

F.No.16-4/2024-U.5
Government of India
Ministry of Education
Department of Higher Education

Room No.428-C, Shastri Bhawan,
New Delhi, dated the 13th September, 2024

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject:- Minutes of the 24th Meeting of Anti Ragging Committee for monitoring measures to prevent ragging in Higher Educational Institutions under the Chairmanship of Air Marshal (Dr.) Ajit S. Bhonsle, AVSM, VSM held on 09th July, 2024 at 11.00 A.M. in UGC Head Office, New Delhi.

The undersigned is directed to enclose the minutes of the 24th Meeting of Anti Ragging Committee for monitoring measures to prevent ragging in Higher Educational Institutions under the Chairmanship of Air Marshal (Dr.) Ajit S. Bhonsle, AVSM, VSM held on 09th July, 2024 at 11.00 A.M. in UGC Head Office, New Delhi, for necessary action and compliance. An action taken report in this regard may kindly be sent to this Department and to Secretary, University Grants Commission, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110002.

Encl.: As above.



(Jasleen Kaur)

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

To

1. All Members of the Anti-ragging Monitoring Committee
2. All Regulatory Bodies
3. Chief Secretaries of all States/ UTs
4. UGC, BSZ Marg, New Delhi

Ministry of Education

Department of Higher Education

Minutes of the 24th Meeting of Anti Ragging Committee for monitoring measures to prevent ragging in Higher Educational Institutions under the Chairmanship of Air Marshal (Dr.) Ajit S. Bhonsle, AVSM, VSM held on 09th July, 2024 at 11.00 A.M. in UGC Head Office.

The meeting of Anti-Ragging Committee for monitoring measures to prevent ragging in Higher Educational Institutions under the Chairmanship of Air Marshal (Dr.) Ajit S Bhonsle, AVSM, VSM was held on 09th July, 2024 at 11.00 A.M. in UGC Head Office.

The following Committee Members attended the meeting: -

- | | | |
|--|---|----------|
| 1. Air Marshal (Dr.) Ajit S. Bhonsle AVSM, VSM | - | Chairman |
| 2. Shri Varadan Chandar 20/52, V.P. Sannidhi Street, Kanchipuram | - | Member |
| 3. Dr. Sarvesh Tandon Professor, Forensics Medicine, Vardhman Mahavir Medical College, Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi | - | Member |
| 4. Prof. Ajay Kumar Arora Principal, Ramjas College | - | Member |
| 5. Shri Pratik Sen Representative of Director, IIT Kanpur | - | Member |
| 6. Smt. Rina Sonowal Kauli Joint Secretary, DoHE, MoE | - | Convener |

In addition, the following officers also attended the meeting.

- | | | | |
|-----|---|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. | Prof. Manish R. Joshi Secretary, UGC | - | UGC |
| 2. | Shri B.K. Singh Director, DoHE, MoE | - | MoE |
| 3. | Smt. Jasleen Kaur Under Secretary, DoHE, MoE | - | MoE |
| 4. | Shri Ashok Section Officer, DoHE, MoE | - | MoE |
| 5. | Dr. Sunita Siwach Joint Secretary, Anti-Ragging Cell | - | UGC |
| 6. | Shri Ajay Kumar Joshi, Under Secretary, Anti Ragging Cell | - | UGC |
| 7. | Shri Sushil Kumar, Section Officer, Anti Ragging Cell | - | UGC |
| 8. | Prof. S.K. Katharia Prof. & Head, Dental Council of India | - | DCI |
| 9. | Dr. Asha Sharma Member, India Nursing Council | - | INC |
| 10. | Shri Aujendra Singh Deputy Director | - | NMC |
| 11. | Shri Narinder Singh Deputy Director | - | AICTE |
| 12. | Dr. Seema Jaggi Assistant Director General | - | ICAR |
| 13. | Ms. Alka Tomar Chairperson, Centre for Youth (C4Y) | - | Anti Ragging Monitoring Agency |
| 14. | Shri Deepak Goyal Managing Director, ADC Electro soft Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi | - | Anti Ragging Helpline |

Representatives from **Bar Council of India, Pharmacy Council of India, Sports Authority of India**, did not attend the Meeting.

The meeting commenced with a welcome note by Chairman Air Marshal (Dr.) Ajit S. Bhonsle to all the Committee Members. He welcomed the participants to the 24th meeting. Chairman recalled that the last meeting was held in 'on-line' mode on 19.04.2024, which was the first quarterly meeting for the year 2024, wherein we had vowed to make the Anti-ragging measures and mechanisms more effective and bring in positive changes suitable for the changed and changing environment in our Colleges / HEIs/ Universities.

