



**REDRESSING VICTIMS OF RAGGING & PROVIDING A REGULATORY  
MECHANISM TO PREVENT RAGGING RELATED ABUSIVE CONDUCT IN SRI  
LANKAN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY  
THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION OF SRI LANKA**

**31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2020**



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**THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE  
APPOINTED BY THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION**

***MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE***

**Justice Dr. Saleem Marsoof PC**  
Chairman

**Senior Professor Janitha A Liyanage**  
Member & Secretary

**Ven. Professor Magamma Paññananda Thero**  
Member

**Rev. Dr. Benet Shantha Fernando**  
Member

**Senior Professor Narada Warnasuriya**  
Member

**Dr. Chandra Embuldeniya**  
Member

**Mr. Prasantha Lal De Alwis PC**  
Member

## FOREWORD

Every intake of students to Sri Lankan state universities and other institutions of higher learning have in one way or another highlighted the breakdown of value system and discipline in our society through an increasingly phenomenal menace called “ragging”. The enactment by the Parliament of Sri Lanka of legislation entitled the Prohibition of Ragging and Other Forms of Violence in Educational Institutions Act No. 20 of 1998 has not succeeded in curtailing this phenomenon.

Despite the enactment of legislation, during the first two decades of the new millennium we continued to hear of new entrant students dying or suffering serious injuries due to ragging or related violence. Many students have reportedly dropped out of these state universities and higher educational institutions, and many other eligible students have refrained from opting to study in these institutions due to ragging related abusive conduct. This has not only adversely affected the students and their families, but also deprived the state of valuable human potential that could have been harnessed for national development.

It is in these circumstances that on the instructions of the then Minister of Higher Education, Hon. Dr. Bandula Gunawardana, this Committee was appointed by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to specifically address the issue of providing appropriate relief to students who have been deprived of their education due to ragging in state universities and higher educational institutions coming within the purview of the UGC during the academic year 2014/2015 onwards. This Committee was also required to propose a regulatory mechanism to prevent ragging to ensure that the affected students do not suffer the same fate when re-admitted to an academic institution.

Evidence gathered by this Committee from students who could not commence or continue their higher education owing to ragging related abusive conduct revealed that anti-ragging campaigns and efforts on the part of academic and other staff of state universities and institutions have failed to achieve their objectives for many reasons. One of the primary factors that inhibited the implementation of anti-ragging measures was the existence of a long standing and deep rooted ‘culture of ragging’ that has gained political backing. The failure on the part of those responsible for discipline in these academic institutions to address the root causes of ragging and the lack of focus on student welfare have also negatively impacted efforts to eradicate ragging in these institutions.

However, since the primary objective of setting up this Committee was the need to redress the grievances of affected students and recommend measures to make their re-admission to these institutions meaningful, and also owing to time, organizational and financial constraints, this Committee has not been in a position to comprehensively study and understand the long standing and deep rooted causes of ragging and suggest remedial measures for all times. We cannot therefore claim that we have fully understood all aspects of the phenomenon of ragging to suggest measures necessary for this menace and its causes to be uprooted from society altogether.

Nevertheless, from the information gathered from the affected students it was possible to arrive at some conclusions regarding the situations prevailing in the relevant academic institutions which are fully outlined in this report and to recommend a regulatory mechanism to prevent the menace of ragging. The following is a ten-point summary of the conclusions and detailed regulatory measures that should be taken to curtail ragging in state universities and institutions of higher learning:-

- 1) Ragging is a manifestation of prevailing social conditions and issues that fall outside the scope of this Committee's terms of reference;
- 2) The primary responsibility for curbing ragging in universities and other higher educational institutions coming within the purview of the UGC vest exclusively in these universities and institutions;
- 3) The UGC as well as the academic institutions themselves should develop policies and procedures for the elimination of ragging and ensure due compliance;
- 4) Security and discipline should be strengthened in all state universities and higher educational institutions and the heads of these institutions should create incentives for due compliance and disincentives for failure to comply;
- 5) Greater co-ordination between police and academic institutions should be established on a permanent basis;
- 6) It is necessary to create wide public awareness of the disruptive consequences of ragging, and the UGC, state universities and other institutions should take steps to develop such awareness and set in place anti-ragging measures;
- 7) For discouraging ragging it may be necessary to be proactive than reactive, and academic institutions should put in place programmes that enhance awareness of human values and potentials, human rights, personality development, vocational guidance etc that can help in redressing the underlying causes of ragging;
- 8) Relevant institutions should review the management and regulation of hostels and canteens, the hotbeds of ragging;
- 9) Counselling and other guidance systems should be put in place; and
- 10) As an essential part of compliance and due diligence, periodic training programmes for all university and institutional staff on ragging must be conducted regularly.

It is our pleasant duty to acknowledge the active assistance received from the UGC and its staff in the preparation of this Report. We are thankful to the Chairman and members of the University Grants Commission for all that they have done to facilitate the work of the Committee, including the procurement of office space at the Bandaranayake Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) for the Committee Secretariat, and assisting with not only UGC office space but also online facilities to have interviews with the affected students by ZOOM. We shall fail in our duty if we do not express our gratitude to the UGC Secretariat Staff, in particular, Mr. Shammika Wijewardane, Senior Assistant Secretary, whose commitment and availability was a great source of inspiration and energy to all members of this Committee. We also thank Ms. Vijini Perera, Assistant Secretary for her ready assistance.

Every member of this Committee had taken to heart the plight of the fresher student who enters the state university or other institution of higher learning anxious to further his or her education for personal development as well as a means of contributing to the economic progress and prosperity of the nation. The menace of ragging frustrates all these aspirations. We believe that this report can help redress those who were affected by ragging during the relevant years, and that the regulatory mechanism proposed by the Committee to prevent ragging related abusive conduct, will curtail if not eliminate the prevalence of ragging in these academic institutions.

On this 31<sup>st</sup> day of August, 2020.

Justice Dr. Saleem Marsoof PC  
Chairman

Senior Professor Janitha A Liyanage  
Member & Secretary to the Committee

Ven. Professor Magamma Paññananda Thero  
Member

Rev. Dr. Benet Shantha Fernando  
Member

Professor Narada Warnasuriya  
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Dr. Chandra Embuldeniya  
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Mr. Prasantha Lal De Alwis PC  
Member



# REDRESSING VICTIMS OF RAGGING & PROVIDING A REGULATORY MECHANISM TO PREVENT RAGGING RELATED ABUSIVE CONDUCT IN SRI LANKAN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

## **1. Introduction: An Overview of the circumstances that led to the Appointment of this Committee**

This committee was appointed mainly to recommend appropriate relief to students who have been deprived of their higher education in state universities and other higher educational institutions coming within the purview of the University Grants Commission (hereinafter referred to as the “UGC”) due to ragging, and to propose a regulatory mechanism to prevent ragging related abusive conduct. It may be useful to outline some background information about the incidence of ragging and other abusive conduct in state universities and other higher educational institutions (hereinafter sometimes referred to as “HEIs”) which led to the appointment of this Committee.

While the term “ragging” has been defined by law as “any act which causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or mental pain or fear to a student or a member of the staff of an educational institution”<sup>1</sup>, from a human rights perspective, it may be described as “a traditional and systematic human rights abuse practiced by seniors upon juniors.”<sup>2</sup> Forms of ragging may vary from a mild interaction to a traumatic mental or physical abuse leading victims to nervous breakdown or death.

Though the causes of the phenomenon of ragging may have been more-deep rooted, the first well known manifestations of the problem were reported in 1975 from two institutions of higher learning in Sri Lanka. The first involved incidents of ragging in the Vidyalkara campus of the University of Sri Lanka where some teachers in government schools attending a Diploma course in New Mathematics were subjected to ragging.<sup>3</sup> The second and the more serious incident reported in 1975 involved a 22 year-old student of the University of Peradeniya’s Faculty of Agriculture, Rupa Rathnaseeli, who was badly injured when she jumped from the second floor of the Ramanathan Hall to escape ragging. The injuries sustained by her paralysed her, and after a prolonged struggle with life, she committed suicide in 2002.<sup>4</sup> Since then there have been an increasing number of incidents such as the deaths in 1993 of Chaminda Punchihewa, of the University of Ruhuna, in 1997 of S.

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<sup>1</sup> See, section 17 of the Prohibition Of Ragging And Other Forms Of Violence In Educational Institutions Act No. 20 of 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Keshini Imesha Hettiarachchi, “Can Ragging in Higher Education Institutes in Sri Lanka Be Eradicated Only by Legislative Reforms: A Comparative Analysis with India” (uploaded on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2017) accessible at: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3011822](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3011822)

<sup>3</sup> See, Report of the Commission of Inquiry into “Ragging” at the Vidyalkara Campus of the University of Sri Lanka (also known as the “V.W.Kularatne Commission”), Sessional Paper No XI of 1975.

<sup>4</sup> See, Tudor Wijenayake, “Ragging in universities, basic issues not even understood”, Daily FT (17 July 2020) at: <http://www.ft.lk/columns/Ragging-in-universities-basic-issues-not-even-understood/4-703242>

Varapragash, an Engineering student of University of Peradeniya and in the same year of Kelum Thushara Wijetunge, a fresher at the Hardy Technical Institute, Ampara,<sup>5</sup> which may all be described as the tip of the iceberg, that led to a public outcry against the menace of ragging and paved the way for the enactment by the Parliament of Sri Lanka of the Prohibition of Ragging and Other Forms of Violence in Educational Institutions Act of 1998 (hereinafter referred to as the “Prohibition of Ragging Act”).<sup>6</sup>

The Prohibition of Ragging Act provides, *inter alia* that any person who commits or participates in ragging within or outside the an educational institution, shall be guilty of an offence under the Act and on conviction after summary trial, shall be liable for a term of rigorous imprisonment not exceeding two years.<sup>7</sup> It also provides that if sexual harassment or grievous hurt is caused whilst committing ragging, the offender shall be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years on conviction after a summary trial.<sup>8</sup> The Act also makes provision for the payment of compensation to the victim in an amount determined by court in respect of the injuries caused to such person.<sup>9</sup>

However, it appears that the enactment of the Prohibition of Ragging Act and the turn of the new millennium did not result in the elimination or even in any meaningful reduction of the menace of ragging, which seem to have got even more deep rooted and more rigorous. This is clear from the progressive increase in the phenomenon of ragging as seen from the death in 2002 of Samantha Vithanage, a third year student at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, who led an anti-ragging campaign and was killed at a meeting while engaged in a discussion on ragging. This led to a series of clashes between two fractions and the death of another student who belonged to the opposite camp. The ongoing student unrest resulted in the resignation of Prof. Chandima Wijebandara, the Vice Chancellor of University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Ragging related incidents continued nonetheless, and in 2011, a female student attached to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Ruhuna, suffered paralysis as a result of ragging, and on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019, a fresher from the Faculty of Management of the Sri Jayewardenepura University was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at the National Hospital after a ragging incident with serious injuries. On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, Shanilka Wijesinghe, in his early twenties who just gained admission to Diyagama Campus of Moratuwa University committed suicide leaving a three-page suicide note, and later in the same year in June, four students of the Eastern University who were subjected to ragging were hospitalised due to injuries.<sup>10</sup> Things came to a head in the University of Colombo in early 2020 when third year students who opposed ragging clashed with second year students who had ragged freshers for days in a most

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>6</sup> Prohibition of Ragging and Other Forms of Violence in Educational Institutions Act No. 20 of 1998.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, section 2(1).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, section 2(2).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, section 2.

<sup>10</sup> Tudor Wijenayake, *supra* note 4.

inhuman manner. The incident took place in the university cafeteria and resulted in 12 students suspected to have been involved being arrested by police.<sup>11</sup>

Incidents of ragging that cause serious bodily harm and even death as noted above, cannot be taken in isolation or taken as exceptions to the “conducive environment” prevailing in state universities and other higher educational institutions. This is because, as pointed out by Dr. Maduragna Kalugampitiya in a very illuminating article entitled “*Who will guard the Guards?*”,<sup>12</sup> ragging related abusive conduct is much more widespread and perverse and affect university life beginning from initiation or orientation till the end of the first year or even beyond. As he observes,

“The numerous forms of this ‘initiation’ process ranging from ‘innocent’ ones like asking the freshers to sing songs to severe forms of mental and physical abuse and torture that are being reported indicate an escalation of ragging related activities in the Faculty this time. *Some reported cases of freshers not being permitted to wear undergarments, being required to wear the same dress over a period of about two weeks, not being allowed to take a proper body wash, not being permitted proper meals, especially those of their choice, and the seniors who are involved in ragging retaining the exclusive power to decide even the menu of the meals for the freshers attest to the fact that in certain areas ragging has risen to unprecedented heights. The alleged cases of sexual abuse, in addition to physical, mental, and verbal abuse, carried out in the name of and as part of this ‘initiation’ process mainly in residential halls signal the gravity of the issue in question.*” (emphasis added)

He goes on to describe the impact ragging can have on the minds of freshers who enter the university or other institution of higher learning, dreaming of a bright future and a career that can benefit them, their families and the nation, in the following words-

“The immense pressure that is unleashed upon the freshers, coupled with the high dose of brainwashing that they are subjected to throughout the ragging period, succeed in implanting certain anti-social tendencies in the minds of a considerable segment of the freshers. In my view, this explains the basis for the magical conversion of the offended in one year to the offender in the following year. *The (anti)socialization process that takes place in university contexts pushes the minds of these prospective scholars to a point where they can easily fall prey to extremist forces. If universities continue to produce a line of offended-turned-offenders at a time when society needs scholars who are progressive and anti-social in a positive sense these institutions cannot be prevented from ceasing to be relevant to the broader society.*” (emphasis added)

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<sup>11</sup> News1st, “12 Colombo University Students arrested for Ragging” (10<sup>th</sup> January 2020) accessible at: <https://www.newsfirst.lk/2020/01/10/12-colombo-university-students-arrested-for-ragging/>

<sup>12</sup> Maduragna Kalugampitiya, Sunday Observer, “Who will Guard the Guards?” (4<sup>th</sup> October 2009) accessible at: <http://archives.sundayobserver.lk/2009/10/04/mon20.asp>

The detrimental nature of the so called ‘culture of ragging’ which allows the raggers to gain dominance over the minds of the ragged freshers to make them conform to their culture and thinking can have long lasting effects on higher education and even in future careers. As Professor Hemantha Senanayake<sup>13</sup> has recently pointed out-

*“Rigid conformity goes against the core principles of university education, which is meant to promote free, independent thought. Ragging is a slick operation that would put military techniques of ‘breaking’ people to shame. Gaining control of the thinking process is the name of the game. The practice is ruining the futures of thousands of promising youngsters, stifling their potential and pulling our universities and the whole country down. The direct deaths, suicides and permanent maiming of students is merely the tip of a massive iceberg that is threatening our university education.”(emphasis added)*

Apart from the physical and psychological harm that the new entrant ‘freshers’ had to undergo, another important consequence of ragging related abuse prevalent in Sri Lankan institutions of higher learning coming within the purview of the UGC is the increasing student ‘drop out’ rate and the number of potential students who chose to attend alternative courses of study conducted by private sector establishments or go overseas for higher studies. It is believed that the recommendations of this committee will help overcome these problems which impact on Sri Lanka’s human resources.

