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CLAT Advice: Do Not Join Any Lower Ranked National Law University (NLU) and What to Do Instead [UPDATED WITH FAQs ANSWERED]

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A small piece of advice for CLAT aspirants: Please do NOT join the lower ranked NLUs (anything after GNLU/HNLU).

It's better to join a good law college in Delhi or Mumbai (or even Bangalore and Pune) than study in the lower ranked NLUs.

The reason is simple and two-fold.

One, in a city like Delhi or Mumbai you'd have something good **(a conference, workshop, or a talk, etc.)** happening nearly every weekend. Attending these would help you improve your knowledge/skills, develop your overall personality/self, and build your contacts.

Also, because you'd have a good number of quality organizations (NGOs, law firms, lawyer offices, etc.) based in these cities, you can easily opt for **after-college hours internships** which will again build your skills/knowledge and your contacts.

The above will translate into more avenues for all-round development and gaining 'employ-ability mileage' (skills, experiences, networking, etc.)

The situation at the bottom NLUs is bad on nearly all fronts (except for the fact that your peer group will be smart and hard-working).

The situation is bad specifically on 2 fronts:

1. The placements at ALL lower ranked NLUs have been dismal throughout the years. Please check the stats on LegallyIndia and BarandBench and do your independent research.

2. Faculty (generally speaking) is pathetic across the colleges (including in top NLUs with an exception of NLU Delhi).

A lot of people have argued *"Give these colleges time. Even NLSIU took time to build*". However, this argument has been going for way too long with no visible sign of things improving.

Sadly, no new NLU (with the exception of NLU Delhi) has shown even a glimmer of hope.

Sorry for being pessimistic here. But as I've said, there's an alternative.

You might, yet again, assert: *"No. NLUx will do well because of the NLU tag*". Well, it might. But if you have to answer *"Will it do well?"* by analyzing the NLU history and making an educated guess about its future, the answer will be a clear NO.

PS- I have been watching the development of law schools closely since 2008 and the above is what my advice for my cousins and young friends would be.

PPS- About me: I graduated from NUJS in 2013. I run Lawctopus.com, a popular website for law students (you are here). My book 'Law as a Career' was published in 2015 by LexisNexis, a leading legal publisher.

UPDATE [June 1, 2018, 8.55 PM]

Based on the phone calls and comments we've received, here are some answers to the FAQs:

1. To find the good law schools in Delhi or Mumbai check out rankings by some popular magazines or the NIRF rankings. While these rankings are NOT to be trusted fully, the top 25-30 list will give you some idea about what good options could be.

NMIMS Mumbai, for example, is a good option. Check their 2018 placements here on LegallyIndia.

2. The above advice does NOT apply to LLM programs. LLB graduates are best advised to get in touch with friends/connections who have done the LLM program from the concerned NLU.

If you are doing an LLM program for the NLU tag, the way ahead is pretty obvious: the more reputed the NLU the better.

If you doing an LLM program for serious research, finding 2-3 great faculty members at a particular law school under whom you'd want to work under should hold you in good stead. Your quest then becomes finding the right faculty/mentor than finding the right law school (you can

easily email/call these faculty members for a chat).

3. NLSIU Bangalore, NALSAR Hyderabad, NUJS Kolkata, NLU Delhi (not CLAT, but still), NLIU Bhopal, NLU Jodhpur, and GNLU Gandhinagar are top institutes. HNLU Raipur is good too.

If you are enamored by the NLU tag, you can consider MNLU Mumbai, RMLNLU Lucknow, NUALS Kochi, and NLU Odisha (versus these, I'd still advise going to a good college in Delhi or Mumbai, but still). For now, I'd strongly advise against going to NLUs other than these.

4. Some commenters have accused me of basing my advice on the 'number of law firm recruitments'. Apologies if it comes across like that, but nothing could be farther from the truth.

I've personally and professionally (through Lawctopus) encouraged alternative (even non-legal) career paths. Delhi or Mumbai (like any other big city) offer you more avenues to explore a lot of things.

5. This advice won't hold for true for those who want an alternative path. Some of you may want to work in rural regions or even explore living in a smaller place, and that's great! There cannot be a one-size-fits-all piece of advice.