We decided to be 'PROACTIVE' rather than 'REACTIVE'. He wished to put on record the contribution of the outgoing Member, Prof. (Smt.) Hardeep Kaur, the officiating Principal of Ramjas College. The last meeting was held on 19th April, 2024. In the intervening period, we have interacted on the WhatsApp group effectively, which shows that we as a team do not wait from meeting to meeting, for addressing the matters and take action. We have to be in step with the environment and, in fact a step ahead. Chairman highlighted some of the notable activities during this period, such as: -

- a. On 12th May, 2024, Prof. Santanu Misra of IIT Kanpur informed that Prof. Manindra Agrawal, Director IIT Kanpur has allocated the required budget and Prof. Santanu received green signals for all sides to move with the Anti-Ragging Mobile Application Development Project. We will get an update on the same today from Prof. Pratik Sen, Dean, Students Affairs, IIT Kanpur.
- b. During the rest of May 2024, we discussed the suggested 'Users' Requirements' for the Mobile App. We look forward to know as to what are the broad features of the App which the IIT Kanpur has narrowed on.
- c. On 13th May 2024, the NEWS 18 Channel quoted the Chairman UGC Prof. M Jagadesh Kumar that the ragging complaints reported to the Anti-Ragging Cell are enquiries about how to register a complaint, to check on most of complaint status and tracing procedures, as well as to seek guidance on the ARC Committee Report Format. Most ragging complaints reported on the Anti-Ragging Helpline, he said, include issues faced by new students such as Mental-harassment (abusive language, name-calling, false accusations, body shaming, and threats related to attendance / grades), Physical Abuse (Some calls report physical violence including beatings), Social Ostracism (being forced to do unnecessary tasks or being excluded from social activities), Sexual Harassment (any unwelcome, sexual advances, comments, or physical contact), Extortion (demanding money or valuables from new students, Verbal Abuse (insults, derogatory language, and other forms of verbal aggression) and Substance Abuse (being pressurised to smoke drink, or use other substances). These prevalent aspects were aptly summed up by the Chairman UGC. The report also carried statistical information such as, between 01st January 2023 and 18th April 2024, a total of 1,240 ragging incidents were reported on the Anti-Ragging Helpline of which 1,113 (89.7%) have been resolved, and it is working to address the 127

active complaints (10.24%). According to the UGC data of the incidents, the breakdown is 82.18% (male), 17.74% (female) and 0.08% (transgender). He further added that the accessible and confidential Anti-Ragging Helpline empowers students to report ragging incidents without fear of retribution. This allows for swift intervention and ensure student's safety. The robust Monitoring System sends a clear message to the institutions that ragging will not be tolerated, creating a deterrent effect, discouraging potential incidents. A Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for follow-up on every case is followed. Quoting the Chairman UGC, "The Anti-Ragging Helpline closes every ragging complaint upon ensuring the victim's satisfaction. In case of the victim being dissatisfied by the institution's Action Taken Report, the Anti-Ragging Helpline seeks Reinvestigation Reports from the College / University. It also ensures that the victims could get their complaints reactivated, if they again face ragging". This has been a very comprehensive interview by the Chairman UGC and we welcome more of these in other media channels / print media and in other Indian languages.

- d. On 21st May 2024, Member Dr. Sarvesh Tandon, posted on the WhatsApp group, the Public Notice dated 21st May 2024 by the National Medical Commission, Post-Graduation Medical Education Board (PGMEB). This Notice informed that Anti-Ragging Cell of NMC has constituted a National Task Force (NTF) on Mental Health and Wellbeing of the medical students. Chairman NARMC had then Informed Shri Aujender Singh, Dy. Secy. PGMEB, NMC for our participation and JS ARC Dr. Sunita Siwach further coordinated. Ms. Alka Tomar of C4Y, the Anti-Ragging Monitoring Cell attended the stakeholder's meeting on 03rd June 2024 with the NTF. She shared the data regarding the prevalent issue of ragging in medical colleges, with a particular emphasis on suicide cases. She highlighted the urgent need for action to galvanise the institutional mechanisms within the NMC for addressing the issues. Ms. Alka Tomar urged the NMC to ensure the participation of senior leadership in the Anti-Ragging Monitoring Committee Meetings. Additionally, she offered to contribute to the ragging prevention related recommendations in the draft- NTF report. This was on 03rd June 2024. Today we will like to get an update on that from the NMC Representative.
- e. Then on 28th June 2024, the Indian Express reported the deplorable case of mass ragging of 50-70 First Year medical students of Govt. Medical College, Durgapur in Rajasthan. Prof. Santanu Misra had posted it on our WhatsApp group for information. The episode happened on the scorching summer heat of 15th May 2024, when the junior students were taken to a hill and made to do 300-350 sit-ups. A 20-year-old student suffered muscle strain and infection to kidney & liver and was rushed to Ahmedabad. There was delay between the episode (15th May 2024) to lodging of FIR (24th June 2024) by the College. The GMC Principal Dr. Bala Muruganvelu S, said they received the complaint via the NMC website (23/24 June 2024). Obviously, The Anti-Ragging Mechanism of the GMC Durgapur is neither existing nor effective. The victim has survived after a number of dialysis. There are seven students alleged to be the perpetrators. We need to follow-up further on this horrible case of ragging.
- f. We are nearly one year from the distressing Jadavpur University suicide case of 10th August 2023. As per 26th May 2024, Indian Express report, the Vice