## **2. Setting up of the Committee – Objectives and Modalities**

This committee was set-up by the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka on the instructions of the then Hon Minister of Higher Education, Hon. Bandula Gunawardana, to recommend relief to students who have been prevented from continuing their education in state universities and other higher educational institutions coming within the purview of the UGC from the academic year 2014/2015 onwards due to ragging and other related abusive conduct.<sup>14</sup> The committee was also required to recommend a regulatory mechanism to prevent ragging related abusive conduct in the universities and such other higher educational institutions (hereinafter sometimes referred to as “HEIs”).

The Chairman of the committee, its Member-Secretary and 4 other Members were appointed by letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2020, which also contained the Terms of Reference of the Committee<sup>15</sup> According to the said letter, the period of scrutiny for recommending relief to students who could not avail themselves of the benefits of higher education due to ragging related abusive conduct was confined to four years, namely commencing the intakes for the academic year 2014/2015 onwards. Although this committee were granted a time-

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<sup>13</sup> Prof. Hemantha Senanayake, “‘Ragging’ is dragging Sri Lanka down”, Daily FT (10<sup>th</sup> June 2020, accessible at: <http://www.ft.lk/columns/Ragging-is-dragging-Sri-Lanka-down/4-701376>

<sup>14</sup> See, BusinessNews.LK , ‘Committee to propose relief for ragging victims’ (11 February 2020), accessible at: <http://www.businessnews.lk/2020/02/11/committee-to-propose-relief-for-ragging-victims/>

<sup>15</sup> For copy of the letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 including the Terms of Reference, see Annexure A.

frame of three months to submit its report, since its work was affected by the onset of COVID-19 and the consequent lockdown and ban on inter-district travel, the UGC was pleased to extend the time-frame by three more months.<sup>16</sup> This meant that the report of the period granted for the submission of the report of the committee would expire on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020.

One of the first official acts of the committee was to formally inform the public about the setting up of the committee and the objectives of the committee. This was done by the UGC on the recommendations of the committee by way of notifications published in daily newspapers in Sinhalese, Tamil and English on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020.<sup>17</sup> By the said notification, applications were also invited from students who had been selected for admission to courses conducted by universities and HEIs during academic years 2014/2015 to 2018/2019 and who could not embark or continue in their studies due to ragging. Applicants seeking relief were required to submit their applications supported by affidavit and other material documentary evidence on or before 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020. Further public awareness regarding the establishment of the Committee and the procedure for making applications for relief was created through the issue of press-releases and through the media using popular TV and radio programs.

Although eighty-eight (88) applications for relief were received<sup>18</sup>, those falling outside the terms of reference of the committee set out in the letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 (Annexure A) by reason of being outside the specified admission period of academic years 2014/2015 onwards or because the admission was to a HEI not falling within the purview of the UGC had to be rejected. The committee also envisaged all applications to be supported by affidavit and copies of supporting documents due to their evidentiary value, and the failure to comply within a reasonable period even after the attention of the applicant was drawn to this requirement prescribed in the press notification, resulted in the application being rejected. Thirty-five (35) applications as tabulated in Schedule I to this Report were rejected for the aforesaid reasons.

All applicants considered *prima facie* eligible for relief were interviewed in depth by the committee in person at the Secretariat of the committee at the Bandaranayake Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) at Colombo 7 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020, but the interviews scheduled for 17 and 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 could not be held due to the onset of COVID-19 and the consequent curfew, lockdown and prohibition on inter-district travel imposed by the government to meet the contingency. The remaining interviews had to be conducted online by ZOOM after the situation had improved. Accordingly several sessions of ZOOM interviews were conducted on 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> June and 14<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

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<sup>16</sup> The extension was granted by the letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020. Copy of this letter is attached as Annexure B.

<sup>17</sup> For copies of the notifications published in Sinhalese, Tamil and English, see respectively, Annexures C, D and E.

<sup>18</sup> Applications for relief were received by email and post, and there were some duplications in entering them in a register and allocating a number. These duplications are also set out in Table 1 and Table 2 *infra*.

Altogether fifty-three (53) applicants for relief were interviewed by the Committee, and the time spent on each hearing whether face-to-face at BMICH or online by ZOOM averaged 45 minutes and then discussions about the evidence for recommendations another 15 to 30 minutes. The purpose of the interviews were two-fold, namely (a) to verify the veracity of the claims for relief and to discuss the nature of the relief, and (b) to hear the testimony of victims of ragging with the view to obtaining valuable insights as to what happens to the first year students who enter these academic institutions. Of the 53 applicants interviewed, fifty (51) applicants were found to be eligible for relief, and the recommendations of the committee in this regard as detailed in Schedule II, have been placed before the UGC for its consideration. It is necessary to mention that every interview was recorded using audio equipment and written transcripts of their testimony will be preserved for at least 5 years.

In the course of its deliberations including interviews with applicants for relief, this committee considered it its responsibility to make an effort to ascertain the causes of ragging, in view of its very secretive, sensitive and complex character, and the important conclusions that could be derived in order to propose a regulatory mechanism to prevent or minimize the impact of ragging related abusive conduct. The recommendations for relief included in this report and the regulatory mechanism proposed by this committee to prevent ragging related abusive conduct are primarily based on the testimony of the affected students, the evidence gathered from the affidavits and supporting documents submitted by them with their applications and other material called from them subsequently, all of which have been carefully cross-checked with records available at the UGC and the relevant universities and other HEIs using all available means.

### ***3. A Summary of Testimony of Victims of Ragging***

This committee has heard evidence from students who could not commence or continue their higher education in state universities or HEIs due to ragging or ragging related abuse. The testimony of the applicants for relief interviewed by the committee reveal that they had worked hard to gain admission to these universities or institutions but due to the fear and/or intensity of unbearable ragging gave up on their hard earned opportunities. The testimony of affected students lead to the following general conclusions:-

- a) A significant amount of ragging and ragging related abuse take place at state universities and institutions, and there is no university or HEI that has eradicated this social menace fully;
- b) During the initiation period (orientation) new-entrant students (freshers) are approached with friendly gestures to get them into compliance, and things change radically when the ragging starts at the end of the initiation period;
- c) Ragging is perpetuated by the immediate senior batch as a habit and the super seniors (third year and fourth year students) join in at a later stage;

- d) Ragging has severity levels ranging from very mild at the beginning and increasing in ferocity with time;
- e) Ragging may continue throughout the first year in the university or HEI. In some cases, it continues beyond the first year;
- f) Those opposing ragging will be seen as enemies of the raggers and will be dealt severely with intense ragging throughout their campus lives;
- g) Some of those opposing ragging will be ostracized even by their own batchmates and labeled “Alaya” and subjected to discrimination even beyond the first year;
- h) Raggers use their compliant subordinates as a resource for till collections and show strength during their protestations;
- i) The non-participants at rallies are subject to various types of mental and physical harassment;
- j) The administration in most universities and HEIs perform a passive role during ragging and generally do not interfere and as a result the new entrants feel extremely helpless; and
- k) Ragging can be stopped by creating awareness amongst university students and those studying in HEIs as well as school children hoping to enter these institutions, academic staff at universities and other institutions, school teachers and parents regarding the reprehensible nature of ragging.

Selected extracts of the testimony of affected students who were interviewed by the committee are set out in brief in the section to follow. It must be noted that an attempt has been made to maintain confidentiality by avoiding disclosure of names of students, the universities or higher educational institutions and even locations as much as possible. The insights gained from the interviews are worthy of being analyzed.

U-02

This new-entrant male students had the opportunity to meet some seniors during the orientation period in early January 2018 when things were cordial and there was no ragging. After a week of orientation, ragging started. Senior Sinhala students came to rag the Sinhala students and Tamil new entrants were ragged by Tamil seniors. Initially the ragging took the form of verbal abuse which later transformed into hard-physical ragging. This student said in evidence as follows: “I refused to submit myself for physical ragging, but we were abused in filth. During the ragging period the raggers disrupted our education in many ways. We were preventing from attending lectures and even going to the library. They took us for ragging even during lecture hours, and due to my not submitting myself for physical ragging, they assaulted me causing injuries. I have submitted medical certificates. I could not attend most of the lectures due to ragging as well as my falling sick due to the injuries. I could not pass any examination due to these distractions. In my batch about 12 students dropped out in February 2019, and I left the university in March 2019.”

U-05

This male student stated in evidence that ragging started early and testified as follows: "Eight seniors came to meet me at the hostel. They did not identify themselves by their real names. I was taken to a boarding house but cannot recollect where it was. They walked with me to the boarding house. There were other students like me. They were all given a toffee to suck and then pass on to others. All had to suck the same toffee. The senior students said this ragging is for 'batch fit' and for fun (Arthal ekata)." He further testified that although they came to rag him, he did not want to be ragged. Then they wanted to rag him, but he did not want to be ragged. Another day he was met by senior students at the boarding house. He was asked to perform obscene sexual acts. He was asked to act as a rapist and show how he would rape a woman. He was also asked to masturbate. When he was kneeling, a senior student summoned him to stand up and approach him. He was tired and stood up, but he could not move quickly. He was assaulted stating he was late in carrying out instructions. The blow he received was hard and he fell. His knee was dislocated, and the spine was damaged. In that condition he was taken into a therapy room and a senior male student applied a cream or some oil on his legs and back side and continued to abuse him sexually. It was a disgusting feeling, but he stayed helpless. He was unable to resist due to the pain in the dislocated knee and the injured back. By this time, he was in terrible shape with the injured knee and the spine. He was unconscious for 12 hours. He returned home but did not tell what happened to parents due to shame but had to take medical treatment. He had suffered not only physical injuries but also severe mental distress and once he fainted at home. In the course of his testimony, this student suggested that for eradication of ragging and related abuses, liquor and opium use should be banned in campus hostels and some CID officers must be introduced as freshers to get inside information.

U-06

She stayed for only few days at the university during the initial period and left due to severe intolerable ragging. She is a student brought up with strong cultural values in a Buddhist family. She is a vegan, not consuming any animal based foods. Her ragging commenced at the canteen where she was asked to sit with a male and a glass of milk kept in between them. She was asked to dip her finger in the milk and let the male student feed by liking her finger. The male was ordered to do the same for her. She was revolted but followed that ragging episode with disgust. There was another ragging incident and its memory was so revolting that she shudders when she thinks of it. She could not describe this incident because it was difficult for her to put that experience into words. That was the end of her stay at the university and with the consent of her parents she left. There were lecturers always around but none of them took any notice of what went on. She would like to study at another university, if the situation turns for the better.

U-08

She was admitted to a higher educational institution in August 2019 and had difficulty in undertaking her studies due to conflicts involving the administration of that institution

which was compounded by the senior students who were a dominant force. Some parents of students were also involved in this conflict. She complains of the intimidatory tactics used by seniors who prevented freshers from going to the canteen for meals or refreshments and the disturbance they caused to lectures and even library usage. Only a few students including her managed to attend the examination held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019, but when they came out of the examination hall they were attacked with rotten eggs. Due to the intolerable situation she dropped out of the university in January 2020, and hopes that she can continue her studies in any other university or higher educational institution in same course.

U-10

This male student suffered from psoriasis and wished to stay outside of the campus to get frequent medical attention. At the orientation they announced there is no ragging. Initial ragging was by giving a salivated toffee which was passed on from mouth to mouth. He also had to share the meals with several other students on the same plate.

He planned to attend lectures from his boarding. The senior students were pressurizing him to get into a campus hostel. He did not encounter Tamil or Muslim students wanting to rag him. The Sinhala seniors ragged Sinhalese freshers. As part of ragging they were asked to prepare a list of the names of batchmates and memorize it. There were around 100 students in their batch. Even if there was a minute error he had to rewrite all the names afresh. This went on for several rounds. Each time the task was made more difficult with inconsistent instructions. Student representatives were appointed by the ragers for both males and females. He was held by the neck and threatened on occasions. He was also forced to drink alcohol which he resisted. Once a picket campaign was announced by the ragers and it was cancelled at the last minute. He heard from students residing in campus hostels that they were kept awake throughout the nights for ragging. The ragging and the pressure brought about by the ragers was brought to the notice of a lecturer, but though he was sympathetic, nothing happened.

He came to know from his batchmates that they too were ragged and physically harassed. He continued to stay bordered outside and attend lectures. However due to immense pressure, distraction from the ragers and his own ailment he missed submission of assignments on time and fell behind the rest of the batchmates. One day he shaved himself at his boarding house and when he arrived at the university the ragers pointed out a few hairs on his face unshaven and shaved his face with a razor until it bled. It was a very painful experience. He was not allowed any opportunity to attend to personal needs while at the university, not even to drink water when thirsty.

The ragers made him spend all the money he had from parents asking him to buy various things that were quite unnecessary. For example, they asked him to buy new slippers and then asked him to change what was already bought. These acts were not only financially wasteful but also resulted in the utter wastage of valuable time he had for studies.

They would not allow him to speak or use English anywhere. They gave severe penalties for using English. The penalty was to write 500 lines with an apology. When he complained to the authorities, he was asked to identify culprits from photographs which were shown to him. Though he identified some of the culprits, nothing happened, and there were among the academic staff some who favoured ragging. He had to pay Rs 5000 for the room only in the boarding house, and food was also expensive. He could not afford these expenditure. For all these reasons, he eventually gave up his university education.

U-16

The monk was ragged from the very first day he entered the university. He was not even allowed to go to the temple to collect a change of robes. He was ragged by senior student monks who used filth and very threatening language. Many monks (around 64) were packed into the bathroom and asked to bath naked. There was insufficient water for bathing, but water was splashed on them with a bucket from time to time. Then they had to collect the dirty robes from the heap without having to bother about selecting the one that belonged to each one of them. These conditions were putrid. Even to defecate there was only a small amount of water. Everything was rationed. They were herded into tiny rooms and kept confined for hours sometimes without lights. That was very stressful due to all having to be in body contact. Ragging ended when this monk decided enough is enough and gave up his studies.

U-19

She went through the orientation and followed dress code. Security officers were present at the university. The orientation went on for a month. She stayed in a private boarding house as no hostel was provided. Ragging started after the orientation. Abusing started during the intervals from lectures. It was very disturbing for her and she was not used to hearing such abuse. It was evident that she had been brought up in a very traditional household under close parental care, and her ragers made fun using feudal language and also abused and threatened her. She was asked to memorize the names of about 250 batchmates and relate all names from memory. She failed to do that and got punished with increasingly more shouting and abuse. She was asked to prepare reports about her school.

The boys played outdoor games till morning about 4 am throughout the night. She had to wait with them to serve drinks. These were soft drinks. It was scary to serve drinks to boys who were drunk at such hours in the night. There were other females as well, but they were all scared. There was a social one day. She had to stay up till 4 am. There was once a Pirith Chanting Ceremony at the university. She was cornered by some drunk senior boys in the middle of the night and questioned, which again was a severe harassment. Somehow there was no physical abuse, but she was subject to mentally traumatic experiences which she could not bear. Ragging did not seem to end, and there was no space for her to do her studies. The time she spent in the university was like an episode in a horror movie. She decided to quit and left the campus.

