



Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas



# Naval Satarawala Chopra

Partner

Competition Law

Naval Satarawala Chopra is a Partner in the Firm's Competition Law Practice, involved with competition law since its inception in India.

He focuses on both contentious and non-contentious matters before the Competition Commission of India (CCI) and appellate forums. His prominent clients include *Microsoft*, *Facebook*, *Monsanto*, *National Stock Exchange*, *Uber*, *VeriFone*, *DLF*, *PVR* and *Abbott*.

Naval has been involved in some of the most prominent abuse of dominance cases in India. He successfully represented *Matrimony.com* in an abuse of dominance case against *Google*, where the CCI fined Google INR 136 crores. He is also advising *National Stock Exchange* in its defence against an allegation of predatory pricing by *MCX Stock Exchange*, *HT Media* against *T-Series* (a leading Indian music label) in an excessive pricing case involving minimum guarantees and *Verifone Corporation* against alleged unfair terms and conditions and leveraging in the supply of POS terminals in India. He is particularly skilled in advising on antitrust aspects of technology related matters, having successfully defended *WhatsApp* in relation to its privacy policy and allegations of tying, *Microsoft Corporation* in relation to licensing terms and *Uber* in relation alleged predatory pricing. Naval is also advising *Bayer / Monsanto Company* in several cases filed by seed companies in India alleging excessive prices, unfair terms & conditions and leveraging.

On the cartel enforcement front, Naval is presently involved in advising several global manufacturers in relation to ongoing international cartel investigations in the *auto components* sector as well as several other bid rigging cases in different sectors involving government contracts. He is also involved in challenges before the Delhi High Court to the CCI's investigation in several cases on account of due process and natural justice issues.

On the merger control front, Naval has successfully obtained merger clearances in several prominent cases including *Think and Learn's* acquisition of *Aakash Educational Services*, which is India's largest ever education sector transaction, *Avago's* acquisition of *Broadcom*, *HP's* acquisition of *Samsung's* printer business, the failed merger of *Publicis* and *Omnicom* as well as the conditional approval for *Bayer AG's* acquisition of *Monsanto Company*, and the acquisition by *PVR* of *DT Cinemas*.

In 2019, he won the Global Competition Review's award for "Matter of the Year" for representing *Monsanto* in the *Bayer-Monsanto* merger and "Behavioural Matter of the Year – Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa" for his representation of *Matrimony.com* in its abuse of dominance claim against *Google*. In 2022, he was nominated Global Competition

## Location

- Delhi

## Education

- LL.B, ILS Law College, Pune
- LL.M, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

## Practices

- Competition Law

## Professional Membership

- Bar Council of Delhi
- New York Bar Association
- Law Society, England & Wales

## Awards & Recognitions

- **Band 2** for Competition / Antitrust in Chambers and Partners Asia Pacific, 2018-24
- Among IBLJ's A-List of India's **Top 100 Lawyers**, 2022-23
- **Leading Lawyers** for Antitrust and competition at the Legal Era Awards, 2022-23
- **Band 2** for Competition / Antitrust in Chambers and Partners Global, 2023-24





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Review's Lawyer of the Year and was described as "arguably India's go-to competition lawyer for technology matters".

Who's Who Legal 2021 has ranked Naval as a "Global Leader", while between 2017-22, he has been listed as a "Thought Leader" in competition law. He has been ranked among the Top 100 Individual Lawyers in the Forbes India Legal Powerlist, 2020, and featured among the BW Business World "40 under 40", in 2020. Naval was also the first Indian lawyer in Global Competition Review's top "40 under 40" competition lawyers in the world survey published in 2015. In another feather in his cap, Naval's article titled 'The Curious Case of Compulsory Licensing in India', won the award for the Best Article in the Business - Unilateral Conducts category, at the World Antitrust Writing Awards 2013.

Naval has been ranked in Chambers & Partners 2018-22. According to Chambers & Partners 2021, Naval is valued by referees as a "very practical, commercially sound and solution-oriented business partner" who serves, not only as a "go-to person for any kind of dispute resolution issue," but also as someone with whom to "discuss strategies in the competition space" more generally. Chambers & Partners 2017 describes Naval as a valuable adviser on abuse of dominance matters, as well as other competition law issues. One impressed source praises his excellent technical knowledge, saying "for competition law globally, his conceptual understanding is very strong and he's able to apply it appropriately before the CCI. He knows how the CCI thinks." Sources quoted in Chambers & Partners 2016 rankings, describe Naval as "very knowledgeable, very well read and very smart" and who "expresses himself excellently". According to Chambers & Partners Rankings 2015, clients value Naval as a "master strategist" and his "ability to think out of the box and find solutions by balancing the law and commercial considerations". He has featured in The International Who's Who Legal since 2012 who describe Naval as a "rising star in the antitrust field and merger control in particular". They say he stands out for his "creative solutions and as a highly effective communicator". Legal Era recognised Naval as a Leading Lawyer in Antitrust and Competition in Legal Era 'Leading Lawyers' Rankings. He was also recognised as a Future Leader in IBLJ Future Leaders, 2022. Forbes Legal Powerlist 2021 recognised Naval as one of the 'Top 100 Lawyers'.

Naval has also authored the India chapters of the *Global Antitrust and Competition Law Compliance Handbook* (Oxford University Press), *Private Equity Antitrust* (American Bar Association), *Evolution of Antitrust in the Digital Era* (Competition Policy International), *Interplay between Competition Law and Intellectual Property* and *Competition and Patent Law in the Pharmaceutical Sector* (both Kluwer Law International). Naval also contributes to annual publications of the ABA Section of International Law - Antitrust Committee, as well as generally updates on the merger control and cartels space in India.

Naval worked closely with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs and the CCI in the finalisation of the Indian merger control regime. He is also the course director for Diploma on Competition Law at ILS Law College, Pune which he has been teaching since 2014.

He is qualified to practice in India, New York and England & Wales and India. He holds an L.L.B. from ILS Law College, Pune and an L.L.M from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Prior to joining the Firm, Naval was an Associate in the India Group at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, London for almost five years.

## Awards & Recognitions

- **Litigation star** for Competition / antitrust in by Benchmark Litigation, 2023-24
- **Distinguished Practitioner** for Competition/antitrust in by Asialaw, 2024
- **Global Leader** by Who's Who Legal 2021-22
- Among the **Top 100 Individual Lawyers** in the Forbes, India, Legal Powerlist, 2020-22
- **BW Business World 40 under 40**, 2020
- **Thought Leader** by Who's Who Legal 2017-20
- **Featured in The International Who's Who of Competition Lawyers & Economists 2012-19**
- GCR 2019 award for **Matter of the Year (Worldwide)** for Naval's representation of Monsanto in the Bayer-Monsanto merger
- GCR 2019 award for **Behavioural Matter of the Year - Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa** for his representation of Matrimony.com in its abuse of dominance claim against Google
- **Only Indian lawyer** in the **Top 40 under 40 Competition Lawyers of the World** list by Global Competition Review 2016