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# भारतीय विधिज्ञ परिषद् BAR COUNCIL OF INDIA

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The Bar Council of India has removed 107 fake advocates from the Roll of Advocates between 2019 and October 2024, enrolled in the State of Delhi alone as part of its ongoing effort to maintain the integrity and professionalism of the legal community. This decisive action is aimed at eliminating fake advocates and those who no longer meet the standards of legal practice. By doing so, the BCI has tried to continue to protect the public's trust and the legal system itself from unethical practices.

The process is being conducted under Rule 32 of the Bar Council of India Certificate and Place of Practice (Verification) Rules, 2015, with a critical amendment to Rule 32 being notified on 23rd June 2023. This amendment further strengthened the verification framework, allowing the Bar Council to more effectively and systematically identify and remove unqualified/fake advocates from the Roll. The amended rule has proven to be a crucial step in creating a legal profession built on transparency and accountability.

Between 2019 and 23rd June 2023, several thousands of fake advocates were removed after a thorough investigation into their credentials and practices. These removals are largely due to issues of fake and forged certificates, and misrepresentation during enrolment. Besides, failure to actively practice law, and non-compliance with the Bar Council's verification processes also make Advocates names removed from the active practice.

However, with the amendment to Rule 32 on 23rd June 2023, the process became significantly more efficient. The Order of Supreme Court in the case of Ajayinder Sangwan & Others Versus Bar Council of Delhi in TC(Civil) No. 126 of 2015 allowing the Rule 32 to be implemented effectively has enhanced procedures and allowed the Bar Council to identify and address cases of fraud and non-compliance at a much faster pace. This represents a marked improvement in the Bar Council's ability to protect the public and the profession from unqualified/fake individuals, emphasizing the importance of the updated rules in safeguarding the integrity of the legal community.

The fake advocates are identified through continuous investigations conducted by the Bar Council and the High Powered Committee constituted by the Hon'ble Apex Court in case of Ajay Shanker Srivastava Versus Bar Council of India & Anr. in W.P. No. 82 of 2023. Some of the cases relating to forgery had been under review before the rule change, while others were addressed after the amendment. These removals further underscore the Bar Council's long-term commitment to



ensuring that the Roll of Advocates includes only those who are genuinely qualified and actively practicing.

The total of 107 latest removals reflects the combination of several hundreds of advocates being removed before 23rd June 2023. 50 advocates have been removed after the amendment. This breakdown clearly highlights the progress made in increasing the efficiency and thoroughness of the verification process, thanks in large part to the June 2023 amendment.

The stark contrast in removal rates before and after the amendment of Rule 32 underscores the success of the new verification framework. The Bar Council's improved ability to identify and remove fake advocates has contributed significantly to public trust in the legal system. By raising the removal rate the Bar Council has demonstrated its dedication to protect the profession and ensure that only qualified, practicing lawyers represent the public.

In light of the meticulous scrutiny that is now in place, many advocates who are aware of their fraudulent or non-compliant status have preemptively surrendered their enrollment certificates, fearing exposure. However, the Bar Council urges all State Bar Councils to exercise caution when accepting such surrenders.

It is essential that fake advocates are not allowed to walk away without being held accountable for their actions, as their deception has harmed the public and compromised the justice system. State Bar Councils must undertake full investigations to determine the authenticity of their enrolment before allowing a surrender. While such advocates may be barred from practicing law immediately, the process of complete surrender should only be finalized after thorough scrutiny and verification.

Additionally, many universities have informed State Bar Councils that they are uncovering more fake advocates during the process of scrutinizing academic degrees. These universities have been collaborating closely with the State Bar Councils, and it is anticipated that in the near future, over several hundred more advocates could be removed from the Roll. Once universities complete their degree verification processes and submit their findings to the State Bar Councils, and these councils forward the information to the Bar Council of India, further action is to be taken. The election to the various State Bar Councils where it is due, are to be held only after the removal of all the fake and forged degree holders and the non-practitioners as per Rule 32. The Hon'ble Apex Court has laid stress on the effective implementation of the Verifications Rules.

The Bar Council of India will continue working in close coordination with the State Bar Councils to ensure that the verification process remains thorough and that no unqualified/fake advocate slips through the cracks. These efforts reflect the Bar Council's ongoing commitment to building a legal profession that the public can trust. By ensuring that only qualified and practicing advocates remain on the Roll, the Bar Council is reinforcing the credibility and ethical standards of the legal community.

  
**(Srimanto Sen)**  
**Secretary**