Chancellor Shri Bhaskar Gupta has said “they have accepted all the recommendation made by the Anti-Ragging Committee of the University. We as an Institution cannot act as per the (Criminal) Law as it is not in our hands. The Anti-Ragging Committee has asked for the expulsion of four senior students allegedly involved in the ragging of a first-year students, leading to his death. The four expelled students are currently in police custody and they belong to the civil engineering, economics and sociology depts. Five other students found involved in ragging have been recommended for rustication for four semesters. All nine have been permanently expelled from the Men’s Hostel. The police will further pursue the case for the death of the student under Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023 (IPC). We need to follow-up this case further.

- g. On 04th July 2024, a 16-year-old Engineering Aspirant allegedly died of suicide by hanging himself from a ceiling fan inside his Paying Guest room in Kota. This is the 13th case of suspected suicide by coaching students since January 2024. Last year, Kota suicide deaths were 26. Are these deaths because of parental pressure, academic pressure / stress, and financial difficulties or also because of an element of ragging or bullying? There is a need to bring the private coaching institutions across the country under the ambit of the Anti-Ragging Measures in line with the Anti-Ragging Guidelines 2009.
- h. Inclusion of Schools and Private Coaching Institutes into the ambit of Anti-Ragging / Anti-Bullying provisions is a long felt need and has been articulated earlier too. After the 2009 Supreme Court’s Judgement on Anti Ragging, Terms of Reference of the Raghavan Committee were formulated. Based on the Report of Raghavan Committee the UGC was involved to draw up the UGC Regulations 2009 for the HEIs. Somehow, the aspect of Ragging / Bullying in Schools and Private Coaching Institutions has been left out. Therefore, in the last 15 years, while the sensitisation about Ragging to the stakeholders of HEIs has borne positive results; the School & Coaching Institution students continue to suffer from Bullying / Ragging with serious consequences to the victims. Unchecked and unsensitised these boys and girls’ step into colleges and resort to Ragging/ Bullying as a normal activity. Given the relative freedom in colleges compared to the school environment the Ragging/ Bullying attains more sadistic and perverse overtones. We need to work at the School level to nip the menace of ragging in its bud and inculcate culture of Anti ragging in the students in their formative stage. Same is the case with Private coaching classes which have no Regulatory Mechanism, except the State/ UT Governments authorities, granting these Institutes permissions to conduct Coaching Classes and run hostels / dormitories / PG accommodations for the students. Therefore, there is a need to engage with the State / UT Governments to institute effective measures. The Chairman expressed that today’s meeting will have fruitful deliberations on all these aspects and on the Agenda Points. The Chairman requested JS (ARC) to take the agenda one by one.

Item No. 1: Confirmation of Minutes of 23rd meeting of the Anti-Ragging Monitoring Committee to prevent ragging in Higher Educational Institutions held on 19.04.2024 in On-Line mode.

The Minutes of the 22nd meeting were confirmed by the Committee.

Item No. 2 Action Taken on the minutes of the last Meeting by UGC and Regulatory Bodies.

The Action Taken on the part of UGC was informed by JS (ARC) to the Committee and the Committee appreciated the efforts of UGC.

Item No. 3: Report, Analysis and Remedies/Modalities for the Institutions for non-compliance of UGC Regulations for curbing the menace of Ragging in HEIs – 2009, a presentation by Anti-Ragging Monitoring Agency.

