

Your legal
partner in
India's complex
landscape

smalegal
LEGAL ADVISORY SERVICES



About Us

Founded in 2001, SMA Legal is a boutique legal advisory firm dedicated to helping those who need assistance or guidance to deal with their legal matters. Whilst upholding honesty, integrity, transparency, professionalism and justice in India's complex legal landscape, SMA Legal goes the extra mile to meet the needs of its clients to their complete satisfaction. With a commitment to providing specialized, client-centric solutions, the firm is a trusted partner for foreign missions, foreign businesses, and foreign individuals, who have an interest in India. With expertise in Indian Business Advisory, Corporate and Commercial Law, Alternative Dispute Resolution, NRI Services, Expert Work and Investigation Services, the firm focuses on efficient and high-quality legal services. Under the guidance of the firm's founder, Mr. Shantanu Mohan Puri, an Expert in Indian law(s), the firm has established a reputation for excellence and high client satisfaction. The firm is committed to delivering tailored legal solutions, contributing to the cause of justice, and expanding its global footprint. SMA Legal leaves no stone unturned when it comes to meeting the needs of its clients.



Our Vision

SMA Legal's vision is to be a trusted leader in the legal advisory market, serving a growing client base and expanding its services to adapt to evolving client needs and industry trends. The firm aims to continue providing specialized, client-centric legal solutions that meet the distinct legal demands of its clients.

Our Mission

SMA Legal is dedicated to providing expert legal guidance, reducing risk in complex legal matters, and offering efficient dispute resolution and strategic insights for businesses. The firm is committed to delivering tailored, high-quality legal services that address the unique legal needs of its clients, ultimately leading to better outcomes and greater confidence in their legal decisions.



Firm Culture

SMA Legal prioritizes personalized client solutions, transparency, and professionalism. The firm's culture is rooted in a direct and professional approach to resolving legal issues, ensuring client satisfaction, and building a strong reputation. It strives to maintain consistent growth and market visibility while delivering cost-effective, high-quality legal services. The team is dedicated to upholding the highest ethical standards and providing tailored approach to meet the objectives and requirements of its clients.

Our Achievements



SMA Legal has established itself as a unique player in the legal advisory market, offering specialized expertise in high-profile cases and non-contentious legal matters. The firm's commitment to staying updated with evolving legal trends and delivering client-centric solutions has created a significant advantage for its clients. Additionally, the firm takes pride in its contribution as the single largest due diligence provider to foreign missions across India.

60+

Consultations/Advice
given per year

400+

Disputes resolved
till date

2.5K+

Cases handled
per year

What sets us apart



Specialized Expertise

Our deep understanding of non-contentious legal matters in India and our Founder's Expertise in Indian law(s) set us apart as a niche firm dedicated to tailored solutions.



Focus on Non-Contentious Solutions

By avoiding court litigation and offering client-centric alternatives, we provide a fresh and distinct option in the legal advisory market.



Global Reach

With over two decades of experience, we serve clients worldwide, offering expert guidance and a fresh approach to navigating India's complex legal landscape.



Client-Centric Approach

We prioritize our clients' unique objectives, ensuring every legal solution is relevant, efficient, and aligned with their needs.



Areas of Practice

SMA Legal assists its clients with non-contentious work. This non-contentious work is spread across six primary areas which look at helping individuals, companies, private equity and venture capital funds, country missions to India, international organisations and private organisations navigate the maze of Indian laws and procedures with ease and the highest standards of professionalism making working in India smoother and efficient. Based upon most of the work done over more than the past 2 decades on a Pan-India basis, SMA Legal has created expertise, a resident knowledge pool of human resources, legal prowess and achieved repeated success for its clients in the following areas of work:

India Business Advisory

India has emerged as a leading global economy which is attracting substantive foreign investment and interest from foreign companies, individuals and business organisations.

SMA Legal is a specialized legal advisory firm that helps international organizations setup their operations in India with an in-depth knowledge of the government regulations, local market insights, industry and the competitors making your business setup smoother and efficient.

