

'Bar Council of India must allow lawyers to advertise'

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HYDERABAD: The Bar Council of India (BCI) must allow Indian lawyers to publicise themselves to enable them reach out to people in an effective manner, said Indian Lawyers' Association (ILA) founder president and California-based NRI advocate Navneet S Chugh.

On his visit to Hyderabad on Saturday, Chugh told STOI that the US too had similar restrictions on lawyers advertising themselves once. "But it lifted all such restrictions in 1971 and today, we see that all yellow pages books in all its states filled with lawyers' details and their areas of expertise. Besides, lawyers in the US can also advertise themselves on hoardings and bill boards," he said.

Chugh was the founder president of South Asian Bar Association of Southern California (SABA) which he started in 1995. He also founded SABA North America (SABANA) in 2003 that has 27 chapters now representing over

10,000 Indian lawyers in the US and Canada and is also the founder of International Indian Bar Association (IIBA) in 2006.

Realising the need to bring together 13 lakh lawyers in India on a common platform outside the Bar Council of India for discussing contemporary issues, Chugh founded ILA in 2017 and had already established 100 chapters in 100 cities in India.

Chugh was critical about BCI for neither according freedom to lawyers nor effectively regulating the 'black sheep' among them. In US, there are state-controlled Bars that regulate advocates in an effective way, he said. "Instead of spreading legal education in a free manner, BCI is putting obstacles in the path of those who are trying to acquire law degrees by putting age restrictions," Chugh added.