

WAQAR KHALIQ SIAL

Senior Software Engineer — PHP/Laravel & Python Backend

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Senior Software Engineer with 6+ years designing and building scalable backend systems and production-grade APIs using PHP/Laravel and Python (Flask, FastAPI). Proven track record architecting KYC/KYB verification, AML screening, and adverse-media monitoring platforms for compliance and fintech products, including hands-on ownership of AML Watcher, Media Watcher, Transaction Watcher, and Facia. Skilled in database design and optimization across MongoDB, MySQL, PostgreSQL, and Redis, with practical DevOps exposure (Docker, AWS, Hetzner, GitLab CI/CD). Combines strong system-design judgment with the ability to lead and mentor backend engineers, taking features from requirements through to production.

CORE TECHNICAL SKILLS

Languages: PHP, Python, JavaScript

Backend & Frameworks: Laravel, Flask, FastAPI, NestJS, Node.js, REST APIs, Microservices, MVC Architecture

Frontend: Vue.js

Databases: MongoDB, MySQL, PostgreSQL, Redis

Cloud & DevOps: AWS, Hetzner, Docker, Nginx, Linux (Ubuntu/CentOS), GitLab CI/CD

Testing & Automation: Selenium, Postman, Web Scraping/Crawling, Automated Testing

Tools: Git, GitHub, GitLab, Jira, Firebase, Socket.IO

Architecture & Engineering: System Design, API Architecture, Third-Party API Integration, Payment Gateway Integration, Database Optimization, Performance Optimization, KYC/KYB Verification, AML Screening Systems

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Software Engineer — Programmers Force

Jan 2025 – Present

- Lead and mentor a backend engineering team, setting architectural direction for scalable, production-grade services across the company's AML/KYC compliance product suite (AML Watcher, Transaction Watcher, Media Watcher, Facia).
- Establish and enforce engineering standards for code quality, performance, and security through structured code review, automated testing, and CI/CD pipelines.
- Partner cross-functionally with frontend, DevOps, and product teams to plan releases and ensure reliable, low-downtime deployments.
- Drive backend architecture and API design decisions as product scope and data volume expand across the compliance suite.

Mid-Level Software Engineer — Programmers Force

Jan 2022 – Dec 2024

- Designed and built backend services for a KYB verification product, combining Python/Selenium crawlers with Laravel APIs to validate business data against official sources.
- Collaborated within a five-engineer backend team to architect a real-time chat application on MVC principles, coordinating API contracts with the frontend team.
- Independently engineered the API module for AML Watcher, integrating LLM-based services (ChatGPT, Gemini) and the Google Custom Search API to power adverse-media and risk-screening workflows.
- Extended shared backend services supporting Transaction Watcher and Media Watcher within the same compliance-data platform.

Junior Software Engineer — Programmers Force

Jan 2021 – Dec 2021

- Developed and maintained Laravel/PHP web applications backed by MongoDB and Redis, taking features from requirements through production.
- Implemented Laravel REST APIs and configured Firebase push notifications across web, iOS, and Android clients.
- Integrated Two-Factor Authentication (2FA) with Google Authenticator, strengthening account security for end users.

Associate Software Engineer — Programmers Force

Sep 2020 – Dec 2020

- Joined as a founding engineer on Whistlelt, a real-time chat application, contributing to early architecture and backend API development.
- Built and documented core backend features, debugging issues across the stack to stabilize early releases.

KEY PROJECTS

AML Watcher — AML & Adverse-Media Screening Platform

2024 – Present

Stack: PHP, Laravel, Python, MongoDB, LLM APIs (ChatGPT, Gemini), Google Custom Search API

- Owned the API module end-to-end for an AML/adverse-media screening service, integrating multiple LLM providers and a custom search engine to automate entity risk detection.
- Designed data pipelines to normalize and screen entity data at scale, supporting real-time compliance checks for business clients.

Transaction Watcher — Transaction Monitoring Platform

2024 – Present

Stack: PHP, Laravel, Python, MongoDB

- Contributed backend services and API endpoints within the shared compliance-data platform, supporting transaction-level risk screening workflows.

Media Watcher — Adverse Media Screening Platform

2024 – Present

Stack: PHP, Laravel, Python, MongoDB

- Built backend components for adverse-media monitoring, extending the data pipeline shared with AML Watcher to surface risk-relevant news and media coverage.

Facia — Identity & Biometric Verification

2024 – Present

Stack: PHP, Laravel, Python

- Contributed backend services within the compliance product suite supporting identity verification workflows.

KYB Application (Know Your Business)

Dec 2022 – Jun 2024

Stack: Python, Selenium, Laravel, MongoDB

- Built Python/Selenium crawlers to extract and verify official business data from external sources.
- Developed Laravel APIs to persist and serve verified business records in MongoDB, supporting downstream KYB decisioning.

FMF (Firewall Management Framework)

Jan 2022 – Nov 2022

Stack: Laravel, Node.js

- Built server-side firewall rule management and access-control features, giving operations teams a unified interface for server configuration.

Whistlelt — Real-Time Chat Application

Sep 2020 – Jan 2022

Stack: PHP, Laravel, Firebase, Socket.IO

- Implemented backend APIs powering real-time messaging and configured Firebase push notifications across web, iOS, and Android; backend supported several hundred concurrent users.

EDUCATION

BS in Computer Science — University of Engineering and Technology

Sep 2016 – Sep 2020

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Languages: English (Professional), Urdu (Native)