

Trilegal partners discuss how institutions depth, AI and cross-border agility are reshaping India's legal market



In an exclusive conversation with ET Legalworld, Trilegal explains how its all-equity lockstep model, first CEO appointment and early AI adoption are preparing the firm for the next phase of growth in a rapidly evolving regulatory landscape.



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Indian law firms are adopting responsible AI tools for legal research, document review, and due diligence, and are strengthening cross-border capabilities through associations with international firms and deeper sector expertise in technology, infrastructure, energy transition, and financial services.



Sridhar Gorthi and Nishant Parikh, Partners and Members of the Management Committee, Trilegal

As India's legal services market shifts from partner-led reputation to institutional strength, Trilegal's winning "Law Firm of the Year" award at ETLegalWorld's Global Legal Convention 2025-26, captures a broader transformation in how leading firms are built and how they compete.

With 159 equity partners in a lockstep structure, a newly appointed CEO, and a strategy anchored in specialist capability, technology and sector depth, the firm is positioning itself to handle increasingly complex, multi-jurisdictional mandates.

In this interview, Sridhar Gorthi and Nishant Parikh, partners and members of the management committee, Trilegal, discuss how institutional capabilities, responsible AI adoption, and proactive engagement with regulators are shaping client service, cross-border deal-making and the next wave of demand in technology, fintech, ESG and disputes.

ETLegalWorld: Trilegal has worked on some of India's most complex and high-profile mandates, including the IPL deal, sophisticated capital markets transactions, cross-border matters, regulatory issues and disputes. What institutional capabilities are critical to delivering consistently on matters of this nature?

Sridhar Gorthi and Nishant Parikh: Complex mandates today are rarely confined to a single legal issue or practice area. They often involve multiple workstreams across different practice areas and jurisdictions, and under significant time pressure. Consistent delivery in this environment depends on a firm's ability to bring the right expertise together quickly and operate as one team. Trilegal's model enables us to do this seamlessly to deliver superior outcomes for our clients.

Clients are looking for advisors who can identify interdependencies early, anticipate regulatory and execution risks, and coordinate multiple workstreams without losing sight of the commercial objective. Firms with deep bench strength, strong partner involvement, robust knowledge systems, and scalable processes are best placed to deliver on high-stakes, multi-dimensional mandates.

ETLegalWorld: With AI becoming embedded in legal workflows, how do you see it reshaping the delivery of sophisticated legal advice? What will differentiate firms that can meaningfully leverage AI, particularly on complex mandates?

Sridhar Gorthi and Nishant Parikh: Generative AI is a transformational force for the legal profession, and firms that adopt it thoughtfully will be better placed to deliver sophisticated advice with greater speed, consistency, and efficiency. At Trilegal, we view AI as an enabling layer that supports lawyers across research, document drafting/review, and knowledge management. Trilegal has been among India's early adopters of legal AI, with an agile combination of proprietary in-house solutions and global tools integrated across lawyers' devices and used across teams for a wide variety of tasks. We are also rolling out an AI-powered document management system to improve searchability and access to institutional knowledge.

The real differentiator will be responsible and strategic adoption: secure systems that protect both confidentiality and privilege, strong governance and training, combined with specialist expertise and judgement-led legal advice.

ETLegalWorld: In an environment of heightened geopolitical and regulatory uncertainty, how are firms supporting clients on cross-border transactions, disputes, and investment decisions while managing risk across jurisdictions?

Sridhar Gorthi and Nishant Parikh: Cross-border activity into and out of India remains resilient, but the manner in which deals are being structured and executed has evolved. Regulatory scrutiny, whether around foreign investment, competition law, sanctions, or sector-specific rules, has become more exacting, and timelines less forgiving.

What this means in practice is that legal advice is being pulled into decision making much earlier. Clients are less focused on reactive problem-solving and more on anticipating regulatory friction points, whether that is around deal structuring, approvals, or post-closing exposure.

A large part of our work now involves helping clients navigate structuring options, sequencing of approvals, and considering potential downside scenarios before a transaction is locked in. There is also a far greater emphasis on coordination across jurisdictions, particularly where regulatory positions are not always aligned. In this environment, clarity, speed of judgement, and the ability to see around corners matter as much as technical accuracy.

ETLegalWorld: Beyond mandates, thought leadership is increasingly shaping client engagement. How important is it for firms to contribute to regulatory and market discourse, and which emerging areas do you see defining the next wave of client demand?

Sridhar Gorthi and Nishant Parikh: Clients today are dealing with areas where legal and regulatory positions are still evolving, AI, data governance, financial regulation, ESG, and they are looking for perspectives that help them make decisions, not just interpretations of the law. For us, this means staying close to how regulation is actually being shaped through enforcement trends, regulator engagement and market behaviour. We derive very useful insights from being deeply involved in those underlying developments.

We see our involvement in policymaking as an extension of client work, rather than something separate from it, as it helps us anticipate how regulators will react to different interpretations and how these may play out practically.

Looking ahead, demand will be shaped by a few clear themes: technology and data regulation, financial services and fintech, sustainability-linked frameworks, and a continued rise in disputes and enforcement.

ETLegalWorld: Winning Firm of the Year reflects more than standout mandates. What does this recognition signal about the evolution of the Indian legal market, and how are leading firms positioning themselves for the next phase of growth?

Sridhar Gorthi and Nishant Parikh: The Indian legal services market is moving from being driven largely by individual partner reputation to placing greater value on institutional depth, consistency, and the ability to support clients across the full lifecycle of a matter. Trilegal was founded on this institutional model. Its all-equity lockstep partnership, now comprising 159 partners, was designed to reinforce alignment, collaboration and shared accountability across practices. The appointment of our first CEO is another step in strengthening organisational capability, while allowing the partnership to remain focused on strategy, culture and client service.

As India continues to attract global capital and regulatory frameworks evolve, leading firms are investing in specialist capability, technology, sector depth, and scalable teams. The next phase of growth will favour firms that are agile, forward-looking, and able to respond to change with clarity and discipline.