The firm formulates, executes, and monitors strategies for companies, individuals and business organisations from across the world by offering advice and assistance with

- Business structure selection,
- Licenses and permissions,
- Mergers and Acquisition,
- Company formation and incorporation,
- Compliances and regulatory requirements,
- Land purchase and real estate,
- Legal auditing services,
- Legal Due Diligence,
- Labour Laws,
- Trademark and Copyrights,
- Accounting and Payroll services, and
- Business exit strategies

Corporate And Commercial Law

Corporate and Commercial law forms the backbone of SMA Legal's work. A robust and well-equipped team deals with a diverse range of issues in this growing area which involves assisting international and domestic clients.

SMA Legal provides comprehensive legal counsel based upon its years of experience of working in the unique and intricate Indian economy. With a deep understanding of the relevant legal framework(s), we provide strategic, commercially-focused legal solutions that cater to specific needs of Indian or international businesses operating or planning to operate in India.

Over more than the past 2 decades, the firm has been able to successfully assist clients with their legal needs be it drafting of agreements, due diligence, commercial contracting, trade negotiations, resolving commercial disputes, project structuring, project finance, private equity and venture capital investment work or advise on infrastructure projects- to name a few, it has dealt with all of it. SMA Legal offers its services which include, but are not limited to the following areas of corporate and commercial work:

- Mergers and Acquisitions,
- Infrastructure contracts,
- Private Equity and Venture Capital work,
- Commercial contracting and drafting,
- Government Compliance and regulatory work,
- International trade and finance,
- Indian Company Law,
- Construction and building laws,
- Family business related commercial issues,
- Cross-border Transactions,
- Project finance,
- Foreign Collaborations & Joint Ventures,
- Licensing and Franchising,
- Employment and labour laws,
- Foreign Direct Investment,
- Debt restructuring,
- Trademark and Copyrights,
- Start-up advisory and support,
- Company liquidation,
- Mandates and service agreements,
- General Corporate and Commercial advice,
- Market Entry and Restructuring,
- Ensuring regulatory compliances, and
- Legal audits and compliance.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

We at SMA Legal, with years of experience in resolving disputes and effecting settlements have been extremely successful in using Alternative Dispute Resolution as an efficacious tool to disentangle the most complex of disputes and resolve extreme differences. This has involved using the mediums of negotiation and mediation to work things out between two warring sides.

Our services under this area of work include,

- Negotiation,
- Partnering,
- Mediation,
- Arbitration, and
- Conciliation

These services have included, but are not limited to, enforcing and challenging enforcement of Arbitral Awards, advising clients on the appropriate venue of arbitration and choice of procedural and substantive law, drafting and vetting of arbitration agreements, advising clients on alternative dispute resolution laws and procedures, among other related issues.

The firm's clients under this area have included foreign small to medium sized business, Government and semi government establishments, private individuals, start up and first-generation entrepreneurs.

NRI Services

Ever since its inception, SMA Legal has been working closely with Non-Resident Indians (i.e., NRI's). We have come to respect, understand and value this large and growing community. By the sheer dint of hard work and an undying spirit to succeed NRI's have excelled in their respective countries. Despite their success in foreign lands, they have always remained in touch with their roots and do something in India.

Some of the areas where we provide legal advisory services to Non-Resident Indians include:

- Land and Real estate issues,
- Mergers and Acquisitions,
- Structuring of Charitable ventures and causes,
- Family Law-inheritance, adoption proceedings, child custody and surrogacy laws,
- International parental child abduction,
- Litigation advice and strategy,
- Due Diligence,
- Investigations to gather information,
- Procurement of documents from Indian authorities,
- Advice on PIO/OCI Issues, and
- Registration of power of attorneys and other documents.

Expert Work

Expert work is a niche area which SMA Legal has made a positive reputation in through its resident expert. Mr. Shantanu Mohan Puri, (the Managing Partner of SMA Legal). Mr. Puri is a bilingual lawyer, who has been acknowledged, internationally, as a Country Expert on India. His expertise lies in Law(s) and Society of India. His varied experience includes rendering Expert Witness Statements, Expert Reports, Country conditions reports and Expert Opinions to various international entities (including courts in a variety of foreign jurisdictions) on a varied number of issues. Some of these issues include Indian Citizenship and Nationality Laws, Indian Family Law (including marriage and divorce, adoption, child custody, surrogacy), Financial fraud, money laundering, gender prejudice and treatment of LGBTQI+, Political persecution and violence due to political ideologies, treatment of Muslims and other minorities, honour killings, matters pertaining to Afghan nationals, Sri-Lankan nationals, Domestic violence, child and human trafficking, modern day slavery and child labour, safety of women and possibilities of internal relocation in India.

