

Newspaper Clips

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P-6

JNU sex scandal: Varsity gives police its report

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: The South Delhi Police have finally received the report from the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) authorities regarding the sex scandal that rocked the institute a few days back.

"We have received the report from the university officials and will be conducting our enquiry in the matter," said HGS Dhaliwal, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South).

Jawaharlal Nehru University officials on their part expelled the two students and rusticated one of them for their involvement in the sex video scandal.

Chief Proctor HC Bohidar who was investigating the matter said, "Today, the university issued orders to expel the two students, one of them who appears in the video and the other who made the video. The third student, who let out his

We have handed over the case to the Delhi Police so that they can investigate if there is involvement of any sex racket behind it.

HC BOHIDAR
JNU chief proctor

room for the act, has been rusticated for a year. Further, we have handed over the case to the Delhi Police so that they can investigate if there is involvement of any sex racket behind it."

The video, which was made not with a cell phone but with a handycam, had been doing the rounds of the campus for almost a year.

According to JNU sources, the boyfriend of the woman made the video while she visited him at one of the hostels in the campus.

Times of India ND 13/02/2011 p-3

IIT can't deny JEE record: HC

Court Says RTI Act Supreme, No Clause In Brochure Valid

Abhinav Garg | TNN

New Delhi: The Delhi high court in an important ruling recently has held that a candidate appearing for the prestigious JEE or GATE conducted by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) has the right to access information or records relating to the exam under the RTI Act.

Dismissing a petition filed by IIT Delhi against an order of the Central Information Commission, Justice S Muralidhar recently asked the institute to provide information to applicants Navin Talwar and Sushil Kohli who had sought a copy of the 'Optical

IIT had claimed immunity from disclosure of records related to entrance examination to aspirants who take JEE or GATE

Response Sheets' or the answer sheets in their RTI plea to IIT-D.

The IIT had claimed immunity from disclosure on the ground that its brochure inviting applicants to appear for the JEE or GATE makes it clear it won't entertain any queries related to ORS, and by filing the RTI

the applicants had violated this precondition.

The IIT claimed any question on marks obtained, if entertained, will only lead to demands for regrading and retotalling, even though the institute doesn't entertain any correspondence on it.

But HC brushed aside the objections, reminding IIT-D of the supremacy of the transparency Act over any other rule.

"The right of a candidate, sitting for JEE or GATE, to obtain information under the RTI Act is a statutory one. It can't be said to have been waived by such candidate only because of a clause in the in-

formation brochure for JEE or GATE. In other words, a candidate doesn't lose his or her right under the RTI Act only because he or she has agreed to sit for JEE or GATE," the court observed.

Talwar, a candidate who had taken the JEE last year and Kohli, whose daughter appeared for GATE, filed an RTI plea seeking copies of the ORSS and subject-wise marks of each of the candidates.

On being rebuffed by the public information officer of IIT-Delhi, the duo appealed before the Central Information Commission, which ruled in their favour.

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Times of India ND 13/02/2011 p-14

IIT-Kgp seeks HRD min opinion on laptop row

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: As controversy on the pricing of hundreds of laptops to be bought by IIT-Kharagpur refuses to die down, the institute has sought the opinion of the human resource development (HRD) ministry.

IIT-Kharagpur has asked the ministry if laptops can be bought under the Cumulative Professional Development Allowance (CPDA) scheme. Under the ministry's fully-funded scheme, each faculty member is given Rs 3 lakh in a block of three years. But, since the scheme started late and the first three-year block is ending in September, a bulk of the sum has remained unutilized.

While IIT-Kharagpur reg-

istrar T K Ghosal claims all formalities have been put on hold till the ministry responds, the institute approved rate of Rs 1.07 lakh per laptop has not been scrapped yet. "It depends on the clarification we get from the ministry," Ghosal says.

It is also not known why IIT-Kharagpur first decided to allow purchase of laptops under CPDA scheme, and later approached the ministry.

Documents accessed by TOI shows that the institute approved rate contract for laptops in last November that is valid till October 2011.

Rajeev Kumar, professor of computer science, who wanted to purchase an Intel i7-740QM processor-based laptop, for an HRD project — separate from CPDA scheme —

found out discrepancies in rates while conducting a trade enquiry. He figured out that if such a laptop is purchased directly from one of the companies, it would cost only Rs 79,000, whereas the IIT approved rate was Rs 1.07 lakh for a similar model.

Kumar also asked his son, who works in Hyderabad, to get the rate. He, too, got a similar quotation.

IIT administration calls it a conflict of interest, and alleges that the laptop, which Kumar wanted to buy was for his son.

The deputy registrar even sent documents, including cellphone bill of Kumar's son and quotation of laptop bearing the Hyderabad address. Kumar vehemently denies the allegations.