The Monitoring Agency informed the Committee about the number of ragging complaints and its redressal till the level of victim/complainant's satisfaction. The Monitoring Agency has suggested the following remedies/modalities to the Committee:

1. **Terminology Update:** The term 'Affidavit' will be replaced with 'Undertaking' in all communications and on www.antiragging.in.
2. **Format Change:** The 'Affidavit' format will be changed to 'Undertaking' format without the signatures of the Deponents. Including the note: "This is a computer-generated undertaking. No signature is required."
3. **District Level Anti-Ragging Committee:** Status updates on whether the 'District Level Anti-Ragging Committee' has been constituted in the States/ UTs.
4. **Penalties for No Compliance Report:** Decide and implement penalties on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that fail to submit their Compliance Reports within the prescribed timeframe.
5. **Verification of Compliance Reports:** The Councils are required to verify the Compliance Reports of their respective HEIs on the anti-ragging portal.
6. **Notices to HEIs:** Send strict notices to all HEIs to update their Institution's Anti-Ragging Committee and Anti-Ragging Squad Contact details on their official websites. HEIs should also provide information about UGC Anti-Ragging Mechanisms on their websites, as per the prescribed format, in accordance with the UGC Regulation on Curbing the Menace of Ragging in Higher Education Institutions, 2009.

Item No. 4: Presentation by NMC, AICTE and any other Regulatory Bodies for steps taken for implementation of compliance of UGC Regulation for Curbing the Menace of Ragging – 2009, if any.

During the discussion it was unanimously agreed that, there have been instances, especially in the Medical Colleges, where the faculty and college have been found

directly or indirectly supporting the ragging. This 'System - supported ragging 'should be covered in the definition of ragging while drafting new Rules/Regulation by UGC. It will be very effective in reducing the incidents of System -supported incidents of ragging. Instances of suicide have also increased amongst the students. Therefore, it should be made mandatory for each educational Institute to report each incident of death including suicide to its Regulator and the Regulator should investigate each case in depth through a visit to the educational Institute. It will help in knowing the exact reasons of suicidal incidents in that Institute and the students. 'Seat -Leaving Bond' and 'Service Bond 'in Medical education is a major cause of stress and depression amongst the students. Seat - Leaving Bond amount ranges from 5 lacs to more than one crore in some States/Colleges. Seat -Leaving Bond was started to stop the wastage of precious medical seats. However, in the past 10 years, the total seats at Under Graduate and Post Graduate level have been doubled. Few seats at PG level still remain vacant. As such, the main logic for imposing the Seat - Leaving Bond no longer holds good. Therefore, Seat -Leaving Bond needs to be done away with regulatory support from the UGC. Similarly, the Service Bond which requires a student to work for a stipulated period, with the Government or the Private Medical college, is also a cause of stress amongst the students. This needs to be reviewed by the State Government and Private educational institutes by instituting suitable mechanisms and reward system.

Item No. 5. Points by JS (ARC), UGC.

UGC is committed to fostering a safe and conducive learning environment and believes that the issue of ragging requires urgent attention and concerted efforts to address it effectively. UGC will collaborate with all Regulatory Bodies to tackle this menace. UGC will be encourages all measures to prevent ragging and create a safe environment for students across educational institutions. UGC is dedicated to supporting initiatives that promote the well-being and safety of students. UGC would welcome the opportunity to explore potential collaborations or participation in any efforts aimed at eradicating ragging from educational settings.

Item No. 6.: Submission by Secretary, UGC.

Secretary, UGC assured the Committee that all directions will be immediately implemented.

Item No. 7. Any Other Item with the permission of Chairman.

Submission by Prof. Pratik Sen (Representative IIT, Kanpur)

In recent case, it is observed that thesis -topic -finalisation and thesis work- related student's stress, led to extreme steps taken by the students. The following has been submitted by Prof. Pratik Sen for the consideration of the Committee: -

A Thesis Monitoring Committee (TMC), comprised of three faculties (including the Thesis Supervisor), is to be set up for every student who is supposed to do thesis work. The TMC will ensure the progress of the thesis, starting from the selection of the thesis topic to work progress and thesis presentation. Moreover, all the processes must be time-bound so that students will not be stressed out due to a lack of time for the thesis work. The TMC must meet twice per semester to monitor progress.

Submission by Shri Varadan Chandar:

Shri Varadan Chandar expressed deep anguish and distress that the trend of increasing numbers of ragging related suicides reported in the NMC affiliated colleges and IITs in the recent years is extremely alarming.