The senior students approached in a friendly way during the introduction. Since he could dance, the senior students asked him to perform dances. He was assigned hostel facilities during orientation, but he went home for the weekend and returned towards mid-December. The seniors met him on the way and assaulted him and a friend who was with him for no reason. He was taken to a hostel and after ragging taken into a room around 3 pm. He had been asked to bring a food parcel by the seniors from home which he had brought. They poured a bottle of water on the rice and asked him to eat. It was putrid and nauseating and he vomited. He cleaned up. He was given things to memorize and then allowed to proceed to the hostel where he stayed. The following day, the batchmates met and discussed the situation and felt they should leave the campus soon. They lined up to go for lectures, but he was singled out from the lineup and taken to near the river and asked to dance. He refused stating that this was not the place to dance. He was assaulted there. He ran away from that place and went back to the canteen and then to his hostel. They came searching for him and he hid inside a cupboard. His phone was taken by the raggers and ordered not to have smart phones. The next day he was caught before he could go to the lecture hall. He went through a traumatic experience while they threatened him with death and said his body will be dumped into the river. He was molested and ran away from the molesters and into his hostel. They returned in the night about 1.00 am. When he heard them coming, he jumped over the balcony with 4 other batchmates and climbed a tree. Was on the tree throughout the night until about 7 am. He wanted to urinate but did so streaming on the trunk from the tree fearing that the seniors would locate them.

The raggers had master keys to enter any room. Then on another day in January this man entered his room while he was asleep and held him on the bed face down and raped him. It was utter suffering as he was helpless. The worst happened to his reputation due to the raggers telling their friends about the incident and other second year students making inquiries from him. He was ashamed and did not know how to handle. He had no one to complain. Some batchmates knew but were of no help. Others only encouraged abuse. It was sheer agony and mental suffering. He thought of committing suicide jumping over the balcony on the higher floor but a batchmate saved him. They had a social one day, and they attempted to abuse him, but he managed to save himself. From then on it became a habit for these perpetrators to follow him to get a chance to abuse him. He faced horrific experiences during those days. There was a strike at the university in May and he came home. He did not want to tell what he was going through to his parents. He feared that these people may have taken photos and post it on social media. He was raped again by six people who entered his room. His hands and legs were tied to the bed. He felt he was going to die but remained lifeless. These animals penetrated him with an iron rod and that made him bleed profusely from his anus. They came again and raped him on a third occasion. The third time four people did it. It all happened in the dark and in the night. The second and third times are referred to as "Yaka Gahanawa". He went to get treatment for bleeding injuries to the Medical Center and then to the hospital. He did not tell anything about how it happened. He went with a friend to the police and complained but the police did nothing.

He went to the security office in the campus to complain but they did nothing. He can recognize people who committed the offenses from their voice. Some of them may have passed out. He left the campus and returned home since it was severely affecting him mentally and socially to remain with the fellow students. Then he told his mother all the things and came for the interview scheduled by this committee with his mother, and gave sordid details of his harrowing experiences in the hands of the perpetrators of these horrific crimes, that resulted in him leaving the university.

U-32

She had to undergo three months of intensive ragging. There was no social, but a welcome was held towards the end of March. They started with the English intensive program. The ragging started in the canteen where she had to present herself in the morning and at lunch time. The abuse was unbearable filth. The abuse went on while having a meal. The seniors would come to the canteen table and bang on the table while they were eating. It was terrifying. Since the abuse was going on during the meals, sometimes she could not finish her food before lectures started. When she could not finish, she had to go without food. She became an anti-rag person ("Ala"). There were twenty such anti-rag students in their batch. They were asked to study and memorize filth and reproduce in writing. The ragers gave assignments to remember things such as the names of batchmates. If one cannot comply then the seniors would scold in filth. Ragging was intense and there was no food given. Even if there was food there was no time to eat. The senior students gave loads of work to accomplish during the weekends so that the new students cannot go home. They had to participate in till collections, protests, and agitation marches. There was no sexual harassment during her short period of stay. She was not free even after she became anti-rag. They mixed one anti-rag with three rag friendly students in the rooms. Anti-rag students undergo ostracizing and thus made to feel severe boycotting. She complained twice to the authorities, but no relief came. She then requested a transfer to another university. She was instructed by the Vice Chancellor not to disclose ragging in the university and the letter requesting a transfer had to be signed by her without disclosing ragging as the reason. Fortunately, the Dean of the relevant Faculty in the other university to which she requested a transfer accepted her request. But the UGC is yet to facilitate this transfer. She received a scholarship worth Rs 10,000 but the Vice Chancellor turned down the request. She has taken medical treatment and has a report of reactive depression, an impact due to ragging. She wanted to get another room in a different hostel, but the Warden refused even though rooms were available. She requests to facilitate the transfer to the university she had already been accepted.

U-33

He was ragged by second and third year students. He stayed in the hostel. They used to assault him very badly. Ragging was done only by the Sinhala students. The senior students ordered him to memorize the names and ID numbers of the batchmates. He had to relate from memory and always he could not do that successfully. Every time he failed, he was assaulted badly. In the canteen the senior students asked him to share one packet of rice

with five others and fed by a female student. The rice had to be mixed with curries by hand until the food contaminated his palm up to his wrist and covered through the fingers. He was taken to the second floor at 11 pm for ragging. Even females had to undergo this in the company of female raggers. He was taught to obey the orders and respect the senior students and never to betray the fellowship. It meant he was not supposed to give away information about ragging or raggers. He was taught to lie when the authorities ask for any information detrimental to the ragging going on in the campus. The orders came in threatening language in utter filth. He was taken to an upper floor where the most senior students stayed. There he was asked questions and upon answering slapped. He was slapped many times every day. That was unbearable. His ears and hearing were affected due to frequent slaps. He came to know of students who got hearing damaged due to receiving slaps. He had to visit a medical officer for treatment and always a senior student was present when the doctor made inquiries. Due to the presence of the senior student it was not possible for him to tell the truth about the ragging and he had to lie to the doctor about how his hearing got damaged. He gave the name of one student who assaulted him. There was no freedom to make any complaints to authorities since his movements were always tracked by the senior students and he was assaulted. He could not take the abuse, both physical and psychological, any longer and left the campus in June 2019.

U-36

She went through the orientation program conducted by the university for seven days. Some events in the orientation programme were conducted by the students' union. A senior student spoke in a professional manner. The senior students laid down a condition to inform them if anyone wanted to use the washroom. The girls were asked to dress uniformly in a long skirt, long sleeved blouse, and rubber slippers of a particular brand. This was enforced during lectures. The students had to find the details of other students such as their names and memorized. It was an emotional blackmail. She was taken inside a room and questioned. Since she did not listen to the seniors orders her batchmates were punished. Another girl was scolded, and male students were punished at the hostel. There were other students who resisted ragging. She was mentally down. She went for two semesters but did not sit for exams. No physical abuse. Harsh and bad language used in scolding. There was no sexual abuse. One girl in the batch was a lesbian. The senior students took away our mobile phones. There was a four storey building and seniors stayed in each floor. Since she did not attend the university for one week, she was made to answer all the seniors in each floor. She was taken into a room for questioning. Seniors escorted the newcomers from the university to the hostels. That was done to create a good impression. This was done for the benefit of the girls who came from outstations. There were about 4 or 5 students who dropped out following her dropping out. Three dropouts were from Colombo. She was isolated from her batchmates by the senior students. She was under stress even before she went to the university but due to the intense mental pressure, she came to be severely depressed. She had to undergo medical treatment from a Consultant. Due to depression she even shaved off her hair after six months in the university. She prefers to do the same degree at another university.

U-40

There was an orientation which lasted three months. She was ragged during the orientation program at the university premises. There was no ragging at the hostel, but she got ragged during the daytime. The intensity of the rag increased with time. It was compulsory for them to be present at the canteen in the morning to get ragged. Laughing was prohibited. She had to bear the filthy language which she never heard before and she cannot relate here. The second year students ragged her. Sinhala students ragged the Sinhala students and the Tamil students were ragged by the Tamil students. There was no ragging at the hostel. She stayed at the university for a period of less than six months. She did not do the first semester exam. About 20 students dropped out from the program before she dropped out. They ragged during breakfast and lunch in the canteen. The dress code was strictly enforced. She was verbally abused in filthy language. If a fresher was absent due to even an illness, the seniors abused all new students. Even the batchmates scolded the batchmates for being absent. She had to memorize the names and personal details of the batchmates. Remembering the names of the entire batch was impossible. They would be asked to relate the names from memory and always they made mistakes. The mistakes resulted in filthy abuse.

Both female and male students from the senior batches were involved in ragging. The first year male students were beaten up by the senior students. There were meetings conducted by the senior students in the afternoons and it was compulsory to attend those meetings. These meetings were addressed by the IUSF leader Lahiru and their university students' union leaders, and went on till past mid-night. There was a picket at least once a week. They were not allowed to return to the hostel after the lectures in the afternoon. She had to wait till about 8.00 pm after the lectures had finished. Lectures finished by 3.00 pm or 4.00 pm. She had to wait in the canteen till about 6.00 pm and then was taken to the place where the meetings were held. The lecturers did not look into such ragging and the first year students would dare not complain to the lecturers. With this schedule the time of the students was wasted and there was no time for studies. There was no mental freedom. She went home for two to three days and returned to the university. She informed all that happens in the university to her parents. Parents did not force her to go back to the university. She did not want to return to the university but her own batchmates persuaded her to return to campus. The batchmates kept phoning her asking to return. So, she returned. After four months of ragging they got their 'card names'. There was no social and no buckets. One day she was scolded in filthy harsh words. The senior students pointed some of their colleagues and asked if she liked them or not. She was scolded because she did not respond to them. The boys' hostels were outside the university. She came to know that the boys were ragged in the hostels. Some of her friends in the batch also dropped out due the unbearable rag. There were no Deans, Lecturers, Security or Marshals to protect them even when serious raging taking place for all to see. The members of the staff members did not even turn up at the canteen. She would like to go to another university other than the university she was admitted to.

U-52

He was an allrounder at school. When he entered, he was abused in intolerable filth. He refused to be ragged. He complained to his Counsellor and also his Mentor. He was labeled an 'Alaya' which means he was isolated from the community of students and not entertained by anyone. If anyone entertains him those who do so also would be punished by the raggers. He was assaulted in the canteen. Then he complained to the police and two temporary lecturers came to the police station with him. He could not mention the details because of the presence of the temp lecturers. He was ill-treated and assaulted in the canteen on many occasions. Later the canteen became out of bounds for him. He realized that his Head of Department, supported ragging. There were some in the academic staff who fell in line with raggers. Of course there were many who felt sorry for the plight of those being ragged, but they too did not voice their feelings. While he was cornered and ill-treated, he got no help from the university to get over the problem. For three years he was verbally abused each day by someone. He cannot think of a single day spent without being abused. Even his own batchmates avoided him because those batchmates were subject to harassment due to contact with him. One of his batchmate was the student representative and his job was to convey messages from the lecturers, but he neglected giving him messages on many occasions which resulted in some of his performance failures. He missed lectures due to communication problems. In the classroom he was treated badly and had to sit away from his friends. He missed group exercises due to not getting information and boycotting. When he participated in group work, he was only watching and did not get to do any activities. Between lecturers he had no place secure enough to wait due to frequent harassment and he had to go to his boarding place which was located downhill. Climbing this hill up and down few times during the day made his knees wobble and painful. He got a problem with the knees now. During field visits also he was treated badly and cornered. Once at the hostel after a field visit, he was sleeping on the ground. Someone kicked him in the dark. He was severely injured. He contemplated twice on suicide but since it was a big sin according to religious teaching he refrained. He has taken this abuse for three years wanting to fulfill the expectations of his parents but felt that he is not making progress due to the treatment he received from the students and some lecturers. So, he left the university after three years. He has no job or any source of income now.

U-67

She stayed out side campus. The orientation programme went on for two months. English course was conducted for two hours from 9 am to 11 am. They had to go to canteen at 7 am and then after 11 am to stay with the seniors. The university officially allowed the seniors to interact with the newcomers after 12pm. Using the washroom is permitted only with permission from the seniors. After the orientation program a concert was held. After two weeks of vacation, she returned on 12<sup>th</sup> March. She was at the canteen for lunch and the seniors ordered her to finish quickly. She was asked to keep the phone off. She was taken around to show the library and the medical doctors. The windows were covered with black paper and the seniors were singing. Some second year students pulled them from behind

and said her hair was short and to tie it. There were about 15 tables. The seniors asked her to bite the finger nails off until it started to bleed. She fainted and was taken to a medical room. There were two other girls who were sick. A boy was wearing a shirt tainted with blood. Another student was epileptic patient. Seniors were in and around the sick room. She was taken to sick room at about 2pm and taken downstairs at about 4pm. Senior students were making disturbing loud noises beating the tables. The canteen had few people at that time. They were using utter filth but cannot relate those words. She got a panic attack with fear. Again, taken to sick room and taken downstairs around 5.30pm. Then she was taken to the main hall where there were other students who appeared to have cried with disheveled hair. She was asked to keep her hands on the legs and keep looking at a senior boy. She was asked whether she liked him. She did not agree. The next time she went for a lecture and made use of the opportunity to send a note to the lecturer saying she faced problems with ragging. The lecturer replied he cannot do anything. She smiled at the gate when exiting the campus and was scolded not to smile (“panawa danna epa”). She came under a panic attack in the bus. At the hostel she called mother to complain. She returned home on 14 Mar. Officials came and instructed her to inform the hospital police. She did not complain. Later she consulted a psychiatrist and received treatment for stress and anxiety for two months. She asked her friends what was going on, but they would not tell because of fear. She complained to UGC Anti Ragging Unit but no action was taken. She stayed at home and followed music lessons for one and a half years. She took guitar lessons. She did not do any job. She wants to get a degree from any university other than where she underwent all these things.

U-75

She had a terrible time after the orientation at which seniors were friendly and nice. But thereafter, they were allowed limited amount of water and food. Each room in the hostel accommodated two Sinhala and two Tamil girls. Lectures start sharp at 8.00 am and all Tamil and Muslim students had no problem attending on time. Sinhala students were held back for ragging and they were late. Sinhalese students were ragged by Sinhalese students only. Raggings divided students according to districts they came from and were given tasks. They had to act various roles and were filmed. They had to say for example “garu jeashtayani, samawanna (“forgive us hon seniors”). They had to act like lovers. They took us to the playground and both males and females were present. They used to put arms around the waist mimicking like lovers. We had to stand in a circle and recite filth in Sinhala. If we were reluctant then using an umbrella, they hit us. One lecturer told us to stay away from ragging but that is not possible. They were asked to run, and she fell. No help given or allowed. She wanted water but not given. She got sick and fever but did not get permission to go home. The raggings prescribed medicine, yellow and white color tablets.

They gave small quantity of food on a plate which was unclean. The curry was stale. There were pieces of cockroaches and she had to eat the head of a dead cockroach, and those who refused to do so were punished. The senior students used to jab them in the stomach with an umbrella. Those raggings are still at the university. Her mother telephoned once, and

the raggers abused her for taking the call. She was asked to leave the phone behind at home. Then her mother asked if she was having trouble. She did not indicate what was going on. Then again when mother asked her, she told her what was happening. She stopped going to the university but then the seniors and batchmates requested her to return. She returned but she gave up thrice altogether. Every time she returned the seniors scolded and ragged even harder. Likewise, another student who stayed back was ragged severely when she returned. She stopped attending lectures and went home. Now she is following a private training programme, and had also did a course in Esoft. She is also teaching some children from home, but is keen to get back to university if given an opportunity.