Mr. Puri has been engaged as an Expert Witness and Country Expert (India), since 2000. In some cases, he has also testified before Immigration Courts in various American jurisdictions and provided expert evidence. He has given his expert opinion on the following issues, including, but not limited to:

- Nationality of refugees,
- Citizenship of foreign nationals having travelled on forged documents,
- Honor killings, religious discrimination, and treatment of minorities,
- Risks and obstacles associated with discrimination,
- Cross-border marriages, child custody, divorce, and inter-religious marriages,
- Hardships of couples or individuals based on their relationships in different countries,
- Medical treatments, access to healthcare, and quality of life in India,
- Elderly care facilities, social stigma faced by elderly individuals,
- Validity and authenticity of documents issued by Indian authorities,
- Indian nationality being compromised due to various circumstances,
- Successful internal relocation within India,
- Sufficiency of state protection in different scenarios,
- Religious conversions related to communities like Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, and their treatment, and
- Inter-faith marriages of various Indian communities and their treatment.

Investigation Services

India's reputation as a global I.T. hub and resource provider is well established. With improvements in technology leading to ease of living and doing business in India happening on a regular basis, India has certainly progressed well in its journey to emerge as a global super power. Yet, despite advancements in technology there are glaring issues which are restraining India from unleashing its true and full potential. Red tapism and a huge bureaucracy have further impeded and slowed down India's progress all of which is best reflected by the fact that information is not readily available- everything cannot be "googled"!

Consequently, in such a scenario the need to gather and/or dig out information becomes even more necessary be that in private matters or business ventures. Information is key and therefore to know what the actual ground reality about a particular issue, fact, individual or company is becomes imperative.

SMA Legal conducts investigation through its well-trained, experienced and specialized personnel for different types of assignments. We cater to specific needs of our clients across varied sectors and have a growing client base which comprises of country missions, individuals and companies.

The firm's investigation services comprise of, but are not limited to,

- Verification of documents issued by public and private offices in India,
- Verification of judgments, orders and decrees issued by Indian courts,
- Ascertaining and confirming the identity and residential addresses of individuals in custody abroad,
- Obtaining public documents to prove identity and address on requests from foreign local authorities,
- Obtaining birth, death, marriage, educational and employment documents from relevant Government and private offices,
- Background checks of prospective employees, vendors, or business partners,
- Verification of financial documents including bank and tax documents,
- Conducting criminal record checks and inquiries,
- Corporate Investigations,
- Investigating fraud, embezzlement and other financial crimes.
- Performing investigations for mergers, acquisitions, or partnerships.
- Gathering evidence for legal proceedings.

Our findings from our investigations are compiled in comprehensive reports with verified information to enable informed decision-making.

Meet the driving force behind SMA Legal

Mr. Shantanu Mohan Puri, the visionary founder of SMA Legal, is a distinguished legal professional renowned for his deep expertise in Indian law. With a career spanning over two decades, he has become a trusted authority in the legal field, contributing his extensive knowledge to courts and legal professionals across the world. His commitment to justice, highest standards of professional ethics, and client-centric solutions has been instrumental in shaping SMA Legal into a respected boutique legal advisory firm, serving a diverse range of clients with globally accepted standards of professionalism, diligence, honesty and integrity.



LLM and Felix Fellowship Scholar
University of London

Our Team

SMA Legal's success is powered by its exceptional team. With a blend of seasoned legal experts and creative minds, the firm brings extensive experience and unwavering dedication to each case. The firm's collaborative approach and passion for delivering top-notch legal solutions drive it to surpass client expectations and achieve favorable outcomes tirelessly.

Client segments we serve

Our services are thoughtfully categorised to cater to a diverse range of client groups, each with distinct legal needs and objectives.

Whether you represent a Foreign Mission, are a Foreign National, a Non-Resident Indian, an SME, a Private Equity or Venture Capital fund, Entrepreneur, or a Start-up, or seek Expert Work, we provide solutions that align perfectly with your specific legal requirements.



