

Raggers beware

Vice-chancellors warn seniors that bullying won't be tolerated

PETALING JAYA: University seniors, take note – those who rag freshies will be expelled.

This is the warning issued by the vice-chancellors of several public varsities in the country.

The universities stood together in declaring that ragging will not be tolerated and urged freshies who were bullied to come forward and file their complaints immediately.

All noted that although ragging was not a new phenomenon, it should not take place at univer-

»We will definitely take action if it happens«

UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA
VICE-CHANCELLOR PROF TAN SRI
DR NIK MUSTAPHA R. ABDULLAH

sities. The campus authorities reminded all parties that the formal Orientation Week was already in place at all universities where there were guidelines everyone must adhere to.

While psychologists pointed out that those who bullied their juniors did it to earn the respect and as a show of strength, former bullies said these were all done "as good, clean fun".

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Reports by ALCIA LIM, KAREN CHAPMAN, JOSHUA FOONG and SHAUN HO

Expulsion for culprits

Varsity seniors caught bullying freshies risk harsh punishment

PETALING JAYA: Seniors caught ragging freshmen will be punished accordingly, including being expelled, warned the vice-chancellors of several public universities.

The VCs and deputy VCs interviewed by *The Star* reiterated that ragging was unlawful and would not be tolerated.

They advised freshmen who were ragged to complaint immediately to campus authorities such as the college masters, fellows or even the security offices.

Universiti Putra Malaysia vice-chancellor Prof Tan Sri Dr Nik Mustapha R. Abdullah said that while ragging was almost non-existent nowadays, stern action would be

create trouble.

"We will definitely take action if it happens. If the offence is serious, there is a possibility the action may warrant expulsion," he said when contacted. He added that the issue of ragging was nothing new.

"The seniors should know they are not allowed to indulge in ragging as it is against the law.

"Orientation week is conducted every year to welcome new students. The universities set guidelines and students have to respect that," said Dr Nik Mustapha.

He was commenting on a statement by Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin that university and college authori-

ties that the orientation conducted did not cross the line.

Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Sahol Hamid Abu Bakar warned that students could face expulsion if they were caught ragging another person on campus.

Universiti Utara Malaysia vice-chancellor Prof Dr Mohamed Mustafa Ishak said there was no harm in senior students getting to know their juniors but they should know when to draw the line between harmless jokes and abuse.

"A little bit of harmless jokes are fine, but anything involving physical, mental or verbal abuse and humiliation will not be tolerated,"

Universiti Kebangsaan Malay deputy vice-chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni) Prof Datuk Mohamad Abdul Razak said of 500 selected student facilitators were trained for orientation week and to watch out for any untoward happenings.

Higher Education Ministry secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Zulkefli Hassan said the ministry's stance on ragging was very clear.

"There is no two ways about it. The relevant authorities in universities will be made accountable.

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For more reports on ragging