U-80

This male student gained admission to the university with extremely good Advanced Level results. He said that during orientation, the seniors started their programmes at 5.30 am and continued up to 09.00 am and again started at 5.00 pm and run up to 4-5 am. So, there was absolutely no time for sleep, and he did not have a complete set of notes. In the lunch time also, seniors came and sat in the canteen and got them to sit between them. In that time they gave us assignments to write regarding topics such as 'University sub-culture'. Then after finishing the lunch, we had to say things by-heart. If a fresher failed to answer a question they asked, he is taken to the wash room adjoining and made to kneel while they splashed water on him.

He had this to say: "Since our hostel had no canteen, we go to the canteen of third year students. There we have to sit between our seniors and they harass us. After the meal they take us to their hostels. So, I would like to propose please keep new students away from seniors. We had a Whatsapp group. The lecturer notes are given to the representative by the lecturer, and sometimes they are not passed on to some of the freshers who are ostracized for failing to comply. Some days around 7 pm we are taken to the hostel where 4th year students stay, and we are asked questions and finally they take us inside the hostel and force us to do things which I cannot tell in my home." (This was a ZOOM interview and this student feared being overheard by the other members of his family) Having been frustrated with her endeavours, I left the university as the 34<sup>th</sup> student to do so. I do not like to go to the same university, but if things are better would like to go to another university and resume my studies. I can identify most of the seniors who ragged us if I am shown photographs.

U-85

This female student stated that they had a 10 day orientation program. They were abused by the raggers and asked to write essays about the student heroes of the JVP. They get scolded in the common room and at the bund. They scold for their dress and sometimes asked them to dance. She scored well in her assignments, and they did not like that and scolded her for that. They were prohibited from meeting lecturers without the batch representative. She was bordered outside the campus. She had to join till collections in far-

away places. They were asked to wear black bands and agitate for pressurizing the university authorities to provide hostels. The participation in these agitations is for 'batch fit'. She was asked not to attend English lectures but was forced to listen to political lectures. She left the university on her own and was treated for psychological problems by a doctor and now she has recovered and is fit. She has followed a private computer course and passed the certificate level and now following the diploma. She feels that the present Vice Chancellor of the university is active against ragging and she wants to go back to the same university.

U-86

She is from Colombo and a very bright student. She said that initially, they spoke to the freshers in friendly terms. Later they were given cakes infected with fungus and biscuits with milk packets. Within an hour all students developed diarrhea. The rag went on until late. The dress code was stipulated by the raggars. At the canteen while waiting in the queue to be served, the raggars would ask various questions and when answers were not given, they would scold them in filth. The 'plantation night' was held for social integration they said. There is a bund they had to cross to leave the hall. The second year students and the freshers had separate places to sit. The university closed after the Easter attack. In her batch only 20 students went to light lamps. She said that she did not participate. She did not participate in till collections since that was in the weekends mostly and she went to Colombo. She was privately following a course of studies leading to professional qualifications as well and had weekend classes in Colombo. Because of that she could not participate in the weekend activities the seniors had wanted her to participate in. She was bordered outside the campus. Seniors did not like that and further asked her why she should go to Colombo for the weekends. They ordered her to participate in their programmes in the weekend and not to go to Colombo. They said if she did not comply, she would face dire consequences. She was very keen to attend the private professional course in Colombo, but the seniors insisted that she should stay and cheer them at their events. On one occasion, when one student fainted, the raggars abused her saying that was false. That student left the university. Normally the raggars abuse in filth if the students do not comply. When freshers do not follow their orders, the seniors would assault the batch representative. She was once asked whether she likes to get friendly with a male student and she did not agree. Then she was abused in filth. All this caused severe stress and was unbearable and she consulted a doctor and the advice was to take rest and relax. Due to the persistent pressure from the senior students to stay on campus and participate in their programmes, she decided to leave the university. She wants to get back to university if her safety can be assured.

U – 89

This male student gained admission to the university with fairly good Advanced Level examination results in the science stream in February 2016 and left the university at the end

of the first semester in November 2016. According to his evidence, the first two weeks good and the orientation went off without any difficulty. After that the freshers were taken to the canteen for ragging. For everything they did the seniors blamed the freshers using dirty words and he was hit on the chin. Later the freshers were taken to the boarding places by the seniors. He testified that "it is hard for me to say what happened to me. I had to undergone both physical and sexual harassment two to three times. Then I got mental depression and had to take medical treatment."

He also said as follows: "There was no mentor. Only the Doctor in the university Medical Centre helped me. I told him what happened, and he tried to settle my mind. Then in November 2016, I went out for treatment. I returned to the campus in early 2018 and went to the Second Year First Semester. I sat all subjects of the First year First Semester exams and passed. I cannot go back to this university but would like to enter another university for continuation of my education."

U – 90

She was admitted to university in December 2017 with good Advanced Level examination results. The orientation programme continued for 3 months. Seniors gave entertainment programmes, and this gave us a chance to talk with and get to know the seniors. There were motivational programmes also. A senior Akka explained to us that they started ragging to develop what she called "batch fit". I think, one of the batch mate (a boy) who delivered speech on TV criticizing ragging was severely ragged as he stated "we do not need rag. We can live together". At the beginning both lecturers and senior students both took part in the orientation and later lecturers were not there and seniors conducted the programmes. Ragging season started in March. She said she kept away from the university on the first day ragging was to start. She got to know it from a friend of her. Next day she went to the university. They took her to the upstairs and applied a balm on her stomach. She got a stomachache. There were two boys and they did not go out when they were applying balm. She requested to go to the boarding place due to the severity of her pain but they did not allow. After two hours later they released her. Her friend fainted several times due to the severity of ragging. Then we took her to the hospital. We had to inform the seniors when we were leaving the place. When we asked for permission to leave, a senior student ordered us not to disclose anything She was admitted in the hospital for treatment. I feared that this was what I would also have to undergo. When she left the university in May 2018, she gave a letter to the University but mentioned the reason for leaving as her decision to register for another course of study elsewhere.

U – 95

He gained admission to the university in December 2017 with a Z-Score in the range of 1.44. His testimony was that when he came to the university, he got to know that his mother had a fall and got blood clot in her leg. Since his father had already passed away, he had to go home to take care of the mother with his sister. Treatment was given to dilute the clot, but due to that she was severely bleeding. Although he had got hostel, he discussed his problem

with the lecturers and return home soon after finishing lectures. So, Seniors did not like that. They asked him about it one day and he replied that “I do not have any objection to ragging but I have to look after my mother.” There are some lectures within the lecture time are done by Arts students for blaming in dirty words, teaching about the university sub culture, etc. According to his evidence, one day drunken students came to the hostel and blamed them. His evidence is quoted in his own words:

“They (the drunken students) scolded me by asking about my father and I told them not to blame my father because he has passed away. Then they thought I was threatening them and I said it is not so but I love my father very much. Then around 11.00 pm they came and took me to another room with head covered with black polythene bag and they hit me. They hit me till around 4 am the next day. I worshiped them and begged them not to hit me and help me to get this degree. That day I went to lectures but I got headache due to the previous day incident. Then I came home and informed to my mother. She took me for treatments and revealed that my head had got severely injured. This was 3 months after entering to the campus.”

He further said in his evidence that they ill-treated him and finally prohibited him from going home for weekends. Since his father was dead and his mother was alone and there was no one to look after her, he was keen to go home for weekends. But they did not allow that and instead sent him to a “kate” (till collection) about 6-7 Km away to collect money. There was a “picketing” of non-academic staff at that time and he was required to support it. His father’s alms giving was in April and he gave them biscuits and asked them: “Please leave me. I want only to take the degree. I am not interfering in your businesses.” But no amount of begging for mercy worked. As things were very difficult, he was compelled to leave the university in June 2018. After he left the seniors were followed him and taking phone calls to him using his batch mates. He added: “One day a call came from a phone box and asked me what am I doing? I said I am going to do a job to take care of my mother and sister. Then the senior said: “Please do not say anything about us. If you do, then you will get into trouble.”

#### **4. Adverse Impacts of Ragging**

Most of the testimony of applicants for relief outlined above show that ragging related abusive conduct had not only adversely affect the applicant’s health and life but had also impacted his or her educational outcome. The extracts of testimony of those who were interviewed by this committee paint a very gloomy picture of the happenings in our well established and publicly funded universities and institutions of higher learning which raise the question as to whether the system is working as it should. The multifarious but extremely serious adverse impacts of ragging that came to light during our interviews with affected students, such as the prevention of adequate sleep, choice of food and medical intervention during health issues, are briefly described below.

## A - Impact on Health

A healthy mind in a healthy body is the expectation of every young new entrant to a university or other institution of learning. This expectation is brutally shattered for many by the pervasive ragging that they encounter. Just as much as a healthy body needs physical exercise, it also needs sufficient rest, relaxation and sleep. The ragging period is a testing time which can, at least theoretically, strengthen the new entrant mentally and physically, or ruin his life forever. It makes serious inroads into their food habits, nutrition and health.

There were many students whose mental health deteriorated under the stress of ragging. This was specially so in those with an innate susceptibility to depression and or other psychiatric disorders. Ragging and other abusive conduct precipitated acute exacerbations which required assessment and management by psychiatrists. In some, the condition becomes chronic with severe adverse implications for continuation of higher studies. Even



relatively mentally sturdy individuals 'broke down' under the stress of ragging and required medications and counselling. Abusive language and mental torture inflicted in various ways has resulted in a significant number of dropouts from the universities and other institutions of higher learning, some of whom continue to show symptoms even after leaving the academic institutions. This impacts on their life prospects and imposes a heavy economic burden on their families.

Adding insult to injury raggers often deprive the victim from receiving correct medical treatment at the health center. They are denied privacy during the consultation and often terrorized into not divulging the real problem, thus delaying the correct early treatment of these potentially serious disorders. This has resulted in permanent physical or mental disability in few students

## B - Deprivation of Sleep

Students are held captive by the seniors for ragging inside the hostels and some cases outside the campus throughout the night. In the morning they return but have to attend lectures. The ensuing drowsiness impacts on concentration and their ability to attend to their academic work. Even when the lecturers notice their somnolence and enquire about it the victims fear to divulge the real cause.

## C - Impact on Food Intake

The common place to start the rag is the canteen during their mealtimes. During this period, the students undergo harassment and interruptions to taking a relaxed meal. They are subjected to a revolting array of practices related to feeding, the mildest being forced to eat unhygienically mixed foods, passing toffees from mouth to mouth, to eating food mixed with cockroach debris. There is disruption of the normal intake of food. The new students are not allowed to visit outside shops/ supermarkets to choose what they prefer and thus they are forced to eat and drink whatever is dished out from the canteen.

## D - Privacy and Leisure/Freedom of movement



First year students are severely restricted in their movements and spied upon by their own batchmates favorable to ragging and the seniors who rag them. Their individual freedom is restricted and any attempt to resist by an individual is punishable to the whole group. Those who persist in resisting are ostracized and labelled an "Alaya". Some students find this even more distressing than the physical rag.

Students are prevented by the senior students from visiting parents or leaving the campus during the weekends and holiday. They are kept back to be ragged. During the rag period students are not free to use their smart phones or take photos. They cannot speak freely to their friends and parents.

The students are held captive by the senior students restricting them from moving around in the campus or going outside the campus. They are particularly restrictive about the students meeting lecturers for fear of leaking information about ragging. These tactics are used to prevent information getting into outside world.

## E - Impact on academic performance



Ragging related activities impose a severe restriction on satisfactory completion of academic activities especially in the first semester but often through the whole of the first year. They are a severe threat to learning and completing assignments and summative and formative assessments. The weak students are most vulnerable but it affects even the good students chances of getting a class/ honours in the long term This has a crippling impact on the academic productivity of the institution as a whole and perpetuates a pervasive mediocrity. It was evident that initial

days of the university is a taken by the raggings as a playtime for them at the expense of the main purpose of the university. The impact on learning and thereby the economy is enormous.

## F- Impact on Personality/ Social Development



The freshers are severely restricted from socializing with any one including their batchmates until the completion of a traditional "bucketing" ceremony followed by a social event. In the past this signified the official completion of ragging. Unfortunately in the present time though the two events still take place they do not signify an end to ragging which continues right through the first year and for some

students, even beyond. Each succeeding student union has become progressively more barbaric in their rag related behavior especially in institutions in which the administration has offered only a token resistance or even turned a blind eye. The impact of this prolonged social isolation leads the weaklings to accept any conditions to be friends with the ragers.

The ragers pressurize the new batch and the other students of the campus to oppose non ragers and anti-ragers. This expression of rejection by own batchmates is a crumbling experience as we explained already. This is one of the most painful things for a student who expects to have a great social life in the campus. This ostracizing is usually continued through out the victims university stay

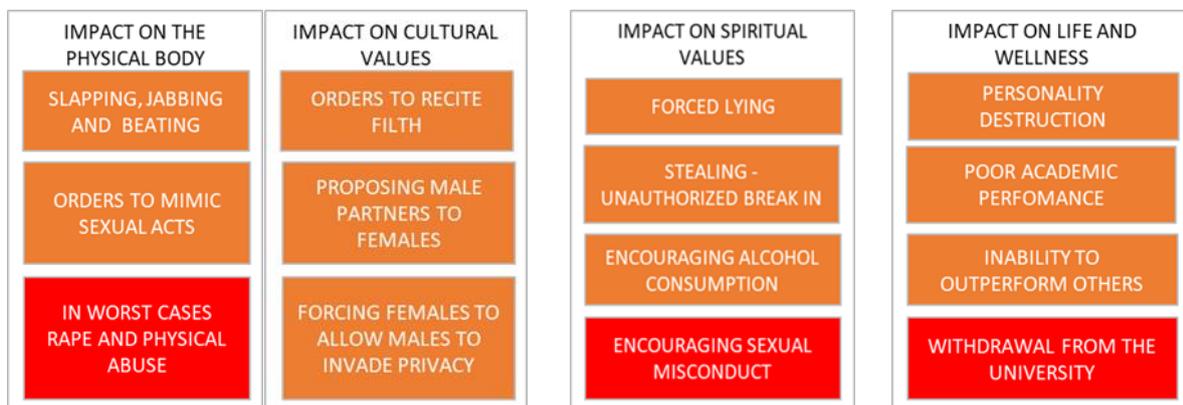


Universities are expected to be hallowed edifices of creativity and expression. This is not so since in most universities with ragging where a monolithic political group holds sway through the student unions. Students are exposed only to this narrow political ideology and are thus intellectually stultified. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century when generic skills like critical thinking and teamwork are valued, the ragging subculture breeds a pack of mediocre individuals with low self esteem.

Students who enter the university are talented students who have played leadership roles in their own schools. They have a personality that usually stands out from the from the rest. At the university when the ragers ensure that the personality of such students are destroyed, and their self-esteem shattered. The ragers use a multiplicity of techniques in this exercise of brain washing, euphemistically referred to as acculturation to the university sub culture.

### G - Impact on Cultural and Spiritual Development

We are seriously concerned about the cultural, social, and spiritual impact rendered by some forms of ragging. These include forced reciting of filth. forced coupling with partner. invasion of privacy even during medical examinations. Inappropriate touching. mimicking of deviant sexual practices this being enforced on male students including student monks, enforced lying to authorities and parents. Illegal access to private rooms, enforced consumption of alcohol, cigarettes and other addictive substances. Enforced consumption of foods of animal origin etc. This is not an exhaustive list.



