC Rules. It becomes ironical that being a centre of excellence, majority of National Law Universities are not able to appoint prominent professors of law. Reasons are two-fold: *firstly*, a professor is not willing to join NLU by seeing the service conditions *vis-à-vis* work load and *secondly*, the Vice-Chancellors are not keen to engage senior professors because they feel more comfortable with young teachers whom they can command. The review commission of Gujarat National Law University pointed out this concern of lack of experienced professors in the university in following words:

“the university certainly needs at least half a dozen senior faculty members (Professors) to handle P.G. classes, supervise work of centres of studies, guide the research and training activities of the institution and assist the Director in administration. If competent persons are not available for regular service, they may be engaged on contract for five years or more from among retired scholars or other scholars of eminence. This is an urgent necessity for GNLU to pick up speed in its academic development.”

The Commission also brought to notice the fact that all the senior academic and administrative positions are filled by Assistant Professor or Associate Professors. Though it may be economically viable considering financial constraints of NLUs but the truth of the matter stands that majority of NLUs are not able to attract best minds. In order to attract quality faculty, the governing bodies of NLU Tripura passed a resolution to provide a special allowance of Rs 50,000/- per annum for faculty from other states to travel to their home towns, in order to incentivise the faculty from other states to join NLU Tripura. Regretfully, the resolution

was refused by the Finance Department of the State Government stating that NLU being a state university, its faculty could not be treated specially, and therefore, the State Government also refused to consider Dearness Allowance for NLU faculty.

F. STUDENT ADMISSION AND DIVERSITY

Admitting a diverse and talented student body is crucial for the vibrancy and inclusivity of a law university. However, ensuring diversity in terms of gender, socio-economic background, and geographic representation can be challenging. Attracting good students to NLUs especially in remote locations and the North-Eastern region, poses significant challenges. Factors include lack of awareness about the institution's quality, geographical remoteness, and limited exposure to career opportunities in law. Students often prefer NLUs in metropolitan areas due to better connectivity, perceived prestige, life-style and access to internships. Additionally, socio-economic barriers and inadequate outreach efforts further deter talented candidates. Addressing these issues requires focused campaigns to promote legal education, offering scholarships, enhancing infrastructure, and emphasizing the unique cultural and academic opportunities that NLUs in such regions can provide to aspiring students.

These challenges, however, are deep-rooted and manifold, and range from financial scarcity, deplorable quality of faculty to sloppy administration and poor infrastructure. Each of these should be addressed at its own level in a systematic manner, lest many of these institutes run the risk of crumbling in the foreseeable future.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Establishing a new law university in India is a complex and challenging endeavour that requires careful planning, substantial resources, and the ability to navigate a wide range of legal, financial, infrastructural, academic, administrative, social, cultural, political, and long-term challenges. However, the successful establishment of such an institution can have a profound impact on the legal profession and society.

The challenges outlined in this article are not insurmountable, but they require a concerted effort from all stakeholders involved, including the Chief Justice of India, Chief Justices of the High Courts, government bodies, educators, legal professionals, and the broader community. By addressing these challenges thoughtfully and strategically, it is possible to establish a law university that not only meets the needs of today's students but also contributes to the future of legal education and the legal profession in India.

The NLUs being state universities, it is pertinent to contrast them with other premier national institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology (“**IITs**”), the Indian Institutes of Management (“**IIMs**”), and previously known as Regional Engineering Institution, the National Institutes of Technology (“**NITs**”). These national institutions are considered the epitome of higher education in India due to their higher standards of infrastructure, autonomy, transparency, diversity, interdisciplinarity and international standing.

. Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh termed these universities as “*islands of excellence in the sea of mediocrity*”. While these words seem appealing, the reality is slightly different. NLUs are often side-lined by their respective states when it comes to the allocation of funds. Such allocation, when made, is grossly insufficient for a large university to sustain. This insufficiency manifests itself in myriad ways. Despite the high fees, many universities have dilapidated structures with cramped spaces or no space of their own at all.

VI. POSSIBLE WAY FORWARD

NLUs being the creations of state legislature are financially dependent on the mercy of state governments and the fees collected from the students. Some state governments with fair number of financial resources provide financial assistance, but poor states like Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya are likely to suffer. These institutions must be elevated to the levels of IITs, NITs, AIIMS and IIMs, by declaring them as institutions of national importance (“**INIs**”) and providing the benefits of such accreditation. The INI status will bring benefits, in terms of regular funds, concessionary grants, autonomy, diversity, transparency, exposure and opportunities. There cannot be two opinions on the fact that legal education is a building block for the development of the bar and bench of the future and its impact penetrates the legislative and the executive branches of governance. Hence, the field of legal education and its development must not be overlooked. Some of the plausible ways for strengthening the NLUs are explored hereunder.

