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Soft-peddalling leads to sense of impunity: Jadavpur alumni

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Kolkata: JU alumni, students and professors, both current and retired, questioned why there seems to be “an effort to soft-pedal” whenever allegations surface of ragging on the varsity campus. They say the university management may be fostering “a sense of impunity among a section of students” that may “further embolden” them. They also felt the university management “often seems to be weaker in authority than apparent wrong-doers”, which is the reason behind “the perception of lawlessness on campus”.

Several people said the culture of impunity or delay in the process allows a section of student leaders to act fearlessly and manipulate administrative decisions. Some of them pointed out it was clear the victim’s statement was conciliatory and he was worried about consequences of making any statement against the harassment.

“ There is a perception that there is lawlessness on this campus. Last Aug, we students of JU faced online bullying because no example was set by the university to control this impunity



Rwitobroto Mukherjee | ACTOR, EX-JU STUDENT

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There is a small section on campus involved in such incidents and, many times, there is political instigation from outside which helps them act fearlessly. In that case, the university should be ruthless because continuing their wrong activities is actually harming the institution.

Abhijit Chakrabarty | EX-VC

The chancellor's nominee at JU executive council, Kazi Masum Akhtar, told TOI, "It is unfortunate that the university couldn't send a show-cause notice to the accused in the ragging incident that took a fresher's life last year. I have written to the university authority questioning the delay, which allows a section on campus to believe they are above law and can do whatever they want. This tendency should be stopped by taking strong action against such incidents."

Former teachers and administrators said the sense of security is giving a small section the freedom to engage in "dadagiri" on campus, and repeated incidents like this were tarnishing the university's reputation. Former VC Avijit Chakrabarty said, "There is a small section on campus who get involved in such incidents and, many times, there is some political instigation from outside that helps them act fearlessly." Another former VC, Pradip Narayan Ghosh, said, "It's painful hearing about repeated incidents. I hope university authorities will take appropriate action."

Several former students said there is an outside perception that lawlessness prevails on campus. Former student and actor Rwitobroto Mukherjee said, "Last Aug, we students of JU faced tremendous online bullying because no example was set by the university administration to control this culture of impunity. Such incidents are repeatedly happening in one hostel. Doesn't that mean that a section of students, emboldened by some power, has a stronger hold than that of the university administration?"

Another former student, actor Sohini Sengupta, said, “The administration has to strongly deal with this issue and take responsibility of creating a safe environment for students. Otherwise, the image of the institute is getting tarnished.”