A University or Higher Educational Institution (HEI) is a place for developing the mind to a level of high attainment for a future career. One has to keep a healthy mind and a healthy body to achieve this end. What we have heard from evidence goes completely against this and results in the production of misfits in society. The ragging process aims at the deliberate destruction of values and attitudes especially of the less sophisticated and innocent students coming from a good cultural and spiritual background. Some students in this category are specially targeted.

Some including a few ideologically motivated members of staff view this process as a strengthening of the personality of the students which enable him or her to better integrate in to the university culture. But we view it as a destruction of spiritual and cultural values and a violation of the student's fundamental right to determine his or her own lifestyle including personal preferences for food, sexual practice and other ethical behaviors.

### **5. Analysis of Ragging and Related Abuses**

In the preceding section of this report, we looked at the symptoms of the degenerating disease we call 'ragging' and 'ragging related abusive conduct', but the disease cannot be cured without diagnosing its causes. In short, the question may be posed as to why do ragers rag?

In Sri Lanka, much has been written on the subject providing great insights.<sup>19</sup> But, Dr. Dinesha Samararatne, currently a Postdoctoral Fellow in the ARC Laureate Program in Comparative Constitutional Law at the University of Melbourne, Australia, articulated the need to get to the root of the disease we call 'ragging' in the following words<sup>20</sup>:

"Regrettably, ragging presents a classical example of a law<sup>21</sup> which has failed in its enforcement and as an example of a law which is observed in the breach. Within the specific context of the Sri Lankan university system, it might be worthwhile to consider (or reconsider) why an unacceptable state of affairs has been accepted by many. *One possible reason for this tragic situation is that the root causes which resulted in the 'culture of ragging' remains at large and have not been addressed in a systematic way.* Students who argue in defence of ragging argue that it is form of 'equalising' of

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<sup>19</sup> See, for instance, Nishika Fonseka, Groundviews, "Ragging in our universities: A symptom or a disease?" (30<sup>th</sup> November 2009) accessible at: <https://groundviews.org/2009/11/30/ragging-in-our-universities-a-symptom-or-a-disease/>; Ceylon Daily News Feature, "Ragging in the university system: A collective mental disorder" (2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017) at: <http://www.dailynews.lk/2017/03/02/features/109119/ragging-university-system-collective-mental-disorder> ; Shanika Shriyananda, Daily FT "Dark and disturbing ragging in local Universities" (27<sup>th</sup> August 2019) accessible at: <http://www.ft.lk/opinion/Dark-and-disturbing-ragging-in-local-universities/14-684603>; Tudor Wijenayake, "Ragging in universities, basic issues not even understood", *supra* note 4 and Dr. Sujata Gamage, "Ragging is responsible for the misogynistic and anti-intellectual culture in our universities" (11<sup>th</sup> June 2020), at: <https://www.advocata.org/commentary-archives/2020/06/11/ragging-is-responsible-for-the-misogynistic-and-anti-intellectual-culture-in-our-universities>

<sup>20</sup> Dr. Dinesha Samararatne, (Island er of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2013 "Addressing causes of Ragging in Lankan Universities" at: [https://www.academia.edu/38535682/Addressing\\_causes\\_of\\_ragging\\_in\\_Sri\\_Lankan\\_universities](https://www.academia.edu/38535682/Addressing_causes_of_ragging_in_Sri_Lankan_universities)

<sup>21</sup> This was probably a reference to the Prohibition of Ragging and Other Forms of Violence in Educational Institutions Act, *supra* note 6.

students who are 'unequals'. 'Unequals' in their ability to use English as a language of communication, unequal in their access of financial resources and fundamentally different in their lifestyles. It is argued by the very same students that the practice of ragging is a tried and tested method of bringing all these student to the same level and of pushing them to identify with each other as being of the same 'batch' and of being supportive of each other in their times of need. "(emphasis added)

Dr. Samararatne goes on to make the following pertinent observation:

*"Within the context of a university, it is telling that students view ragging in this way. To begin with, expecting that uniformity and unity should be achieved at the cost of personal liberty and diversity within a student population cuts against the ethos of a university community. A university provides an intellectual space within which knowledge is shared, challenged and where new knowledge is produced. Such an exercise demands a strong emphasis on free thinking, academic discipline and the freedom within which academic excellence is pursued. The practice of ragging within any university then is a symptom of the fact that there is a mismatch between the objectives of a university community and that of raggings."* (emphasis added)

Most of the acts of ragging we have heard about from the interviewed victims of ragging and abusive conduct fall into one or other of criminal offences punishable under the Penal Code such as Hurt,<sup>22</sup> Grievous Hurt,<sup>23</sup> Wrongful Restraint,<sup>24</sup> Wrongful Confinement,<sup>25</sup> Assault,<sup>26</sup> Criminal Force,<sup>27</sup> Abduction,<sup>28</sup> Sexual Harassment,<sup>29</sup> Grave Sexual Abuse<sup>30</sup> and Criminal Intimidation.<sup>31</sup>

It is noteworthy that the Prohibition of Ragging and Other Forms of Violence in Educational Institutions Act of 1998 has introduced into our law the offence of Ragging,<sup>32</sup> which is defined as "any act which causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or mental pain or fear to a student or a member of the staff of an educational institution" and is made punishable under the act.<sup>33</sup> The said Act has also made it a much graver offence for a person to cause sexual harassment or grievous hurt to any student or member of the staff of an educational institution whilst committing ragging, which attracts more severe punishment.<sup>34</sup> The Prohibition of Ragging Act also has created and prescribed special

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<sup>22</sup> The offence of 'Hurt' is defined in Section 310 of the Penal Code No. 11 of 1887, as subsequently amended.

<sup>23</sup> The offence of 'Grievous Hurt' is defined in Section 311 of the Penal Code.

<sup>24</sup> The offence of 'Wrongful Restraint' is defined in Section 330 of the Penal Code.

<sup>25</sup> The offence of 'Wrongful Confinement' is defined in Section 331 of the Penal Code.

<sup>26</sup> The offence of 'Assault' is defined in Section 342 of the Penal Code.

<sup>27</sup> The offence of 'Criminal Force' is defined in Section 340 and 341 of the Penal Code.

<sup>28</sup> The offence of 'Abduction' is defined in Section 353 of the Penal Code.

<sup>29</sup> The offence of 'Sexual Harassment' is defined in Section 345 of the Penal Code.

<sup>30</sup> The offence of 'Grave Sexual Abuse' is defined in Section 365B of the Penal Code.

<sup>31</sup> The offence of 'Criminal Intimidation' is defined in Section 483 of the Penal Code.

<sup>32</sup> See, section 2(1) of the Prohibition of Ragging and Other Forms of Violence in Educational Institutions Act of 1998, supra note 6.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, section 17.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, section 2(2).

punishments for certain other offences when committed against a student or member of the staff of an educational institution, such as Criminal Intimidation,<sup>35</sup> Hostage Taking,<sup>36</sup> Wrongful Restraint,<sup>37</sup> and Unlawful Confinement.<sup>38</sup> The Act has also made the forceful occupation of any premises of, or under the management or control of, an educational institution and causing damage to such property an offense.<sup>39</sup> The enactment of such legislation shows the commitment of the state to prevent or eradicate the unlawful activities described above, and in these circumstances, the fact that the vast majority of such unlawful conduct committed within the premises of a state university or other higher educational institution go unreported and uninvestigated, seem to not only create an illegal regime within Sri Lanka but also projects an image of impunity that can have a telling effect on the psyche of the students and staff of these institutions of higher learning. Such public perception can discourage bright students from seeking admission to these seats of higher learning and can also lower the standard of education imparted in these institutions.

Several attempts have been made in the past to identify the root causes of ragging in Sri Lanka. In 1975, the V.W. Kularatne Commission in its Report<sup>40</sup> devoted Chapter X to identify causes of student indiscipline, and in Chapter XI suggested some remedial measures. Reference has to be made in this regard to Prof. A.J. Weeramunda's report submitted to the National Education Commission entitled "Socio-Political Impact of Student Violence and Indiscipline in Universities and Tertiary Education Institutes"<sup>41</sup> where in section 4 (pages 37 to 50), several root causes were identified and some remedial measures were suggested in section 1.3 (pages 12 to 16).

In India, where too ragging is a serious menace, on the direction of the Indian Supreme Court, a Committee chaired by Dr. R.K. Raghavan submitted a Report<sup>42</sup> to the Supreme Court in 2007, which has been implemented in stages by the Indian University Grants Commission (UGC) and other relevant institutions. It is significant to note that the Raghavan Report viewed the problem of indiscipline in a broader perspective and extended its proposals to cover six levels, namely (1) schools, (2) higher educational institutions, (3) district administration, (4) universities, (5) State authorities and (5) Central authorities.<sup>43</sup> At every such level, the Committee solicited the "active involvement of media and the civil society" in the process of implementation. Referring to the approach adopted by the Indian

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, section 3.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, section 4.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, section 5.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, section 6.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, section 7.

<sup>40</sup> Report of the Commission of Inquiry into "Ragging" at Vidyalkankara Campus of the University of Sri Lanka, *supra* note 3.

<sup>41</sup> Prof. A.J. Weeramunda's report entitled "Socio-Political Impact of Student Violence and Indiscipline in Universities and Tertiary Education Institutes" submitted to the National Education Commission in May 2008) at: <https://www.coursehero.com/file/44373839/Socio-Political-impact-on-the-students-and-staffpdf/>

<sup>42</sup> Dr. R.K Raghavan Committee Report, "The Menace of Ragging in Educational Institutions and Measures to Curb it", Report of the Committee constituted by the Supreme Court of India In SLP No. 24295 of 2006, at: [https://www.iist.ac.in/sites/default/files/antiragging/committee\\_rkr.pdf](https://www.iist.ac.in/sites/default/files/antiragging/committee_rkr.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, Recommendation 5.01.

Supreme Court and the Raghavan Committee in the context of the situation prevailing in Sri Lanka, a Sri Lankan lawyer has commented as follows:-

“It is crystal clear that ragging is a criminal problem which has psychological roots and social ignorance around it and also that a top-down law enforcement approach may not be adequate to solve it. Moreover, ragging does not have a quick-fix solution. We must understand that unless the society condemns it, ragging cannot be eliminated. We require a focused and concentrated effort to educate the masses in Sri Lanka in order to curb this social menace.”<sup>44</sup>

In this context, it is noteworthy that the UGC has formed a Standing Committee for Gender Equity and Equality and set up a mechanism to receive complaints of ragging. It is also relevant to note that in the course of the Budget Speech for 2017, the Hon Minister of Finance showed commitment to bring about some change and minimize the impact of ragging on education, and stated that-

“You will no doubt agree Honourable Speaker, that our State university education has been marred with issues of ragging and student violence. I, therefore, propose to establish a Centre for Gender Equity and Preventing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Ragging, for which I propose to allocate Rs. 10 million.”<sup>45</sup>

Apart from the aforesaid Centre for Gender Equity and Preventing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Ragging, several universities have set up a Centre for Gender Equity and Equality (CGEE) in or in close proximity to the university. These organizations can be useful in building up public awareness of the importance of the prevention of ragging related abuses and take the Anti-Ragging message to grassroot levels.

## **6. A Regulatory Mechanism to prevent Ragging**

The Regulatory Mechanism outlined below is tailor made for the protection of students who have been recommended relief by this committee who will be granted readmission or other recommended relief. The mechanism may also be used by the UGC, if so advised, for seeking to prevent a resurgence of ragging in academic institutions in the future.

- (a) Students who are recommended relief by this committee, may be re-admitted to the same or another university or other higher educational institution based on the student’s academic standing (attempt and Z-Score), his or her convenience and the level of risk of being ragged again. At re-admission the student should ideally be given a new admission number so that he or she will not be identified as a student

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<sup>44</sup> Keshani Imesha Hettiarachchi, “Can Ragging in Higher Education institutes in Sri Lanka be eradicated only by Legislative Reforms: A Comparative Analysis with India”, SSRN Open Browser (1<sup>st</sup> August 2017), accessible at: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3011822](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3011822)

<sup>45</sup> Budget Speech for 2017, Hansard, Parliamentary Debates, Official Report, Hansard of 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016 Vol 248 page 25 paragraph 123. The text of the entire budget speech is also accessible at the Treasury website at: <http://www.treasury.gov.lk/documents/10181/28027/Budget+Speech+2017/a092d16a-68ec-46d5-8e27-9e3c00243aa8>

who is getting back to the university or other institution as a ragging victim to whom relief has been granted on the recommendations of this committee. The fact that he or she is a re-entry student should only be known on a 'need to know basis' by the Vice Chancellor, Proctor and Dean of the Faculty. It should not be made known to other academic and administrative staff or students. This may not be easy if the student is admitted to the same university, but maximum effort should be taken to cover his or identity as a re-entry student, and monitor and report progress to the UGC or any Standing Committee that may be set up by the UGC for the purpose.

- (b) Ragging is a manifestation of prevailing social conditions and issues that fall outside the purview of the terms of reference of this committee. Nevertheless, it is the considered opinion of this committee that an attempt should be made by the UGC and state universities and institutions of higher learning falling within its purview to help eradicate indiscipline in schools, work places and society in general. However, the UGC, state universities and other higher educational institutions should take the initiative to prepare students and parents in regard to the adverse effects of ragging and prepare them to face future challenges that they may have to face in the future in institutions of higher learning with confidence.
- (c) The primary responsibility for curbing ragging in state universities and other higher educational institutions coming within the purview of the UGC vest exclusively in these universities and institutions. The UGC as well as the academic institutions themselves should develop policies and procedures for the elimination of ragging and ensure due compliance, through a system of incentives for compliance and a system of disincentives for non-compliance. In particular, the form of application for admission must clearly mention that ragging is prohibited by law in the state universities and other higher educational institutions, and any student found in violation of the law relating to ragging is likely to be punished appropriately, which punishment may include a sentence of rigorous imprisonment of varying terms depending on the gravity of the offence. As an additional measure, at every intake of students, every student should be required to sign a declaration assuring compliance with the institutional policies, rules and regulations including the applicable provisions of law, and severe punishment including expulsion or suspension from the university should be meted out to those who fail to honour the said declaration. Such a declaration of compliance should also be obtained from all other students of state universities and other institutions immediately, and the failure to make such declaration should be deemed a violation of student discipline that calls for disciplinary action including the withholding of degree and other academic attainments.
- (d) The responsibility for protecting the new entrant students as well as those being re-admitted to a university or other institution of higher learning on the basis of the recommendations of this committee should lie with the Vice Chancellors, Proctors,

the relevant Dean and other academic or non-academic staff to whom the responsibility may be delegated, and analogous officials in higher educational institutions coming within the purview of the UGC.

