

## Awareness on Ragging

My dear Senior Students,

The incidents of ragging in educational institutions is becoming a National issue. I wish that all the senior students of SSITS will receive the suggestions expressed here positively and act as desired so that we can continue to maintain "RAGGING - FREE INSTITUTION" status for ever. Remember the fact: Awareness on ragging leads to eradication of ragging.

From what was intended to provide good humour and harmless fun to students, ragging today has assumed inhuman forms in some places that defy all norms of decency and morality. Though everyone knows about what can be treated as ragging, I would like to repeat it for your kind information. In brief, ragging is inhuman and perverted conduct, doing any act which causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological harm or raise apprehension or fear or shame or embarrassment to a student in any educational institution.

Today, almost all the countries of the world have enacted stern laws that ban ragging and it has been completely eradicated in majority of countries. But sadly, India, which inherited ragging as a legacy from the British Raj, has not been able to free itself from the clutches of this inhuman practice. It is unfortunate that our country's name is in a prominent position among the countries where ragging still exists.

In this context, we should agree that the following may happen to the victim of ragging:

1. The ragging may leave permanent scar in the victim's mind that may haunt him/her for years to come.
2. The ragging demoralizes the victim who enters the college life with many hopes and expectations.
3. It causes grave psychological stress and trauma to the victim.
4. Those who succumb to ragging may drop out, thereby hampering their career prospects.
5. In extreme cases, if the victim is too sensitive, he/she may resort to suicide, or culpable homicide.

Ragging has become a menace, cause of fear and shock, not only for a fresher but to his/her parents too who are sending their loved ones for pursuing higher studies by investing a lot of hard earned money.

My dear senior students! Don't forget that your primary duty is to honour the wishes of your parents. They wish to see you first as successful student and then as successful professional occupying respectable position. Their wishes are selfless. For this, what you should do is: Leading disciplined student life and possessing good character, without indulging in any unlawful activities, including ragging. If you can't behave like a good student today; tomorrow you can't act like a good professional in your career. Ragging is definitely a bad habit, which must not be practiced.

Imagine how you might have felt at the time of joining this professional course. You might have wished whole-heartedly and prayed God that no one troubles you through ragging. Follow the golden rule: Whatever you feel that should not be done to you by others, you should avoid doing to others.

Also, please bear this in mind: The victims of ragging are not only the students concerned, and their parents; but also the educational institution in which the evil practice of ragging is committed. The following may happen to the educational institution in which the unfortunate thing of ragging takes place:

1. It lowers the image of the educational institution and destroys the respect it is commanding from the society.
2. Bring a bad name to an educational institution, thereby hampering its prospects in the society.

In our country, all the State Governments are taking the issue seriously and enacting " Prohibition of Ragging Acts". In our state, ragging within or outside educational institution is prohibited as per "A.P Prohibition of Ragging Act 26, 1997. As per the act, ragging entails heavy fine upto Rs.2.5 lakhs and /or imprisonment upto even 10 years. It may also invoke suspension or dismissal from the college. Thus, we see that the practice of ragging does good to none.

The Supreme Court directed all the educational institutions across the country to take stringent anti-ragging measures including lodging criminal cases against erring students at the police stations.

The bench also asked the National Council for Educational Research and Training, to include in their Text books of relevant subjects like social or civic studies, a chapter on ragging under a sub-heading of human rights violation.

Approving elimination of ragging in educational institutions through exemplary and harsh punishment, the bench said that in the cases where a victim or his parent is not satisfied with the action taken against ragging, an FIR must be filed by the institution.

In this context, it is my duty to inform you all about the measures we are taking to prevent the occurrence of ragging in our institute:

Though our Institute got the "Ragging Free Status", consecutively 3 years from our Hon'ble District Collector, we are not for relaxing in our efforts to monitor any likelihood of ragging incidents in the Campus as well as outside the campus. Apart from the Anti-Ragging cell headed by number of senior staff members of the Institute, we have formed number of anti-ragging squads, each consisting of student volunteers and one teacher to monitor the situation in the college main building, Boys and Girls Hostels, critical areas in Rayachoty and Kadapa towns. Any unwanted behavior on the part of the seniors, will be reported by the concerned squad members to the Anti-Ragging Cell. The members of the cell, after thorough enquiry, report its findings to the Principal for taking necessary action.

Finally, a piece of advice to the student community. Ragging is a problem to the students and by the students; and therefore, the solution to it also should lie with the students. With ragging becoming rampant in the colleges, it is time that the student community awakens its conscience to this inhuman practice before more and more students and more and more educational institutions become victims of it. So, my dear seniors! The freshers everywhere, are by and large a timid lot. You ought to try and make them comfortable instead of enhancing their fears and apprehensions.

I conclude, wishing that the senior students of SSITS will continue to cooperate in eradicating the practice of ragging in and outside the campus and provide tension-free and conducive environment for the FIRST YEAR students; thus earning good name to the Institute for ever.

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