

M Rajaram

Chairman and Co-Managing Director of K&L Gates Straits Law LLC

Singapore
+65.6713.0218

rajaram@klgates.com

OVERVIEW

M Rajaram leads transactional teams in advising in a full spectrum of loan and other debt-related and corporate transactions, including mergers and acquisitions; banking, loan, and other debt-related and corporate transactions including but not limited to syndicated loans, asset and trade financing, and cross border financing; advising fund formations and compliance; advising on setting up and operations of single and multi-family offices; private client practice including employment and immigration advice; corporate secretarial services; international trade; mediation; and general corporate advice. He also advises on family business continuity and estate planning for high net worth individuals

He is a past chairman of the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and currently an emeritus chairman. He was the vice-chairman of the Singapore Business Federation, and council member of ASEAN Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He is the honorary consul of the Republic of Mali in Singapore, an office he assumed in 2000. He is actively involved in social work at the grassroots level and is a patron of the Taman Jurong Citizenship Consultative Committee, having served as a member of the Taman Jurong CCC for many years. He also assists in running the legal clinic at Jurong MPS on a weekly basis. He was also the vice president of the Dyslexia Association of Singapore, deputy chairman of the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee of the Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS) and was the chairman of its Audit Committee. He was a term trustee in Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA) for a period of 12 years. He also serves as a member of the Presidential Council for Religious Harmony. He is also a notary public and justice of the peace.

For his contributions to society and to the business community, he was bestowed the PBM (Pingat Bakti Masyarakat–The Public Service Medal) in 2009, and BBM (Bintang Bakti Masyarakat–Public Service Star) in 2024 by the President of the Republic of Singapore.

He has been recognized for his extensive work with Indian companies venturing abroad. He is particularly active in acting for lenders for infrastructure power and mining companies and international trading companies for their trade finance requirements, mergers and acquisitions and international trade disputes. Most of these transactions are cross border in nature. He has been cited by Asia Law Profile, International Financial Law Review, and The Legal 500 for his analytical ability and for the quick turnaround time for corporate and banking matters.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Prior to the merger of K&L Gates Singapore and Straits Law, he was the executive chairman at Straits Law Practice LLC which was co-founded by him in 2001. A litigator from 1980 to 1997, he switched to corporate and private client work and now heads the non-contentious departments in Straits Law. He was a former police officer who was admitted to the Supreme Court of Singapore in 1980. A notary public and commissioner of oaths, he is also a Solicitor in England and Wales. He started his professional career as a litigator in criminal and civil proceedings and for 15 years, and since then, he has been actively practising in the areas of banking and transactional work, mergers and acquisitions, cross border work, real estate, insolvency and corporate restructuring and arbitration. He is a fellow of the Singapore Institute of Arbitrators (FSIArb) as well as a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCIArb). He is also an accredited mediator with the Singapore Mediation Centre (SMC). M Rajaram received his training in mediation at SMC and Harvard Law School. He is currently a council member of the Singapore International Mediation - Mediation Advisory Council. He also currently sits on the Presidential Council for Religious Harmony.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Recognized by *The Legal 500 Asia Pacific* as a Recommended Lawyer for Banking and Finance: Local Firms in Singapore, 2024-2026
- Conferred the PBM (Pingat Bakti Masyarakat - The Public Service Medal) in recognition of his contributions to the community.
- Nominated by the Minister of Law to sit on the Council of the Law Society of Singapore, since 2017
- Awarded with MCI Special Recognition Award by Ministry of Communications and Information, May 2017

PROFESSIONAL / CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Member, and have served in the Board of Directors in various capacities as Board Member and six terms of Vice Chairman and two terms as Chairman
- Taman Jurong Constituency, assists in Meet The People Sessions every Monday
- Dyslexia Association of Singapore, Vice President, Member of the Executive Committee and Chairman of the Audit Committee
- South West Community Development Council, Resource Person
- Taman Jurong Citizens Consultative Committee, Patron
- Singapore Institute of Arbitrators, Fellow
- Institute of South East Asian Studies Yusof Ishak Institute, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Chairman of the Audit Committee
- Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, Fellow

- Singapore Indian Heritage Centre, Member of the Steering Committee
- Ministry for Information, Communications & Arts, Member of the Political Films Consultative Committee
- State Courts of Singapore, Volunteer Mediator
- Panel of Arbitrators, Law Society Arbitration Scheme, Member
- Law Society of Singapore, Vice President
- The Republic of Mali in Singapore, Honorary Consul
- Presidential Council for Religious Harmony, Member
- The Singapore International Mediation Centre (SIMC), Accredited Mediator at the Singapore Mediation Centre (SMC) and a Specialist Mediator
- SIMC Mediation Advisory Council, Member

EDUCATION

- Masters in Business Administration, Maastricht School of Management, 1998
- Bachelor of Law, University of Singapore, 1978 *(Hons)*

ADMISSIONS

- Advocate and Solicitor, Singapore
- Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England and Wales

LANGUAGES

- English
- Hokkien
- Malay
- Tamil (India)

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP *POWERED BY HUB*

- 10 April 2020, COVID-19: Reliefs and Support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Singapore
- 3 April 2020, COVID-19: Singapore's COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Bill: What is it? How does it impact you?

NEWS & EVENTS

- 16 April 2026, More Than 80 K&L Gates Lawyers Across Asia-Pacific Recognised in 2027 Best Lawyers, Ones to Watch Editions
- 12 February 2025, K&L Gates Advises Carlsberg South Asia's US$744 Million Sale to Carlsberg AS
- 4 November 2024, M Rajaram Awarded Public Service Star at Singapore National Day Awards 2024

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption
- Anti-Money Laundering (AML)
- Debt Capital Markets
- Immigration
- International Trade, Investment Controls, and National Security
- Land Use, Planning, and Zoning
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Professional Liability
- Real Estate Finance
- Restructuring and Insolvency

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Presently, there are only a small handful of 856 CMS licensees in Singapore, as it is a financial institution status that is heavily regulated by the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS). We assisted by conducting high-level legal due diligence, drafting and reviewing the term sheet and sale and purchase agreement for the transaction, and applied for approval to obtain effective control of Target as the holder of a CMS licensee under the regulations. As the MAS is strict with the structural ownership and statutory requirements of CMS licensees, this exercise involved heavy correspondence with the MAS.
- Advising on strategy and regulatory issues for each licensed activity and MAS application for operating additional activities. Involves heavy correspondence with MAS.
- Advising on a Sri Lankan-based REIT deal owned by a family office. The transaction involves a family office-owned complex REIT structure for real estate assets located in 4 different jurisdictions for the hospitality industry. Advising on pre-REIT structure, assisting with setting-up the structure, transaction documents, and working with local counsels.

- Advising shareholders on different classes of shares created within the parameters of a tax efficient structure provided by company's tax advisors. The equity value of the target is around US$780 million. The target is a leading provider of technology-driven content and data solutions. The group has over 17,000 employees in 15 locations.
- Client holds a license issued by the Financial Conduct Authority of UK with branches in Singapore and Geneva. Advising on the expansion of business in Singapore and structure of the purchase, key terms of the commercial arrangement and applications to MAS for approval of purchase. This includes conducting high-level legal due diligence and assistance with transaction documents for the purchase.