

*Our Founder Aparna Mittal and Samāna's launch was featured in this interview published by
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MARKET PULSE



Aparna Mittal

EX-AZB PARTNER MAKES GENDER EQUALITY HER FOCUS

Aparna Mittal, a former partner at AZB & Partners in the corporate and mergers and acquisitions practice, has founded the Samāna Centre for Gender, Policy and Law. The organization is primarily involved in promoting gender mainstreaming and gender capacity building.

Mittal's focus will not be on law firms, but instead on companies, philanthropic entities, trade bodies and other professional organizations that need to be aware of gender mainstreaming and capacity building, either as part of their philanthropic or corporate social responsibility work or through their internal human resources policies. Specific to the latter, "My job here is two-fold," Mittal told *India Business Law Journal*.

"[It is what you as a company] are supposed to do legally and what you should do beyond that to make it a better workplace at par with international best practices." The centre will also take up selective interventions aimed at reform of law and policy in this area.

Mittal has worked in corporate law for over 12 years and spent most of her career, before AZB, at Luthra & Luthra, where she was a partner in the M&A, joint ventures, franchise and general corporate practice area until December 2015. "It was a considered move to shift from law to policy. Internationally, a lot of people spend 10-15 years in full-time law practice and move to public policy, which is an evolving area where you can use your skillset to create a social impact."

Mittal was prompted to make the switch after observing social inequities around her. "If you look at the reality around us, there is a big gap in rights owed to women and members of the third gender, and rights actually made available to them in practice. There are many societal practices that cause such inequities, and these need to be addressed to bring about real equality, which is a fundamental right guaranteed by the Indian constitution."