A. NATIONALIZATION OF NLUS

Two individual efforts were made in this direction. In 2016, the historian Prof. Sugata Bose, the then Member of Parliament from Trinamool Congress, introduced a bill in the Lok Sabha seeking to provide a national status to NLUs. Later in 2019, Ms. Meenakshi Lekhi, a Member of Parliament once again made an effort to introduce a private member bill, namely the 'National Law Universities Bill, 2019', aimed at complete nationalisation of NLUs by granting them the status of INI. While the 2016 Bill intended to grant solid national character to these institutions but mandated that effective control be in the hands of the state but 2019 Bill in contrast, proposed that complete control and administration be bestowed to the central government. However, these bills lapsed. The Chief Justice of India and Chief Justice of the High Courts may be persuaded to pass a resolution in this regard on the lines of that of Joint Conference of Chief Ministers of State and Chief Justices of High Courts on 'Review of Quality of Legal Education Programs' wherein in 2016, a resolution was passed to expedite the establishment of National Law Universities in every state. The Consortium of National Law Universities must deliberate on this issue. In this regard, it must be highlighted that conversion of State Universities to Central Universities is not a novel phenomenon. For instance, the previous known Regional Engineering Institution has been converted into premier engineering Institutions of National Importance, now known as NITs.

B. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND MANAGEMENT

Establishing a new law university is a capital-intensive project. The financial challenges associated with setting up such an institution can be daunting, particularly in the context of India's diverse economic landscape. Building a law university requires the development of state-of-the-art infrastructure that meets the needs of students, faculty, and staff. This includes not only academic buildings but also libraries, moot court halls, research centres, residential facilities, and recreational spaces.

State Governments must not start the project unless adequate budget is allocated. It is ideal that first infrastructure is created and then academic activities must be commenced. Starting university in a make-shift arrangement diverts the attention and dilutes the quality. Beyond the initial investment, the ongoing operational costs, including faculty salaries, maintenance of facilities, and provision of student services, must be managed sustainably. Financial mismanagement or a lack of sufficient funds can lead to the deterioration of academic standards and, ultimately, the failure of the institution.

C. CONTINUOUS FACULTY DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Considering the fact that best legal minds do not prefer to join a new NLU, continuous training of faculty in teaching pedagogy, evaluation including setting of question papers, research, and publications is vital for maintaining academic excellence in any new NLU. Such initiatives ensure that educators stay updated with evolving pedagogical methods, legal developments, and interdisciplinary approaches. Training programs focus on enhancing classroom delivery through innovative teaching techniques,

integrating technology, and fostering student engagement. Workshops and seminars are organized to equip faculty with advanced research methodologies and promote high-quality publications in reputed journals. Regular engagement with national and international experts, collaborations, and participation in conferences strengthens the faculty's academic and professional competencies.

D. ESTABLISHING GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES

Setting up a governance structure that ensures transparency, accountability, and academic freedom is a critical challenge. This includes the formation of governing bodies such as the Governing Council, Executive Council, Academic Council, Finance Committee and various committees that oversee different aspects of the university's functioning. Ensuring that these bodies function independently yet collaboratively is essential for maintaining the integrity and quality of the institution. The establishment of efficient administrative processes is equally important. This includes everything from student admissions and examinations to faculty recruitment and financial management.

E. LEADERSHIP AND VISION

The leadership of a new law university plays a pivotal role in its success. The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor must have a clear vision and coordination for the institution and the ability to implement it effectively. Leadership challenges include not only managing the day-to-day operations of the university but also building its reputation, fostering a culture of academic excellence, and ensuring the institution's long-term

sustainability. A visionary and keen Chief Justice can create a lot of positive contribution in the establishment of new National Law University.

F. BUREAUCRATIC COORDINATION

Establishing a National Law University in a state requires seamless coordination among key government departments to ensure smooth execution of policies and resource allocation. The collaborative efforts of the Departments of Higher Education, Finance, Law, and Public Works are critical to overcoming logistical, regulatory, and financial challenges in such a complex project.

G. SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE AND OUTREACH

The establishment of a new law university in India also involves navigating various social and cultural challenges. These challenges can impact everything from the institution's location and accessibility to its ability to attract students and faculty from diverse backgrounds. Gaining social acceptance for a new law university, particularly in underdeveloped areas, can be challenging. There may be resistance from local communities, who may not immediately see the benefits of such an institution. Moreover, reaching out to potential students and creating awareness about the university and its programs is essential for attracting applicants. This requires a concerted effort in terms of marketing, outreach, and engagement with schools, colleges, and the local community.

H. CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND INCLUSIVITY

India's cultural diversity presents both opportunities and challenges for a new law university. Ensuring that the university is culturally sensitive and inclusive is essential for creating a welcoming environment for students and faculty from different backgrounds. This includes not only promoting diversity in admissions and recruitment but also fostering an inclusive campus culture that respects and celebrates different cultural identities. In NLU's viz. NLU Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya, Jharkhand, integrating tribal students with other students is essential for fostering inclusivity and cultural harmony. This can be achieved by creating a supportive academic environment that values diversity. Organizing cultural exchange programs, workshops, and festivals celebrating tribal heritage can promote mutual understanding and respect. Mentorship initiatives, where senior students guide tribal students, can ease their transition into university life. Special focus on bridging language and academic gaps through preparatory courses or skill-building sessions is crucial.

I. POLITICAL SUPPORT AND PATRONAGE

Political support and patronage are crucial for the growth and success of a new NLU. Strong backing from the state and central governments can ensure adequate funding, infrastructure development, and policy alignment. Support in the form of legislative measures, scholarships for students, and faculty recruitment initiatives can elevate the university's stature. Engaging political leaders as advocates for the university helps in securing collaborations, national visibility, and regional

outreach. Patronage can also foster connections with public institutions and industries, enhancing placement opportunities and research funding. The state political leaders must be convinced that law university in the state will directly benefit the state in ways like advancing the law and legal processes and their role in national development, directly benefitting the local communities through legal aid programs and social outreach activities, and, through its action-oriented research for rights-based law and governance reform including through interventions in various fora such as governmental and judicial institutions. A harmonious relationship with policymakers ensures the university's sustained development as a centre of excellence in legal education. However, on a cautious note, this can also lead to challenges if there is undue political interference in the governance or academic functioning of the institution. Balancing the need for political support with the need to maintain academic independence is a delicate task.

J. REPUTATION BUILDING

Building a reputation as a centre of excellence in legal education is a long-term challenge that requires consistent effort and strategic planning. This involves not only maintaining high academic standards but also engaging in research, hosting conferences and seminars, publishing scholarly work, and establishing collaborations with other institutions, both nationally and internationally. For instance, NLU Tripura an MoU with National Institute of technology Agartala for various academic and

technological collaborations,³⁸ and with Panchayat Department, Government of Tripura to provide handholding support to gram panchayats in development of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (“**GPDP**”).³⁹ Encouraging students to participate in moot courts, conferences/workshops, other such competitions will enhance the visibility of the law schools. A strong reputation is essential for attracting top students, faculty, and funding.

K. ALUMNI RELATIONS AND NETWORKING

Developing a strong alumni network is another long-term challenge. Alumni can play a crucial role in the success of a law university by providing mentorship, facilitating internships and job placements for students, and contributing to the university’s development through donations and fundraising. Building and maintaining strong relationships with alumni requires sustained effort and effective communication strategies. Since the NLU’s also offer one year LL.M. courses, therefore they must start their alumni base, immediately after the completion of one year of university study, which may be beneficial for internship and several other purposes.

I have made above suggestions in all humility merely based on my experiences as founding member of NLU Odisha and founding Vice-

³⁸ Abhijit Nath, *National Law University Tripura & National Institute of Technology Agartala Inks MoU for Academic and Technical Collaboration*, NORTHEAST TODAY (July 1, 2024), <https://tripurachronicle.in/local-news/nlu-tripura-and-nit-agartala-inks-mou-for-academic-and-technical-collaboration/>.

³⁹ Hiranya Bhandarkar, *National Law University Tripura Joins Forces with Rural Development Department to Empower Panchayats*, BAR & BENCH (Sept. 4, 2024), <https://www.barandbench.com/news/lawschools/national-law-university-tripura-joins-forces-with-rural-development-department-to-empower-panchayats>.

Chancellor, NLU Tripura and triggered by a desire to boost the standard of legal education in India. This will eventually improve the image of the legal profession and the justice delivery system in public esteem. As an important stakeholder of legal system, we need to do frank introspection which demands an honest admission of our weaknesses without which the improvement cannot start. Let me finish this paper with a line from the poem “*The Glories of Our Blood and State*”,⁴⁰ by James Shirley, explaining how fate is inescapable and how death is ultimate leveller, only the person good deeds will endure in this world after his or her departure

*Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.*

⁴⁰ James Shirley, *The Glories of Our Blood and State*, POETRY FOUNDATION, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/56372/the-glories-of-our-blood-and-state> (last visited Jan. 10, 2025).