

Infamous cases of extreme ragging

IN March 1988, the nation was left saddened and shocked when news of the death of a student from brutal ragging in a technical school in Cheras, Kuala Lumpur, was confirmed.

Form Five student Hishamuddin Majid suffered organ failure after being beaten in the school's toilet at 11.30am by "super seniors" who had visited the school to collect their Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia results.

After being beaten, Hishamuddin requested permission from his teacher to return to his hostel because he wasn't feeling well. At 7.30pm the same day, his friends informed the hostel warden that Hishamuddin was in pain. He was taken to a hospital's emergency room, but died shortly after. He was pronounced dead at 8.50pm from stomach complications.

The case was only reclassified after Hishamuddin's father lodged a police report about the attack.

Investigations showed that during an orientation ceremony, seniors gave nicknames to selected juniors, who had to undergo a series of "tests", which included beatings and other forms of physical torture. Hishamuddin was one of the unlucky few.

After years of court appearances, both of the accused were released. One "super senior" was released after pleading guilty and publicly apologising to Hishamuddin's family while the other was released after the prosecution had failed to prove a prima facie (referring to a lawsuit or criminal prosecution in which the evidence before trial is sufficient to prove the case unless there is substantial contradictory evidence presented at trial) case against the then 19-year old.

JUST over a year later, in July 1989, a barbaric and sadistic ragging case, known as "the Serdang heli" involving six male seniors and six male juniors from a public university created headlines. The extreme ragging was carried out in the rented home of a senior in Sri Serdang, about 2km from the university.

The freshies were slapped repeatedly and forced to dance around naked. This particular case drew disgust from the public as the juniors' genitals were tied to a ceiling fan as they were made to run



Bullying in schools creates short and long-term psychological damage.

around in circles when the fan was switched on.

After five hours of deliberation, Universiti Putra Malaysia's disciplinary board found five of the six seniors guilty. Three were expelled, while two were suspended for two semesters. One senior, who was a spectator, received a stern warning.

THE most recent reported case was in June this year involving seven public university freshmen who were allegedly abused by 10 of their seniors, including being forced to strip and perform lewd acts on each other during ragging at the university's hostel.

During the incident, which happened between midnight and 4am, the juniors were forced to strip down to their underwear while their seniors took pictures of them.

They were also forced to perform lewd gestures, including grabbing each other's private parts and touching each other's nipples while dancing to music.

They were even forced to smoke and those who refused were threatened. One junior was warned that they were all at the mercy of the seniors until they completed their studies at the university.

The case was considered closed following a meeting between the parties involved where an apology was made.