

## Some points to remember about ragging

- **Ragging is an act of aggression** committed by an individual or a group of individuals over another individual or a group of individuals where the first group, by virtue of their being senior to the second group, somehow get the authority and audacity to commit the act and the second group, by virtue of their being new to the institution are automatic victims. Any interaction which is aggressive and asymmetric (not on equal footing) is ragging.
- **Ragging is not harmless fun.** In an institution like IIT Palakkad, students come from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, and what may be harmless fun for some may turn out be serious indignity for some others. There are always a few cases where some freshers find ragging (or interaction) intolerable and suffer loss of self esteem. Nation-wide there have been more than 25 ragging deaths and suicides since 1998. It is often the case that seniors, being young students themselves, do not realize where to draw the line and when to back off. The risk is simply not worth it.
- **Ragging does not increase smartness of make a fresher bold.** Quite to the contrary it forces an individual to accept subjugation and conform; perhaps even rationalize it later (with the drinks and samosas at the end of the interaction period). This loss of individuality suppresses talent and reduces self-worth. In turn, the forced homogeneity precludes free flow of new ideas, creativity and the spirit of inquiry. Also, the attempt of the seniors to break the self esteem of a newcomer and revel in their shame and fear engenders feelings of bitterness and revengefulness, which is often taken out on juniors next year.
- **Ragging does not help bring people out of their shells and bring out their talents.** Talent in human beings is varied and multi-faceted. Identifying and recognizing talent is difficult business and one person cannot unilaterally decide that another needs "bringing out". It is also regressive to make some people feel that they are talentless or that they lack social skills.
- The courses in IIT Palakkad are so designed that for every credit registered, an average student requires to put in an hour of study/work. Denying the freshers the time to put in this work often results in poor academic performance.
- A premier institution like IIT Palakkad provides many opportunities for a new comer to excel, in both academics and extra-curricular activities. Forcing a predetermined set of ideas on to a fresher diminishes his/her chances of self-discovery.
- It is a matter of shame that a "Google search" on "ragging" returns most of the top few items related to ragging in India. Ragging, in most other countries, have become a thing of the past, and this has in no way reduced the sense of belonging to their institutions.
- It is neither possible nor desirable that a high-handed proctorial discipline and punishments be used to stop ragging. If this social evil has to be eradicated it must happen through the understanding and efforts of the student body. Not only should they not rag others but should actually prevent ragging from happening. We make an earnest request to all students to play an active role in stopping ragging.