Over 1500 students at California's Tri-Valley University have officially been declared as sham. The situation has taken a worse turn for those 18 who have been shackled with GPS-fitted anklets. S RAJAGOPALAN tells you more

We're victims, yet we're treated like criminals. Who would have thought such a thing can happen in America of all places," grumbles a student from Hyderabad, on the point of breaking down. "We played by the book, followed every procedure, did everything lawfully. Yet, here we are trying to convince one and all that we're innocent," complains another.

They are but two of 1,555 students of California's Tri-Valley University, now officially declared a sham and shut down for good. As many as 95 per cent of them are from India, and almost all of them are from Andhra Pradesh. Right now, they all are in a state of limbo, with their F-1 student visas terminated in one stroke of executive pen. They are effectively out of status.

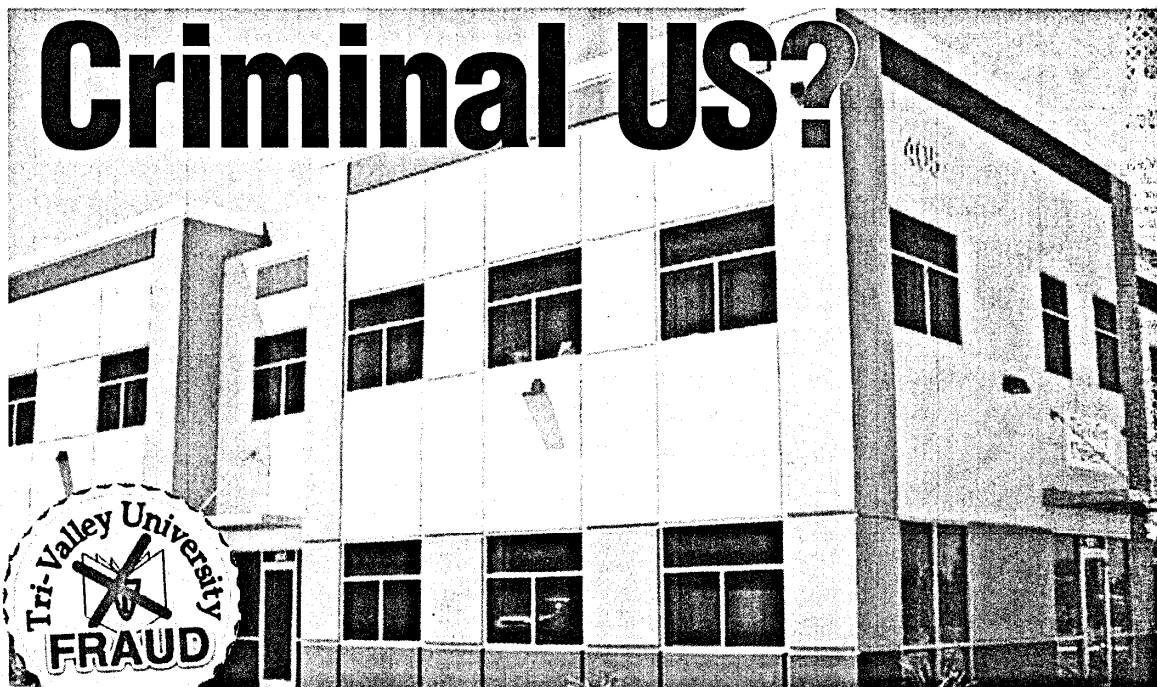
By far the worst plight is of those students who were interrogated and shackled with GPS-fitted anklets, not to mention the "nightmarish experiences" of some subjected to detentions. Eighteen students were forced to wear these anklets. By Wednesday, however, Indian immigration attorney Kalpana V Peddibhotla got the US authorities to remove the radio tags from the anklets of two of these students. She hopes to take some more students next week.

It is another matter that despite the outrage in India, US authorities took the stand that radio-tagging monitors were a better alternative to detention. Unconfirmed reports say at least a dozen Indian students have been detained. And an unspecified number of students have been served "Notice to Appear", the first step in removal or deportation proceedings.

"We have confirmed reports that several students have already been detained and questioned by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and have been placed in deportation proceedings," says Peddibhotla. The Santa Clara-based Peddibhotla is one of the Indian American attorneys tapped by the Telugu Association of North America (TANA) to help the students with legal advice.

It's a little over three weeks since ICE agents raided Tri-Valley's premises in Pleasanton and the luxurious villa and other properties of the woman behind the dubious venture, Susan Xiao-Ping Su. Despite a complaint for forfeiture of her five properties and charges of massive immigration fraud netting her \$4 million, Su appears unfazed. She instead blames ICE and others for the plight of the students, who are just trying to figure out what the future holds for them.

On Wednesday, ICE finally came out with its promised advisory. In the coming days, the hapless students should come to know of the options available to them. A lot of secrecy surrounds the working of ICE. What it has



in store for the students will be individually communicated to them.

