

VAKALAT MEIN ADALAT (1985). By Pawan Chaudhary. Vidhi Seva, New Delhi. Pp. 121. Price Rs. 30 hardback; Rs. 20 paperback.

THE BOOK under review¹ in Hindi may be called 'A Lament for the Legal Profession.' The legal profession and also courts with which it deals are those of the district level the author is more familiar with. For the last some years there has been an increasing concern with the fall in standards of the legal profession in India. J.D.M. Derrett, a scholar of Hindu law, had written some years ago a strong criticism of the working of the legal profession and the system in India. Upendra Baxi recently delivered lectures in a similar fashion at the Indian Law Institute. The author differs from both of them because he is concerned not with theory and ideal but with the day to day experience of persons dealing with lawyers and subordinate courts in Delhi.

The book makes interesting reading because of the saucy and racy style of the author. He contrasts the high place which one gives to the profession and courts as an ideal with the deplorable state of affairs which one finds in practice. In 20 small chapters he depicts their different images in different situations. For example, the whole of the atmosphere in and around courts is described in chapter "Ghat" (a place of pilgrimage); the chapter "Pesha" (profession) is also similar. The author has tried to assure that law is a profession and not business, differentiating the two in an interesting manner. He is one of the few who brings out the origin and significance of the black coat about which not many seem to know much. Likewise so many hangers around the court are also portrayed in the same satirical style : *parishramic* (fee), *munshi* (clerk) and *muvakkil* (client) etc.

The author deserves congratulations for being able to stick to what is the correct image of a lawyer and courts and he is, therefore, able to point out lapses from the image.

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1. Pawan Chaudhary. *Vakalat mein Adalat* (1985). The author has been given the prestigious award on the book by the Hindi Academy, Delhi, for 1985-86.

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