- (e) Security and discipline should be strengthened in all state universities and all new-entrant students and even other students should have access to the Anti-Ragging hotline in the university or institution concerned as well as the UGC Anti-Ragging Unit at all times. The Proctor, Marshals and other disciplinary officers as well as Security Staff should ensure that students are protected from ragging related abusive conduct at all times, and the disciplinary staff should be capable of being accessed at all times. A useful protective measure would be surprise visits that may be made by disciplinary staff to canteens, hostels and conceivable place where ragging can take place such as toilets, corridors, libraries etc. Equipment such as CCTV must be provided at all vital points and must be monitored by disciplinary and security staff. The Anti-Ragging Unit of the UGC should be provided resources including efficient trained support staff who should function under an experienced and resolute officer familiar with ragging related issues. This unit should monitor the affected student's wellbeing by monthly telephone/WhatsApp contacts. A progress record should be maintained with respect of each new entrant student.
- (f) The student should be permitted to travel from home or a private hostel if he/she prefers it. Any attempt to curtail this freedom by compulsion such as those imposed by seniors or even batch mates to participate in political activities such as protests, picketing, strikes, rallies, till collection or other fund raising activities should be reported to disciplinary authorities and dealt with appropriately. For students staying in a university hostel, its safety should be assured, and access for senior students to hostels where freshers are accommodated must be restricted and monitored. Hostel wardens should be vested with not only responsibility but also appropriate disciplinary powers and they should ensure that no ragging activities take place. The Dean and relevant Heads of Department should also ensure that the student is not academically handicapped in any manner by ragging, ostracization, or deprivation of academic material. WhatsApp groups should be given access to all teaching aid by university staff and the system of distribution through student representative should be abolished. Even the mildest attempt to rag and/or ostracize the student should be dealt with promptly and effectively. The UGC Anti-Ragging Unit should be kept informed of all ragging related incidents taking place in state universities and other academic institutions.
- (g) As a supervisory body, the UGC should take responsibility and put in place systems to ensure that the said academic bodies discharge their responsibilities. Guidelines by way of regulation or otherwise must be made available to these institutions, and monitoring system should be discussed and organized. For this purpose, bi-annual conferences of academic heads and staff should be held for the purpose of

deliberating on disciplinary measures necessary to eradicate ragging and other forms of violence in these institutions with collaboration from other relevant bodies such as the Judiciary, the Attorney General's Department, the Ministry of Education, the National Education Commission and the Police Department.

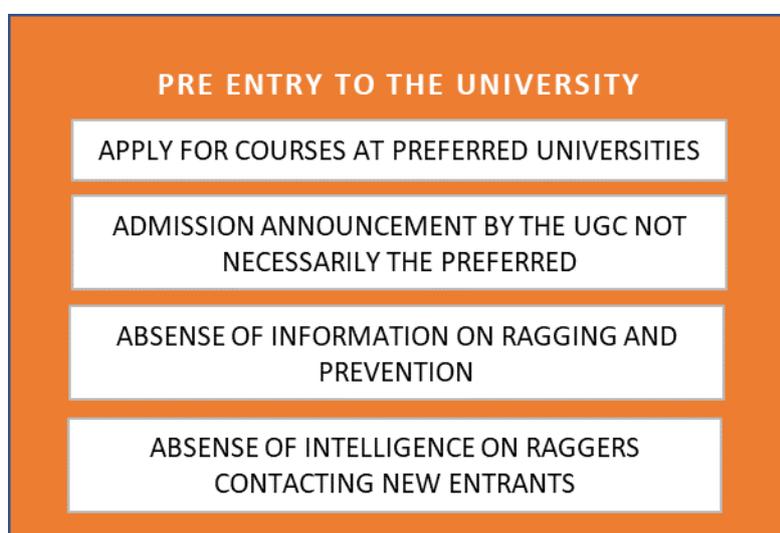
- (h) Greater co-ordination between police and academic institutions should be established on a permanent basis, and the UGC should establish a unit or standing committee to monitor all complaints of ragging and other ragging related abuse or violence which can effectively co-ordinate with the police. Even where cases are filed based on complaints of ragging the unit or committee should monitor progress and render all assistance to ensure that offenders do not go unpunished. It should be made obligatory for academic institutions to file official first Information reports with the police in any instance of a complaint of ragging. This would ensure that all cases would be formally investigated under criminal justice system, and not only by the academic institutions own ad-hoc bodies. Failure to prevent ragging shall be construed as an act of negligence in maintaining discipline in the institution on the part of the management and the officials in authority of the institution. Hostel wardens / superintendents should also be kept informed of their responsibilities and duty to uphold discipline at all times, and the failure to discharge such responsibility should be dealt with as an act of negligence in the maintaining discipline.
- (i) It is necessary to create wide public awareness of the disruptive consequences of ragging, and the UGC, state universities and other institutions should take steps to develop such awareness and set in place anti-ragging programmes. The local community and students in particular must be made aware of the dehumanizing effect of ragging inherent in its perversity. Posters, notice boards and sign-boards wherever necessary, may be used for the purpose. For discouraging ragging it may be necessary to be proactive than reactive, and academic institutions should put in place programmes that enhance awareness of human values and potentials, human rights, personality development, vocational guidance etc that can help in redressing the underlying causes of ragging including growing student frustration.
- (j) Relevant institutions should review the management and regulation of hostels and canteens - the hotbeds of ragging. Strict pre-emptive measures, such as lodging freshers in a separate hostel, surprise raids especially at nights by the anti-ragging squad, and night access from one hostel to another should be denied as a rule.
- (k) Counselling and other Guidance systems should be put in place. It is important to note that some of the victims of ragging interviewed by this committee disclosed how badly they have been affected by ragging and other abuse physically and mentally. In fact, the committee observed that certain students admitted the universities have certain sensitivities which are violated by the blatantly harsh acts of ragging giving rise to depression and other psychological conditions. Indeed, there

are some students who are too sensitive, and care must be taken to ensure no ragging takes place in these hallowed institutions of learning that in any way offend these sensitivities. University medical staff should also be given courses on psychological issues arising from ragging and how to deal with them.

- (l) Last but not least, as an essential part of compliance and due diligence, periodic training programmes for all university and institutional staff on ragging and ragging related abuse must be conducted at least once a year.

The operation of the Regulatory Mechanism outlined above is further discussed here first at the Pre-Entry Level and thereafter at Post-Entry level, which is divided into two phases.

- (1) The Pre-Entry Level Situations:



Situation:

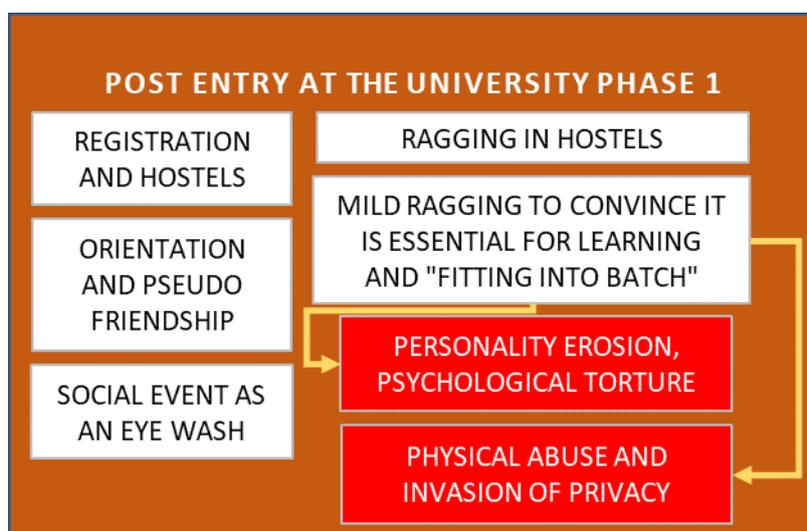
The schools rarely prepare the students to face the ordeal of ragging. This is due to the multiplicity of factors which include lack of awareness about ragging, sympathy on the part of some teachers for the concept of ragging and the lack of a mechanism to prepare students to face the challenges they have to meet in the universities and higher institutions of learning after admission.

Recommendations:

- a) The University Grants Commission (UGC) should encourage universities and higher educational institutions (HEIs) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and / or the Provincial Departments of Education to develop well-balanced programmes to create awareness among students selected for admission and even students preparing for the GCE Advanced Level Examination and their parents on the economic, social and security issues relating to ragging and abusive conduct.

- b) In particular, it will be useful to create public awareness that ragging and related abuse violate provisions of the Penal Code and the Prohibition of Ragging Act and are not only crimes but are also inconsistent with cherished value system and human rights.
- c) Efforts should also be made to boost confidence levels of such students and their parents to meet future challenges that could arise during the students' campus life. Such confidence building process has to engage parents to listen to the students' side of the story after they enter the university or other higher educational institution. The parents have a duty to make frequent inquiries on the wellbeing of their offspring. Such measures can help prepare the students and parents to face the challenges that could arise in future.

(2) Post-Entry Level Situations at the University – Phase 1.



Situation:

The admission process begins with the UGC informing the student of selection to a particular university. Thereafter, registration will be followed by an orientation programme and social events conducted by the university or HEIs. These programmes may often involve senior students who either organize them or are given opportunities by the university or HEI to participate by conducting certain lectures and events. The orientation and social may give the new-entrants much needed solace as the lecturers and the officials they listen to are neutral or friendly. Freshers may also be informed of the names of their moral/ pastoral tutors during the orientation. Seniors may in the process build friendships with freshers and even rag them. For this reason, some new entrants may keep away from orientation and/ or social for fear of being ragged.

#### Recommendations:

- a) Orientation programmes should be done without the presence of the seniors and these programmes should be well planned by a competent professional group. Other universities could share their best experiences in introducing a non-violent culture and trained to effectively resist inhuman ragging.
- b) Every student who gains admission to a higher institution of learning should be introduced to an official, either a lecturer or a counselor, who would stay in touch with the student as frequently as possible. This would be a duty of the official at the university who may have a group of such students under his observation and care. The group size should be manageable.
- c) Every student has to meet the official at periodic intervals and must keep in touch with him or her online. A record should be maintained by the said official on the progress of the student and the student's experience of ragging and other activities during the first academic year, and if necessary, even in later years.
- d) Any seniors or even bath-mates who attempt to prevent a new-entrant from visiting his or home during the weekends or holidays should be severely dealt with by the university or other institution. The lecturer/counselor should ensure that all students are not deprived of their freedom notwithstanding the influence/pressure of senior students or even conniving batch-mates.

#### Situation:

Ragging at hostels takes place due when senior students mix with the new students. The security officials take no steps to prevent ragging, and the warden, sub-wardens and other officers also fail in discharging their responsibilities. They appear to be helpless and on occasions advise students to bear with ragers until the ragging is over.

#### Recommendations:

- a) Seniors should not be given accommodation in hostels provided for new students.
- b) The new students' hostels should be kept strictly out of bounds for the senior students and any intrusion without prior permission should be treated with severity as an incident of ragging.
- c) New-entrant students (freshers) should not be allowed in the seniors' hostels. If any new student is found, then the persons responsible should be dealt with for breach of discipline, neglect of duties and violations of the applicable law, and charged.
- d) Any new entrant who connives with perpetrators of ragging should be charged for aiding and abetting under the applicable law.

#### Situation:

The security services in the universities do not contribute in any meaningful way in the prevention of ragging. This system has to be changed to a security system. It should be given to professionals who are familiar with managing the severe challenge that is facing the students.

Recommendations:

- a) The security system of each university or institution of higher learning must be transformed into an efficient and responsible security service that uses modern technology and rapidly responds to any violations of discipline and law in a timely and effective manner. Technology must be embedded in the process as a deterrent and as a means of gathering evidence. Security personnel should be legally empowered as a law enforcement officers.
- b) Dummies may be introduced as students with to nail the culprits who violate the provisions of disciplinary rules and applicable law.

Situation:

Academic activities of state universities and HEIs often get disrupted by strikes, demonstrations and class boycotts in which student bodies also get involved. Dominance over new-entrant students maintained by seniors through ragging result in the new-entrants willingly or unwillingly participating in these disruptive activities. It is necessary for academic institutions to face these challenges and minimize the impact of these interruptions to academic work in an effective manner.

Recommendations:

- a) The universities must act resolutely to stop all disruptive activities taking serious note of all incidents of ragging and responding with effective counter measures.
- b) Covid-19 gave the universities opportunities to run online learning programmes. The students who wish to continue their studies during boycotts and other disruptions in academic activities must be given the opportunity to do so online.
- c) The possibility of conducting assignments and examinations online must also be considered, and measures put in place for meeting emergency situations through online assignments and examinations if it becomes necessary.

(3) Post-Entry Level Situations at the University - Phase 2



#### Situation:

The new entrants reported an increase in ragging after the social event which they expected would signal the end of ragging and the beginning of new career at the university. During this period after the social event, some of them found it hard to cope with the academic work due to the extensive filth and abuse and withholding of their study time by the ragers. The ragers would order them to do excessive physical exercises or ask them to memorize long lists of names or other equally meaningless data. One of the significant features is that they were all identified by pseudonyms (nicknames), perhaps done as a precaution by ragers and as a means of destroying name identity and self-esteem. New entrant students will often find all this most intolerable and even decide to quit the university.

#### Recommendations:

- a) The new students should be grouped and brought under the mentorship of lecturers/counsellors. These officials should take care of these students on a regular basis until the students can continue with confidence without interruptions to the academic programme. The records of engagement must be kept with the official.
- b) The lecturers/counsellors must be given mentorships as part of their normal duties and held responsible and accountable for the outcomes of their terms of reference

#### Situation:

New entrant student monks are ragged by senior monks in the university in a manner that is not at all consistent with the Buddhist discipline (Vinaya) they are vowed to maintain. The monks are not only subjected to severe physical and moral abuse and kept confined in the bathrooms of the monks' hostel with inadequate water to clean themselves, but the words used by the senior monks to talk to new entrant monks are abusive. There is no security staff or hostel disciplinary authority available to deal with the matter.

#### Recommendations:

- a) To assist in the maintenance of discipline among student monks, it will be prudent, wherever possible, to place student monks under the mentorship of senior monks of the same Nikaya who are not from the university but are resident in neighborhood temples. This is a preventive measure which can provide proper guidance to student monks who will be properly ordained under the strict Buddhist discipline (Vinaya) so that they will be more inclined to hold their monkhood discipline sacrosanct. The university should facilitate the visits and ensure uninterrupted meetings between the senior monks and the new entrant monks.
- b) Any monks reported for ragging by any of the new entrants through the senior Bhikkhus or otherwise should be immediately disciplined and if found guilty, be reported to the Nikaya and the senior monks from the temple who ordained him for necessary disciplinary action in keeping with the Vinaya.

- c) All student monks should be kept informed and reminded that the provisions of the university disciplinary rules and provisions of law including the Penal Code and the Prohibition of Ragging and Other Forms of Violence in Educational Institutions Act No. 20 of 1998 apply to them in the same manner as they apply to other students. All student of the university including student monks should be familiarized about the content of such disciplinary rules and applicable law and the sanctions for violations. Any violations on the part of student monks of the university disciplinary rules should be dealt with by the university disciplinary authorities, and any violations of the above-mentioned provisions of the law should be reported to the police.

Situation:

There were instances of life threats against students who reported ragging to police. Due to fear of such threats materializing these new students do not pursue action. The system should encourage new students to bring threats to the notice of mentors, counselors, lecturers, security officers, or any anti-ragging hotlines. The information has to be registered with the police immediately. If online facilities could be made available, then it would become less cumbersome. Action should be taken by the police by arresting the named culprits and producing them before a judge. The judge would decide on the follow up.

