

#BAHARAAOBAATKARO

Army Institute of law, Mohali is a law college set up under the aegis of the Army Welfare and Education Society. 400 students are currently studying in the under graduate program offered by the Institute, and a vast majority of the said students reside in the campus in the hostels.

The Institute, once a force to be reckoned with, has now been plagued by administrative inefficiencies, deteriorating quality of the teaching staff and a general sense of unreasonableness and apathy towards the students for some time now.

The Institute is run and managed on the basis of a Code of Conduct, which enumerates certain do's and don'ts to be followed by the students (also referred to as *inmates*), which is draconian, infringes upon the basic freedoms of students, and leaves enough scope for administrative ambiguity and discretion.

There is a lack of a democratically elected student representative body, to act as a conduit between the students and the authorities. The present student body consists of students who have been cherry picked by the authorities on recommendations of the wardens of the boys and girls hostels. The said student body has a very limited set of responsibilities, such as conducting the daily roll calls in the hostels, ensuring that students attend lectures in proper uniform, and act as personal henchmen to the wardens.

The Code of Conduct prohibits collective airing of grievances, and rather encourages students to personally approach the concerned authorities, and *politely* explain to them the issues plaguing them, upon which the authorities then proceed to conduct a character assassination of the student and damage his/her credibility instead of providing constructive solutions. Students are often shooed in a dismissive and evasive manner.

There is an inherent lack of an organized Disciplinary Body to look into instances of disciplinary violations, it is constituted each time an *offence* takes place, in an arbitrary manner. Students are excluded from the process, are not allowed to appeal against the decisions, and are constantly harassed in order to expedite the process. There is a lack of an Internal Complaints Committee, with no mechanism to redress grievances regarding sexual harassment, discrimination an unfair treatment.

The students are not allowed to roam around in the campus post 11 pm, despite having a curfew of 9 pm, in approximately a 3 acre large campus, with more than adequate security personnel and installation of surveillance cameras. Moreover, students are not allowed to order food late at night, and are threatened with fines *if caught* doing so.

The conditions of the mess and café services in the college are appalling as can be seen by the sightings of rampant frolicking around of rodents, silky tresses found swimming in bowls of soup,

service providers taking on the role of rajahs where there is no one to question their monopolistic tendencies and lackadaisical attitude till where their kingdom extends.

Students are “not allowed” to fall sick at night, because it’s *inconvenient* for the wardens, despite having a designated vehicle for transportation for medical aid purposes. Girls warden in particular, frequently abuses the power she has over female students by blatantly asking for gifts for her personal appeasement, indulges in moral policing constantly, raises aspersions as to the students’ characters and their upbringing.

The aforementioned issues, coupled with poor placements, sub-par quality of the newer faculty, arbitrary disciplinary actions against students, and attempts to throttle every freedom and opinions of the students have culminated into a joint petition prepared by the students of the college.

This Joint Petition was forwarded on 4th October, 2016 to the college authorities, namely Dr Tejinder Kaur (Principal) and Col. Harbinder Singh (Registrar), and to other named dignitaries of the Western Command and the Army Welfare and Education Society, New Delhi.

Presently on 16th October, 2019 students are yet to receive an acknowledgment or a response from the concerned authorities. Anticipating a reaction from the students, the wardens and the Registrar tried to contain the students in their hostels by placing barricades outside the gate. At 10 pm, students walked out of their hostels in solidarity, expecting an audience with the Registrar who was, and is present in the college premises.

300 students are braving the cold, mosquitoes and are camping below the statue of Lady Justice, hoping to peacefully uphold the dignity of the profession they have chosen by having their opinions heard in a fair, just and equitable manner. All the students have laid down mattresses in the college campus and refuse to budge till their statement of relief is acknowledged and assented to.

The Registrar chose to sneak out of the back door, and evaded the 300 eager students who were awaiting an acknowledgment of their grievances, and retired to his quarters, and continues to sleep soundly.

As he sleeps in the comfort of his residence, all the students of AIL tirelessly sit on shared mattresses, and hope to see a better morning and a better tomorrow.

Student Community

Army Institute of Law, Mohali