

# NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY

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सत्ये सिधतो धर्मः

The National Law University Odisha (NLUO) promises to be an exciting new development in the field of legal education. A very new institution, its establishing Act of legislature was notified as recently as April 2009 and within a span of four months, classes commenced with the entrance being conducted in May. The University has made a name for itself by earning laurels with excellent performance of its students in various seminars, conferences and moot courts.

NLUO is located in Cuttack, a city dating back to over a thousand years, and also boasting a rich legal heritage – not only is the Orissa High Court situated here, but also some of the finest lawyers and judges of the country trace their roots back to this city. Currently the University has admitted students from no less than twenty-five States, representing a diverse range of socio-economic, ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. We hope that in the years to come, students from even more divers backgrounds will join NLUO, thereby underscoring its truly national character. There was a time, in pre-and early independent India when legal education was treated as a pathway to a vast array of opportunities.

The decline in standards began around the 1960s. This period was marked by a mushrooming of law colleges, most of which met Bar Council standards only in form. Whatever the real reasons for the Bar Council's inability to stem the rot, one major factor could have been the sheer number of students enrolled at these spurious institutions. Law had become the last resort of the incompetent and perhaps the first of the indolent; for as matters stood then, if one paid the fee and stuck through the stipulated period the degree was almost assured.

The upshot of this abysmal situation was that it jolted the legal fraternity out of its stupor. It was in early 1970s that the Legal Education Committee of the Bar Council of India proposed the establishment of a national institution of excellence to promote legal research and scholarship. The proposed institution eventually took shape after thirteen long years in utero. The National Law School of India University (NLSIU) was set up at Bangalore and was an immediate success. So much so that it inspired a paradigm shift in legal education in the country. The law school at Bangalore rescued legal education from the mire it had sunk into by instituting an unprecedented curricula and methodology. It has since paved the way and provided the template for most law schools.