Recommendations:

- a) Develop an online system to report incidents of ragging, verbal abuse, threats and violence to be logged on with the police.
- b) Engage a legal officer to take care of the ragged persons on a regular basis at least online.
- c) The relevant authorities should be informed of the places where the ragging had taken place, whether inside or outside the universities.
- d) A special police station should be established in the vicinity of each university until the situation of ragging is brought under control.
- e) Some dummies could be sent in with each intake of students so that they could get first-hand information, recognize the raggings, and bring them to book.
- f) The complaints could be made not only by the victim but by anyone who gets to hear about incidents of ragging and allow the passage of law to find out the truth and mete out justice.
- g) The complaints of past ragging should be entertained and investigated even after students pass out. Such cases should be dealt with expeditiously by charging the culprits.

Situation:

Currently complaints are treated as normal and responses and little or no action is taken by the university authorities against raggings. Often, affected students complain to the authorities and even take up the matter with the Vice Chancellor, but nothing positive happens at the university, and ragging goes on. The authorities find it easy to deny the

existence of ragging, and even where complaints have been made to disciplinary officials or security or even police, but action is not pursued.

Recommendations:

- a) The reports of ragging at any level should be dealt as the shared responsibility of the university by all departments of the university, and the legal officer of the university coordinating with the police and assisting in investigations. There should be sufficient weight and importance given to the investigation, which will be a positive feature that establishes an attitude of zero-tolerance of ragging.
- b) Often the victim of ragging only meets with denial of the occurrence of ragging and is asked to bring the witnesses to establish ragging. This negative practice should be reversed, transferring the onus of investigation to the police. The legal officer at the university should follow up and co-ordinate with relevant departments of the university.
- c) The present UGC Center for Gender Equity/ Equality & Prevention of Ragging should be restructured by making it two divisions with one to deal with ragging and the other to deal with Gender related matters. There should also be a standing committee to engage on ragging related action at the UGC to overlook the needs of the center. This anti-ragging unit should take action with the police and pursue legal action working in close coordination with the university or other institution of learning. The hotline to make complaints will be made known to all new students.

Situation:

We have observed that ragging is rampant in some faculties of the universities and some may be free from ragging. The universities have reported over thousand cases of students who left the universities without giving reasons. Only a few have given ragging as the reason to leave the university, and there is evidence of university authorities encouraging the departing students not to mention that they are leaving due to ragging. Those students who applied for relief from this committee also acknowledged that they left the university without following formalities or suppressed the fact of ragging. There is also evidence that the ragers get in touch with drop-outs and request or threaten them not to disclose the incidents of ragging.

Recommendations:

- a) All universities should develop a clear policy for elimination of ragging and a strategic plan with a clear time frame. Vice chancellor should take the lead in this process with the proctor, deans and all academics being involved. It should be a fixed agenda item in the Senate and the Council.
- b) The provisions of the Prohibition of Ragging Act should be fully enforced with police involvement in every confirmed or suspected incident of ragging. If necessary, a police post should be established close to the University for this purpose.
- c) A comprehensive database of all ragging incidents and their outcome should be maintained and shared with the anti-ragging unit of the UGC.

- d) In Universities and other institutions or faculties or departments thereof where ragging activities are more intense and rigorous, the orientation programme for freshers should be organized by the university staff and should not involve senior students or student unions.
- e) During lectures, lunch and tea breaks and leisure time after lectures specific measures should be taken to prevent freshers coming into contact with seniors. As far as possible hostels and wings of hostels should be exclusively for freshers and the mere presence of a senior in these designated areas should be construed as an act of ragging.

Situation:

The student unions and some raggars have laid down “no go areas”, which are carefully avoided by academic and security staff during certain hours. The creation of “no go areas” within the university or other educational institution facilitate ragging by serving as dedicated venues for ragging.

Recommendations:

- a) The establishment of “no go areas” should be deemed a part of ragging and prevented at all costs.
- b) All “no go areas” should be regularly patrolled by security staff. CCTV cameras should be installed in such places and if students / student unions damage them, they should be dealt with in the strictest manner. The canteens also need to be strictly patrolled by security staff who should be provided with mobile phone cameras to capture any incident of suspected ragging.
- c) If the university security staff cannot maintain the peace and security, help of the police should be sought.
- d) Any academic, nonacademic, security or other staff who collaborate with or turn a blind eye to incidents of ragging should be subject to disciplinary action after an inquiry.

Situation:

The new entrants often prefer to stay outside of hostels. They may be travelling from their own residences, rented premises, friends, or relatives. The current practice is such freedom is denied to new students by the senior students through forced enforcement.

Recommendations:

- a) Any fresher who wishes to travel from home or a private hostel should be allowed to do so. All freshers should be free to go home on holidays and weekends. The security should be deployed to ensure this. All freshers should be permitted to have a mobile phone with them all the time. They should be provided a 24x7 hotline to report any incidents of ragging.

- b) Any action on the part of senior students or those acting in connivance with them to prevent the freedom of movement of any student must be deemed to be an act of ragging and dealt with accordingly.

Situation:

The students who comply with raggers are usually given all the information by the batchmates and they are usually in a WhatsApp group. Other students who are noncompliant are treated differently by making access to information difficult. The lecturers are too busy to help them directly.

Recommendations:

- a) All academic activities, study aids such as WhatsApp groups should be made accessible to all students.
- b) Providing videos of lectures and other academic material should be the responsibility of academic staff and there should be no discrimination in the dissipation of such material.
- c) No students should be delegated the function of distributing academic material to students.

Situation:

In universities and other academic institutions, the line of authority for maintenance of discipline is not well marked or understood, and this results in general indiscipline.

Recommendations:

- a) Vice Chancellors of the university and the Head of any other academic institution should be responsible for discipline.
- b) Disciplinary powers may be delegated to subordinate officials such as Proctors, Marshalls, Wardens etc, but the delegation of authority must be done effectively and monitored by the head of the institution, who will be ultimately responsible for any breaches of discipline.
- c) Progress on elimination of ragging as well as the issue of institutional discipline should be an agenda item at CVCD meetings and CVCD/ UGC meetings. It should be included as a good practice indicator in the institutional/ programme review process.

It is hoped that the above Situational Analysis sufficiently explains the manner in which the Regulatory Mechanism set out in this report can best be utilized.

This report has been prepared in English, but it may be necessary to have it also translated into Sinhalese and Tamil for creating public awareness as well as for administrative convenience.

**Schedule I - Table of Applications that could not be considered and reasons**

Application No.	Recommendation of the Committee
U-07	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-20	Application withdrawn by letter dated 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2020
U-25	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-28	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2012/2013
U-29	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2011/2012
U-30	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2013/2014
U-31	Could not be contacted
U-35	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-38	Not Eligible; Academic Year 1999/2000
U-39	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2000/2001
U-41	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2005/2006
U-42	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2002/2003
U-43	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-45	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-46	Not Eligible as the relevant institution does not come within the purview of the UGC
U-49	Not Eligible as the relevant institution does not come within the purview of the UGC
U-50	Not Eligible as the relevant institution does not come within the purview of the UGC
U-54	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2009/2010
U-56	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-57	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2007/2008
U-58/69*	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-59	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-62	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit

U-65	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2013/2014
U-68	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-70	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2010/2011
U-72	Not Eligible as the relevant institution does not come within the purview of the UGC
U-73	Not Eligible; Academic Year 2012/2013
U-74	Not Eligible; From University of Vocational Technology (UNIVOTEC)
U-76	Could not be contacted
U-78	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-87	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-91	Application rejected due to non-submission of affidavit
U-92	Not Eligible; Academic Year 1995/1996 (admitted to Uni. Of Sri Jayewardenepura in 1997)
U-93	Not Eligible; ragging was done in Mahaweli National College of Education

**NOTE: There are certain duplications of entries since applications from students claiming relief were received by email and post and a few applicants had been allocated two numbers. All duplications are highlighted with an asterisk (\*).**

## Schedule II - Recommendations of the Committee including Nature of Relief

Applicati on No.	Recommendation of the Committee
U-01	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any university.
U-02	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-03	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-04	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any university.
U-05/23*	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-06	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-08	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any university.
U-09	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-10	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-11	Recommended re-admission to same course in same university with Bursary.
U-12	Recommended re-admission to same course in same university.
U-13	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university with bursary.
U-14	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-15	This case falls outside purview of this committee as it does not involve any ragging issue.
U-16	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-17	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-18	Recommend re-admission to same course in same university.
U-19	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-21/81*	The applicant does not desire re-admission. Appropriate relief recommended.
U-22	Recommended re-admission to same course in same university.
U-24	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-26/55*	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-27	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-32	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-33	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-34/43*	This student is still in the university she had been admitted to, and the committee is of the view that appropriate relief, if any, should be provided by the UGC in consultation with the university concerned.
U-36	Recommend re-admission to the same course at the same university.
U-37	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-40	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-44	Does not come within the purview of this Committee. Student complains of ill health (not due to ragging) and seeks a transfer to another university due to health reasons. UGC may consider relief, if any, in consultation with relevant university.
U-47	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any university.
U-48	Recommend UGC assistance to rejoin relevant institution

U-51	Recommended financial Assistance equal to the Bursary from the date of leaving the relevant institution
U-52	Recommend re-admission to same university and placement at suitable level or re-admission to a comparable course in any other university.
U- 53	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-60/66*	Recommended to transfer to another university with possible credit transfer
U-61	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-63	Recommend re-admission to same course in another university.
U-64	Applicant eligible for relief but does not wish to rejoin university for personal reasons.
U-67/83*	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-71	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-75	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-79	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-80	Recommend re-admission to same course in any other university.
U-82	Recommend re-admission to same university for same course.
U-84	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-85	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-86	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-88	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-89	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-90	Recommend re-admission to comparable course in any other university.
U-94	Recommend re-admission to a course in management in any other university.
U-95	Recommend re-admission to same course in same university.

**NOTE: There are certain duplications of entries since applications from students claiming relief were received by email and post and a few applicants had been allocated two numbers. All duplications are highlighted with an asterisk (\*).**

Annexure A : Letter of Appointment dated 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 and attached Terms of Reference



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UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

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எனது இலக்கம்  
My Number } UGC/VC/PA/RAG/2020/Appointment

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20, வாட்டு இடம், கொழும்பு 7, இலங்கை.  
20. Ward Place. Colombo 07. Sri Lanka.

31<sup>st</sup> January 2020

Justice Dr. Saleem Marsoof,  
No.5/6, Bankhill Gardens,  
Pelawatte,  
Battaramulla

Dear Dr. Marsoof,

**Appointment as the Chairman of the Committee which had been formed to provide relief to students who have been deprived of their Education in Universities and other Higher Educational Institutions due to Ragging**

I am pleased to inform you that you have been appointed as the Chairman of the Committee formed to provide relief to students who have been deprived of Education in Universities and other Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) coming within the purview of the University Grants Commission due to Ragging. Your appointment is effective for a period of three (03) months with immediate effect until 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

This committee is appointed to achieve the objectives mentioned below.

1. Propose a mechanism to re-enroll the students who have been deprived of their education in the Universities and other HEIs coming within the purview of the UGC due to ragging from the academic year 2014/2015 onwards;
2. Propose a regulatory mechanism to prevent ragging related abusive conduct in the Universities and such other HEIs.

The committee is comprised with the following members.

1. Justice Dr. Saleem Marsoof, Former judge of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka (Chairman)
2. Ven. Professor Magammana Pannananda Thero, Professor in Buddhist Civilization, Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Sri Jayewardenepura (Member)

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Fax } 2688045

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வெப்தளம்  
Web site } <http://www.ugc.ac.lk>

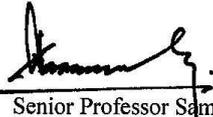
3. Rev. Dr. Benet Shantha Fernando, Director, Jathika Dharmopadesha Centre (Member)
4. Mr. Prasantha Lal De Alwis, President's Counsel (Member)
5. Professor Narada Warnasuriya, Former Vice Chancellor, University of Sri Jayewardenepura (Member)
6. Dr. Chandra Embuldeniya, Founder Vice Chancellor, Uwa Wellassa University of Sri Lanka (Member)
7. Senior Professor Janitha A Liyanage, Vice Chairperson, UGC (Member/ Secretary to the Committee)

A suitable honorarium will be paid after the assignment and the University Grants Commission will appreciate confirmation of your acceptance of the appointment together with your details.

Annexed Please find the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunge  
Chairman

Cc: Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation  
Vice-Chairperson, University Grants Commission  
Secretary, University Grants Commission  
Accountant, University Grants Commission  
Auditor-General

**Terms of Reference of the Committee to provide relief to students who have been deprived of University Education due to ragging**

Introduction:

It is recorded that a considerable number of students were dropped out of University education due to ragging for last five years period. It is a tragedy that the ending of the University education opportunities of bright students who have been selected from highly competitive examination process and highly competitive selection procedure for University education due to ragging.

Within the new development approach of “Vistas of prosperity and splendour”, parallel to the implementation of the new program of providing higher education opportunities for all the students who have passed the GCE A/L examination and eligible for University admission, it is emphasized that the steps should be taken to eliminate all the possibilities of further victimization of students thus admitted to the Universities in the face of this inhuman process.

Responsibilities of the committee

1. Establish a mechanism to monitor the process of eradicating the ragging in the National Universities system in 2020 onwards.
2. Commence a process to provide higher education opportunities to students, who have left University education due to these inhuman acts that have taken place since the year 2015.
3. Submit the recommendations of the Committee within a three month period.



Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunge  
Chairman

Annexure B: Letter of Extension of Tenure dated 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020



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பல்கலைக்கழக மாணியங்கள் ஆணைக்குழு  
UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

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எனது இலக்கம் }  
My Number }

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Post Office Box }

ඔබේ අංකය }  
உமது இலக்கம் }  
Your Number }

20, වෝර් ප්ලේස්, කොළඹ 07, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව.  
20, வாட்டு இடம், கொழும்பு 7, இலங்கை.  
20. Ward Place. Colombo 07. Sri Lanka.

23<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Justice Dr. Saleem Marsoof,  
No.5/6, Bankhill Gardens,  
Pelawatte,  
Battaramulla

Dear Justice Dr. Marsoof,

**Appointment as the Chairman of the Committee which had been formed to provide relief to students who have been deprived of their Education in Universities and other Higher Educational Institutions due to Ragging**

This has reference to my letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020, on the above subject.

I am pleased to inform you that the tenure of your appointment is extended with immediate effect until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020.

The other terms and conditions stipulated in the above Letter of Appointment will remain unchanged.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunge  
Chairman

Cc: Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation  
Vice-Chairperson, University Grants Commission  
Secretary, University Grants Commission  
Accountant, University Grants Commission  
Auditor-General

දුරකථන } 2695301  
தொலைபேசி } 2695302  
Telephone } 2692357

ෆැක්ස් } 2688045  
பெக்ஸ் }  
Fax }

වෙබ් අඩවිය } http://www.ugc.ac.lk  
வெப்தளம் }  
Web site }



**මහජනතාව වෙත කෙරෙන නිවේදනයයි**

**විශ්වවිද්‍යාල ප්‍රතිපාදන කොමිෂන් සභාව**

**නවක වධයේ වින්දිතයින් කඳහා සහන සැලැස්ම**

උසස් අධ්‍යාපන, තාක්ෂණ සහ තවත්වනු ලබන සේවාවන් සඳහා විද්වත්වරුන් ප්‍රතිපාදන කොමිෂන් සභාව විසින් නවක වධයට ගොදුරුවන්නට සුදුසු සහනයක් නිර්දේශ කිරීම සහ නවක වධය වැළැක්වීම සඳහා සුදුසු ක්‍රියාමාර්ග යෝජනා කිරීමේ පරමාර්ථය උදෙසා විශ්‍රාමික ශ්‍රේණිධාරීන්ගේ විනිසුරුවරයාගේ ප්‍රධානත්වයෙන් යුත්, සත් සාමාජික විමර්ශන කමිටුවක් පත්කර ඇත.

