

UoP lecturer accuses V-C of bias

Visually challenged law teacher's services were terminated on April 2

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

APRIL 9

A VISUALLY challenged lecturer at University of Pune's law department has leveled serious allegations against Vice Chancellor Narendra Jadhav and department head Dilip Ukey, claiming his removal from service on April 2 was "personally motivated" and targeted at his disability.

Sanjay Jain was hired as a lecturer for Labour Law, an optional subject in the academic year 2005-06. It was a two-year probation that was to end on April 12. On March 26, he was informed that a committee will consider the confirmation of his post and he was to furnish all relevant information.

Jain was summoned for an interview with Jadhav on April 2. "The V-C leveled allegations against me and said that I was to be dismissed

from services," said Jain. Among the reasons for his dismissal were poor quality of teaching which led to scrapping of Labour Law course. It was also claimed that Jain was not handling as much administrative responsibility as other employees.

Speaking on the manner in which he was addressed by Jadhav during the April 2 interview, Jain said, "Claiming that he could not compromise on quality by retaining me, Jadhav dismissed my President's Award saying that it was only in the disabled category." He added that it was disappointing that Jadhav made such remarks about someone from a disadvantaged category, since he had himself struggled on his way up.

Jain further said that Ukey had claimed during an oral examination some students were reading the answers from the book, and being vi-



V-C Narendra Jadhav

visually impaired he was unable to see this. "If this was the case, why didn't Ukey take action against the said students immediately, and why was I not informed at that time?" Jain demanded to know.

The University authorities have, however, denied that the dismissal was personally motivated. Speaking on be-

half of Jadhav, who is currently out of the country, acting V-C and Board of Colleges and Universities Development director Pandit Vidyasagar said appropriate procedures had been followed. "The V-C took special efforts by forming a committee to scrutinise the matter. The decision is not motivated by any personal grudge," Vidyasagar said.

Jain said many of his students had secured merit ranks in Labour Law in the first year and said that he had successfully handled many administrative duties at MP College: "In fact, I was not given as many duties at the University," he said.

Jain has received backing from the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) and the Blind Men's Association, and is exploring legal options. He also plans to approach the NHRC and the University Grants Commission.