The Future of Legal Education in India: Philanthropy, Excellence and Institution Building

Monday, April 6, 2015
12 – 1pm
Wasserstein Hall 3016

Speaker: Dr. C. Raj Kumar

Professor Dr. C. Raj Kumar
LL.B. (Delhi), B.C.L. (Oxford), LL.M. (Harvard), S.J.D. (Hong Kong)
Vice Chancellor, O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU)

The talk will discuss the importance and need for fundamental reforms in legal education in India as the foundation for building a society based on the rule of law. Reforms in legal education and legal profession are integrally connected to the efforts of building a rule of law society in India. The talk will provide critical perspectives on legal education in India and the promise it holds for seeking higher standards in the legal profession. In particular, the talk will reflect on the importance of legal scholarship and research and the need for understanding issues relating to access to justice in India through rigorous academic research, creation of knowledge through scholarship and publications. The talk will explore the challenges of institution building in India and how they are inextricably linked to nation building and what role can universities play in shaping the future of Indian democracy. It will focus on the attempts to develop a sound higher education system in India that addresses issues relating to quality, quantity, accessibility, and equity at the same time. The talk will address the fundamental causes for why not even a single Indian university is not featuring in the top 200 in the world in all recognized global rankings and how it is impacting the quality of teaching, research and scholarship. It will critically examine the existing regulatory regime and its effect on the establishment of institutions of excellence in India. The talk will also throw light on the contemporary efforts to address the challenges of legal education through the promotion of global collaborative initiatives. It will discuss the issues relating to the funding of higher education sector, including the role of philanthropy and the private sector in higher education. The talk will conclude by providing a specific set of suggestions to improve the functioning of law schools and universities in India and what can be learned from the best practices and experiences from around the world.

About the Speaker:
Professor (Dr.) C. Raj Kumar was appointed as the Founding Vice Chancellor of O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) in India at the age of 34 in 2009. JGU has completed five years and has grown into a multidisciplinary and research-oriented university with five different schools relating to law, business, international affairs, public policy and liberal arts & humanities. JGU has acquired a stellar reputation in India and abroad for its effort to promoting excellence in teaching, research, capacity building and community service.

Professor Kumar has academic qualifications from the University of Oxford, Harvard University, University of Hong Kong, University of Delhi and Loyola College. Professor Kumar is also a Member of the National Legal Knowledge Council (NLKC). He was a faculty member at the School of Law of City University of Hong Kong, where he taught for many years. He was a Rhodes Scholar at the University of Oxford, UK, where he obtained his Bachelor of Civil Law (B.C.L.) degree; a Landon Gammon Fellow at the Harvard Law School, USA, where he obtained his Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree and a James Souverine Gallo Memorial Scholar at the Harvard University. He was awarded the Doctor of Legal Science (S.J.D.) by the University of Hong Kong. He also obtained a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) degree from the University of Delhi, India; and a Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com.) degree from the Loyola College of the University of Madras, India.


Professor Kumar has held consultancy assignments in the field of human rights and governance. He has been a Consultant to the United Nations University ( UNU), Tokyo; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, Geneva; and the International Council for Human Rights Policy (ICHRP), Geneva. He has advised the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (GIABOC) in Sri Lanka and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in India on issues relating to corruption and good governance. Professor Kumar is an Attorney at Law and is admitted to the Bar Council of Delhi, India and the Bar of the State of New York, USA.