"උ" හඳුනා ගන්නා "උසස්" නව සංවර්ධන ප්‍රවේශය යටතේ, උසස් පෙළ විභාගය සමත් වන විද්වත්වරුන්ට හෝ වෙනත් උසස් අධ්‍යාපන ආයතනයකට සුදුසුකම් ලබන සියලුම සිසුන්ට උසස් අධ්‍යාපන අවස්ථා සලසාදීමේ නව වැඩසටහන ක්‍රියාත්මක කිරීමට සමඟිතව, මෙම පියවර ආරම්භ කර ඇත.

විද්වත්වරුන් ප්‍රතිපාදන කොමිෂන් සභාව විසින් 2014 / 2015 අධ්‍යයන වර්ෂයේ සිට 2018 / 2019 අධ්‍යයන වර්ෂය දක්වා විද්වත්වරුන්ට උසස් අධ්‍යාපන ආයතනයකට තෝරාගන්නා ලද සහ නවක වධයේ ගොදුරුත් වන්නට, එම විද්වත්වරුන්ට / උසස් අධ්‍යාපන ආයතනයේ බඳවාගැනීමේ වැළඳුණු හෝ නවක වධය හේතුවෙන් ඔවුන්ගේ උසස් අධ්‍යාපන කටයුතු අත්හිටුවීමට සිදුවූ සිසුන්ට සහන සැලැස්ම සඳහා අයදුම්පත් කැඳවීමට මෙම කමිටුව මගින් තීරණය කර ඇත.

ඔබේ නවක වධයේ ගොදුරුත් වන්නට, අනෙකුත් කැඳවීමට ඇතුළත් ඔබගේ විද්වත්වරුන් අධ්‍යාපන ආරම්භ කිරීමේ හෝ සම්පූර්ණ කිරීමේ අවස්ථාව අහිමි වූ සිසුවකු නම්, අනෙකුත් කමිටුව වෙත **2020 පෙබරවාරි 28** වන දිනට හෝ ඊට ප්‍රථම, ඔබගේ සහන සඳහා හිමිකම් අල්ලීමට අදාළ ලිපිලේඛන / සාක්ෂි සහිතව දිවුරුම් ප්‍රකාශයක ආකාරයෙන් සහන සඳහාත් කොරතුරු සැපයීම මගින් සිදුකළ යුතුය.

01. **ඔබ හෝ ඔබේ / ඔබවහන්සේගේ / උසස් අධ්‍යාපන ආයතනයේ නම :** .....
02. **අධ්‍යයන වර්ෂය :** .....
03. **අධ්‍යයන පාඨමාලාව, පීඨයේ සහ ලියාපදිංචි අංකය :** .....
04. **සම්පූර්ණ නම :** .....
05. **ස්ථීර ලිපිනය :** .....
06. **අංකුම් විස්තර :**  
 දු.න. අංකය : ..... ඊ මේල් : .....
07. **විශ්වවිද්‍යාලයෙන් / උසස් අධ්‍යාපන ආයතනය හැර ගිය දිනය (අදාළ වේ නම්)**

ඔබ විසින් සපයන සියලුම තොරතුරු, අනාගතයේ ලෙස සලකන බව කැණීහැරවේ සලකන්න.

මේ සම්බන්ධව වැඩිදුර තොරතුරු දැන ගැනීමට 011 3002440 අංකයෙන් දුරකථන කථනා (සාමාන්‍ය රාජකාරී දිනවල පෙ.ව. 09.00 සිට ප.ව. 4.00 දක්වා)

ඔබගේ සහන අල්ලීම පත්‍රය සහන සඳහා ලිපිනයට, ඇතුළු මාර්ගයෙන් **2020 පෙබරවාරි 28** වන දිනට හෝ ඊට ප්‍රථම යොමු කරන්න. විකල්පයක් ලෙස ඔබගේ අයදුම්පත්‍රය සහන සඳහා ඊ මේල් ලිපිනයට හෝ ඇත් සංචාරක වෙත ද යොමු කළ හැක. එසේ ඊ මේල් හෝ ඇත් සමඟින් යොමු කිරීමෙන් පසු අදාළ දිවුරුම් ප්‍රකාශයේ මුල් පිටපත ඇතුළු මගින් එවීමට කටයුතු කළ යුතුය.

ඊ මේල් ලිපිනය : [ragrelief@gmail.com](mailto:ragrelief@gmail.com)  
 ඇත් සංචාරක : 0112686041

ඔබගේ අයදුම්පත්‍රය වැඩිදුර ඇතුළු මාර්ගයෙන් (Email) හෝ ඇත් සංචාරකයෙන් එවන විට, අදාළ ලිපිලේඛනවල මුල් පිටපත් අවශ්‍ය වන විට සැපයිය යුතුය. අවසාන දිනට පසුව ලැබෙන අයදුම්පත්‍ර සලසා බලනු නොලැබෙන බව කැණීහැරවේ සලකන්න.

**සැලැස්ම ලිපිනය :**  
 සෞඛ්‍ය මහාචාර්ය ජනීතා ඒ, ලියකගේ මාවත  
 විද්වත්වරුන් ප්‍රතිපාදන කොමිෂන් සභාවේ උප සභාපති,  
 ලේකම්, නවක වධයේ වින්දිතයන් සඳහා සහන සැලැස්ම කමිටුව,  
 විද්වත්වරුන් ප්‍රතිපාදන කොමිෂන් සභාව,  
 නො. 20, වෝඩ් පොලොව,  
 කොළඹ 07.

2020 පෙබරවාරි 10



**பொது அறிவித்தல்**  
**பல்கலைக்கழக மாணியங்கள் ஆணைக்குழு**  
**பகிடிவதையால் பாதிக்கப்பட்டவர்களுக்கான நிவாரணம் வழங்கல்**

பகிடிவதையால் பாதிக்கப்பட்டவர்களுக்கு பொருத்தமான நிவாரணத்தை பரிந்துரைத்தல் மற்றும் பகிடிவதையை தடுப்பதற்கு பொருத்தமான நடவடிக்கையை முன்மொழியும் நோக்கிற்காக இலங்கை உச்ச நீதிமன்றத்தின் ஒப்பீட்டு நதித் தீர்மானம் ஒருவர் மூலம் தலைமை வகிக்கும் ஒரு உறுப்பினர்கள் கொண்ட விசாரணைக் குழு ஒன்றை, கோரல உயர் கல்வி, தொழில்நுட்ப மற்றும் புத்தக அமைச்சரின் வழிகாட்டலில் பல்கலைக்கழக மாணியங்கள் ஆணைக்குழு (UGC) நியமித்துள்ளது.

இந்த நடவடிக்கையானது உ.பொ.த. உ./ந. பரீட்சையில் சித்தியெற்ற மற்றும் பல்கலைக்கழகம் அல்லது ஏனைய உயர் கல்வி நிறுவனம் ஒன்றில் இணையும் தகுதியுடைய அனைத்து மாணவர்களுக்கும் உயர் கல்வி வாய்ப்புகளை வழங்கும் புதிய திட்டத்தை நடைமுறைப்படுத்துவதற்கு இணையாக "நாட்டை உட்பெய்யும்படி கட்டீசத்தின் நோக்கு" புதிய அபிவிருத்தி அணுகுமுறைக்கு உட்பட்டு முன்னெடுக்கப்படும்.

2014/2015 தொடக்கம் 2018/2019 வரையான கல்வி ஆண்டுக்கான பல்கலைக்கழக மாணியங்கள் ஆணைக்குழுவின் நோக்கெல்லைக்கு உட்பட்டு வருகின்ற பல்கலைக்கழகம்/ உயர் கல்வி நிறுவனம் ஒன்றில் அனுமதிக்காக தேர்வுசெய்யப்பட்டு குறித்த பல்கலைக்கழகம் அல்லது உயர் கல்வி நிறுவனத்தில் பகிடிவதையால் பாதிக்கப்பட்டவர்களாக பதிவுசெய்யு தடுக்கப்பட்டு அல்லது பதிவு செய்தபின் நிறுத்த வேண்டிய கட்டாயம் ஏற்பட்ட மாணவர்களிடம் இருந்து நிவாரணத்திற்காக விண்ணப்பங்களை கோருவதற்கு இந்தக் குழு தீர்மானித்துள்ளது.

மேற்குறிப்பிட்ட காலப்பகுதியில் பகிடிவதையால் பாதிக்கப்பட்டு உட்களது பல்கலைக்கழக கல்வியை ஆரம்பிக்க அல்லது யூத்தி செய்யும் வாய்ப்பை இழந்த ஒரு மாணவராக நீங்கள் இருந்தால், நிவாரணத்திற்கான உட்களது கற்றுக்கு ஆதாரமான தொடர்புடைய ஆவணங்கள்/ அத்தாட்சிகளுடன் சத்தியக்கதாசரி வழி மூலம் பின்வரும் தகவலை வழங்குவதன் மூலம் மேல் குறிப்பிட்ட குழுவிற்கு 2020 பெப்ரவரி 28 ஆம் திகதி அல்லது அதற்கு முன்னர் நிவாரணத்திற்காக நீங்கள் விண்ணப்பிக்கலாம்.

1. நீங்கள் தேர்வு செய்யப்பட்ட/ பதிவு செய்யப்பட்ட பல்கலைக்கழகம்/ உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனத்தின் பெயர்: .....
2. கல்வி ஆண்டு : .....
3. கற்கை, பீடம் மற்றும் பதிவு இலக்கம்: .....
4. முழு பெயர்: .....
5. தந்தை முகவரி: .....
6. தொடர்பு விவரங்கள்: ..... தொலைபேசி இல: ..... மின்னஞ்சல் முகவரி: .....
7. பொருத்தமாயின் பல்கலைக்கழகம்/ உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனத்தை விட்டு வெளியேறும் திகதி

உட்கள் மூலம் வழங்கப்பட்ட அனைத்து தகவல்களும் மிகவும் இரகசியமானது என்று கருதப்படும் என்பதை கருத்தில் கொள்ளவும்.

இது தொடர்பில் மேலதிக விவரங்களை 0113092449 என்ற தொலைபேசி இலக்கத்திற்கு அழைப்பதன் மூலம் பெறக்கொள்ள முடியும். (சாதாரண வேலை நாட்களில் மு.ப. 09.00 தொடக்கம் பீ.ப. 04.00 வரை கிடைக்கப்பெறும்)

நிவாரணத்திற்கான உட்களது விண்ணப்பம் 2020 பெப்ரவரி 28ஆம் திகதி அல்லது அதற்கு முன்னர் கிடைக்குமாறு கீழ் தரப்பட்டுள்ள முகவரிக்கு நாம மூலம் அனுப்பலாம். மாற்றாக, உட்கள் விண்ணப்பத்தை பின்வரும் மின்னஞ்சல் முகவரிக்கு மின்னஞ்சல் செய்ய அல்லது தொலைநகல் இலக்கத்திற்கு அனுப்பலாம்.

மின்னஞ்சல் முகவரி : [ragrelief@gmail.com](mailto:ragrelief@gmail.com)  
 தொலைநகல் இலக்கம் : 0112686041

உட்களது விண்ணப்பத்தை நீங்கள் மின்னஞ்சல் அல்லது தொலைநகலில் அனுப்பும் பட்சத்தில், நீங்கள் அவ்வாறு செய்ய நேரும்போது எந்தவொரு சத்தியக்கதாசரிகள் அல்லது ஏனைய ஆவணங்களின் மூலப்பிரதியை சமர்ப்பித்தல் வேண்டும். காலக்கெடு முடிந்த பின் கிடைக்கப்பெறும் விண்ணப்பங்கள் அவதானத்தில் கொள்ளப்படமாட்டாது என்பதை கருத்தில் கொள்ளவும்.

**அஞ்சல் முகவரி:**  
 சிரேஷ்ட. பிராசிரியர் இனித்த ஏ லியன்கே,  
 பல்கலைக்கழக மாணியங்கள் ஆணைக்குழுவின் பிரதி தலைவர்,  
 செயலாளர், பகிடிவதையால் பாதிக்கப்பட்டவர்களுக்கு நிவாரணம் வழங்குவதற்கான குழு.  
 பல்கலைக்கழக மாணியங்கள் ஆணைக்குழு  
 இல. 20, வோர்ட் பீளேஸ், கொழும்பு 07.  
 2020 பெப்ரவரி 10.

Annexure E: Public Notification published in Daily News dated 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020  
(English)

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Public Notification</b> <b>UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION</b> <b>PROVIDING RELIEF FOR VICTIMS OF RAGGING</b></p>
<p>The University Grants Commission (UGC) on the direction of the Honourable Minister of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation, has appointed a seven-member Committee of Inquiry headed by a retired Judge of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka for the purpose of recommending appropriate relief to victims of ragging and to propose suitable measures to prevent ragging.</p> <p>This measure has been initiated within the new development approach of "Vistas of prosperity and splendour" parallel to the implementation of the new program of providing higher education opportunities for all the students who have passed the GCE A/L examination and become eligible for admission to a University or other Higher Educational Institute.</p> <p>The Committee has decided to call for applications for relief from students who were selected for admission to a University /Higher Educational Institute coming within the purview of the University Grants Commission for the Academic year 2014/2015 to 2018/2019 and who were prevented from enrolling or after enrolling forced to discontinue their higher studies in such University or Higher Educational Institute due to becoming victims of ragging.</p> <p>If you are a student who has been deprived of the opportunity of commencing or completing your university education during the period mentioned above due to becoming a victim of ragging, you may apply for relief by furnishing the following information by way of affidavit with relevant documentation/evidence in support of your claim for relief to the above mentioned Committee on or before 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020.</p>	
<p><b>1. The Name of the University/Higher Educational Institute you got selected to/enrolled with : .....</b></p> <p><b>2. The Academic year : .....</b></p> <p><b>3. The course of study, the Faculty and the registration No : .....</b></p> <p><b>4. Full name : .....</b></p> <p><b>5. Permanent Address : .....</b></p> <p><b>6. Contact details : .....</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>Telephone No : ..... E - mail address : .....</b></p> <p><b>7. The date of leaving the University /Higher Educational Institute if applicable</b></p>	
<p>Please note that all information provided by you will be treated highly confidential.</p> <p>Further information in this regard can be obtained by calling 0113092449 (available from 09.00 m to 04.00 pm in normal working days).</p> <p>Your application for relief maybe sent by post to the address given below to reach on or before 28th February 2020. Alternatively, your application may also be emailed to the following email address or fax number:</p> <p>Email address: ragrelief@gmail.com Fax Number: 0112686041</p> <p>In the event that you email or fax your application, the originals of any affidavits or other documents attached to your application should be furnished when you are required to do so. Please note that applications received after the deadline will not be entertained.</p>	
<p><b>Postal address:</b> Senior Professor Janitha A Liyanage, Vice Chairperson of the University Grants Commission, The Secretary, the Committee to Grant Relief to Victims of Ragging, University Grants Commission No. 20, Ward Place, Colombo 07</p>	
<p>10<sup>th</sup> February 2020</p>	