He urged that on a closer look on a case-to-case basis for understanding the causes of each of the suicides. It can be gleaned that they fall under two distinct categories, namely those which are "System - caused ragging suicides " and those which are "Seniors - caused ragging suicides".

While the focus of most of our discussions in the NARMC have all along been on the latter while the former appears to be in the ascendance, especially in the medical and engineering streams (including the IITs).

These are indicatively caused by the inherent and often unreasonably heavy demands and at times unbearable pressures applied on the students by the institution's administrative and academic system itself such as bond demands, loan pressures, biased extension of the duration of research thesis, stressfully heavy study burdens etc. which push the students to the extreme steps.

He requested that our NARMC could consider writing to the heads of concerned Regulatory Councils to carry out a deeper and more empathetic study about such causes and ask them to evolve provisions in the Rules of their own systems to accommodate the needs and limitations of such vulnerable sections too and prevent such tragical ends caused to the students by their systems as well.

He urged that the Councils should take preventive and corrective steps upon their affiliated colleges to control the incidence of ragging related suicide cases more seriously and in an expeditious manner.

He emphasized why any type of winking or condescending attitude towards campus ragging by their internal ARC staff themselves must be frowned at and strongly rebutted.

He urged that those institutions allowing recurrence of such tragic suicide instances repeatedly in their campuses have to be identified and very seriously dealt with by their respective Councils.

Closing Remarks by Air Marshal (Dr.) Ajit S. Bhonsle:

1. In the closing address, the Chairman appreciated the work undertaken by the ARC UGC, in the intervening period since the last meeting on 19th April 2024, especially in terms of ensuring compliances from 1050 out of 1156 Universities. He expressed concern about the stress caused on the students due to overbearing faculties who are chasing unrealistic time schedules for completion of syllabus/Project relentlessly. This could well be classified as a “Institution-Induced-Ragging”. It is reportedly prevalent in well-known leading Educational Institutions and need to be curbed at once.
2. The Chairman drew attention to the need for holding Inter-Council Meeting, prior to the NARMC, to iron out any issues at the Inter-Council level and also to identify Points to be brought up for the NARMC deliberations. One-to-one consultation between ARC(UGC) and Councils could also be done on a continuous basis. Some of the Councils have their own Formats for Compliances; these need to be harmonized with the ARC(UGC) Formats.
3. He once again highlighted the importance of activating 'District-level Anti-Ragging Committees' and this can best be done by sending a written communication to the Chief Secretaries of all the States/UTs. If necessary, it may be sent under the signature of Chairman, NARMC.
4. Alluding to the National Task Force's Report submitted at the NMC, the Chairman expected to receive the copy of the same at ARC(UGC), in due course of time, for analysis.
5. Elaborating on the point made by Dr. Sarvesh Tandon, the Chairman said that besides the NMC and other Councils dealing with Medical/Dental/Nursing education, we should also approach the respective State/UT Government's Directorate of Medical Education for effective Anti-Ragging Measures in the HEIs, under their jurisdiction.
6. The Chairman also urged on the revision of the UGC Regulations, 2009 at the earliest, to make them contemporary with the changing environment. The definition of Ragging needs to expand to encompass the unintended Ragging inflicted by the Institution, besides the Ragging inflicted by the students.
7. The Chairman appreciated the effectiveness of Anti-Ragging Measures by the Nursing Council of India (NCI) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), through compliance with UGC Regulations 2009 and especially through their respective internally generated mechanisms and processes.
8. The Chairman referred to the draft ‘Regulations on Curbing the Menace of Ragging (Bullying) in Schools’, compiled by the UGC in consultation with Inter-

Council Committees, representatives from various departments of school education and states. These were, compiled by the UGC in the Year 2022 in order to provide the schools with the benefit of knowledge, expertise and experience that UGC has gained over a decade by the implementation of Anti-Ragging Regulations, 2009. These draft- Regulations on Curbing the Menace of Ragging (Bullying) in Schools were forwarded by the Secretary, UGC to the Secretary, Dept of School Education, MOE vide D.O.F. No.1-15/ 2016(ARC) dated 13 July 2022. The Chairman urged that these need to be followed up all across the schools in the country.

9. The Chairman requested Dr. Pratik Sen, Dean of Student's Affairs, IIT Kanpur to provide an update on the development of Mobile Application for National Anti-Ragging Committee in the coming weeks.
10. The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking JS (ARC) for organising the Meeting.

The meeting concluded with JS (ARC) proposing the Vote of Thanks to all the members attending this meeting.