Foreign Missions



MNCs, SMEs, Entrepreneurs
and Startups



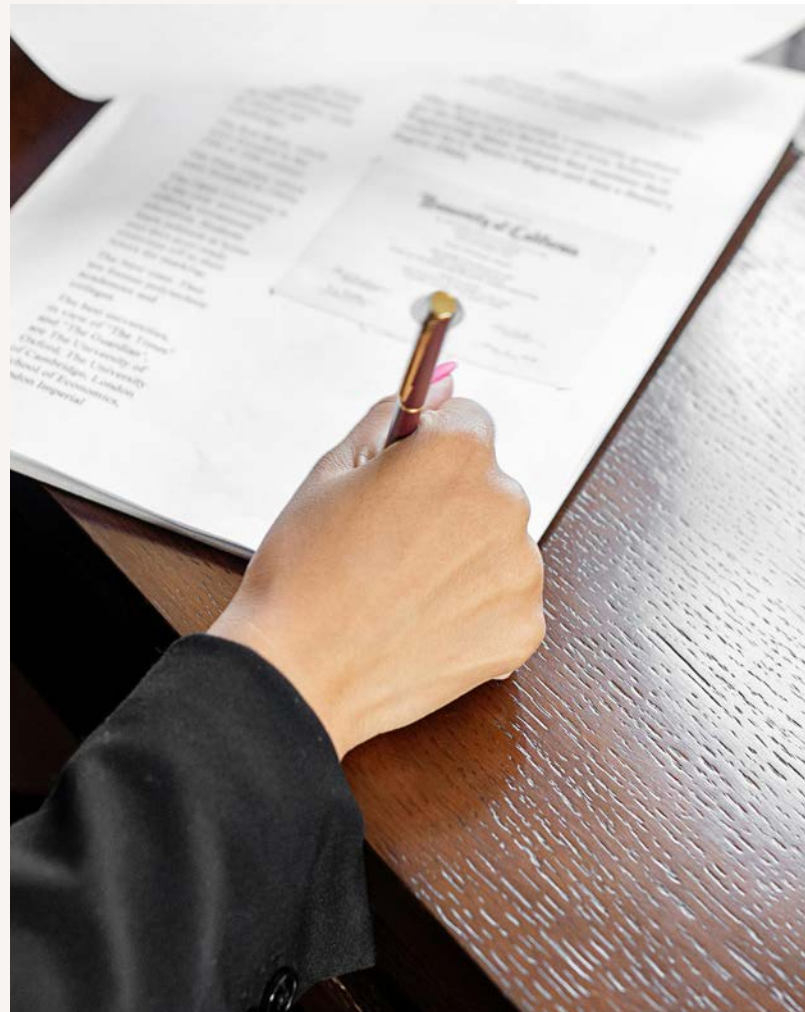
Expert Work



Foreign Nationals



Non-Resident Indians



Some of our valued clients

Embassies and Missions



Corporate



Words of appreciation



We have chosen the law office of SMA Legal at the recommendation of the German Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Shantanu Puri has successfully resolved cases out of court with his deep understanding of the differences in business culture between German and India.

We are grateful for his support.



Luitpold Rupprecht Heinrich Prince of Bavaria
President of König Ludwig International

The services rendered included verification of authenticity of documents in connection with the legalisation, enquiries regarding contents of documents with regard to civil status affairs, educational background checks and field trips.

This Embassy appreciates the thoroughness and quality of the reports provided by Shantanu Mohan and Associates as well as the competent services.



Sandra Chawla-Gantenbein
Ex Attaché, Embassy of Switzerland, New Delhi

The continual efforts of your entire team, their complete dedication towards their work is admirable. We appreciate specially your open disposition to enlighten us about particular issues of the Indian law whenever they arose.



José Del Palacio Tamarit
Former Head of Consular Section, Embassy of Spain, New Delhi

Mr Puri's professional approach, dedication and legal expertise have been very valuable to our mission.



Nina Vaskunlahti
Former Ambassador, Embassy of Finland, New Delhi

Shantanu, you have always been particularly reactive to all our questions regarding civil registry law and regulation issues in India and SMA Legal has developed its best endeavour to provide quality reports related to our field investigation inquiries to check the genuinity of Indian official documents.



Dimitri Demianenko
Former Consul, French Embassy in India

Take the first step towards resolving your legal challenges

Your legal partner in India's complex landscape

SMA Legal

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