But it may not be hunky dory for all. While the decks may perhaps be cleared for many students for applying to other schools and transferring their F-1 visas, one option of leaving the US will stare in the face for quite a few. As ICE itself grimly pointed out in its advisory, "When you call, Student Exchange Visitor Programme (SEVP) will provide you with your options, including the option to depart from the US without an otherwise possibly applicable bar to re-admission in the future." A daunting prospect indeed.

The Indian students enrolled at Tri-Valley fall in at least four different categories. Only a small number have come on visas arranged by the university. Some reports put this number at about 140. A large chunk are other Indians, already living in the US, be they H-1B visa holders who have lost their jobs, or their spouses on H-4 dependent visas. For the latter, Tri-Valley promised a golden opportunity to earn a US degree attending "virtual classes" online from their home and getting a work permit in the process. The fourth category consisted of Indian students who shifted from other universities, attracted by Tri-Valley's low fees, online classes and Curricular Practical Training (CPT), enabling them to work.

The worst sufferers are those who came from India to join Tri-Valley. They don't have much of a fall-back option. If they fail to get admission to a different university, they will have to pack up and go home. And this is not going to be an easy option. The fee structure could also be forbidding. At Tri-Valley, they had to pay a mere



\$2,700 per semester. It could be three to four times the amount in established universities.

Although ICE's court complaint essentially targets Su and the university, it does speak of foreign nationals paying tuition fee in order to illegally acquire student immigration status authorising them to remain in the US. "Since February 2009, Su through TVU has been paid millions of dollars by foreign nationals to illegally obtain student visas that authorise them to remain in the US," the complaint alleges.

Sham it may well be, yet, surprise of surprises, Tri-Valley still appears on ICE's list of schools approved for foreign students. As of February 9 — three weeks after ICE raids and filing of a complaint seeking the school's forfeiture of five properties — Tri-Valley was on the list of 10,271 SEVP-approved universities and colleges for international students. The entry says the school is approved with effect from

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February 17, 2009. That begs the question if it is proper to fault students in faraway India for not having done due research on Tri-Valley before enrolling there. "Check Tri-Valley in the List of SEVP approved schools, released by ICE," says immigration attorney Shah Peerally in a teaser on his website. One of the pro-active attorneys to take up the cause of Tri-Valley students, Peerally has also shot off an open letter to President Barack Obama, taking exception to ICE treating the students as co-conspirators, while in reality they are victims of fraud.

"It is highly unlikely that the majority of these students had any idea they were enrolled in a sham university. Most of the students enrolled at Tri-Valley University simply wanted to improve their prospects in life and ensure themselves a better future by doing so. Unfortunately, all of these students are being treated as potential criminals despite having no intention of defrauding any rules of the US

Government," Peerally says in his missive to Obama.

There is no word from ICE on its enforcement action against Tri-Valley students. Questions to ICE on this score are met with the standard response that because of the ongoing nature of the investigation, no details could be discussed at this point of time. So there is no authoritative information as to how many Indian students have been detained or placed in deportation proceedings.

Indian Ambassador to the US Meera Shankar and officials of the Indian consulate in San Francisco have taken up the problems faced by students with the State Department and ICE, which is a part of the Department of Homeland Security. Following the intervention, ICE director John Morton has assured Shankar that his agency would use "good judgment" and "common sense" while handling the cases.

Indian American associations, mainly Andhra expatriates, have been actively mobilising support for the affected students. TANA president Jayaram Komati drafted Peddibhotla and another immigration attorney, Ashwini Bhakre "to offer free preliminary consultation and a discounted representation fee if you are detained, in path of deportation or out of status".

Immigration and attorney services in the US are an expensive proposition. This is particularly so for those facing deportation proceedings. "TANA has been receiving a lot of calls from concerned students and parents with requests for requesting our support, advice and help," says Komati, but makes the point that every affected person should seek legal advice relating to his or her unique situation.

Medical entrance exam goes biometric to stop imposters

JIPMER entrance today will record fingerprints and photographs of 15,000 candidates

SARITHA RAI
BANGALORE | FEBRUARY 12

A TINY device, no larger than a TV Remote, will check a rampant Indian examination malpractice — impersonation — in the high-stakes JIPMER (Jawaharlal Institute of Post-graduate Medical Education and Research) entrance exams being

held countrywide on Sunday.

The device called AuthenTrac will capture fingerprints and photographs of each of the 15,000 candidates across dozens of exam centres in five cities in real-time, matching it with previously-stored candidate data from the institution. The data will be re-checked at the time of counselling and seat allotment.

The technological innovation

will curb exam impersonators, giving the meritorious a fair shot at securing a coveted spot in the 120 post-graduate medical seats at the Puducherry-based JIPMER, one of the top medical schools in India.

AuthenTrac has been developed and is offered as a service by Bangalore-based testing and skills assessment company MeritTrac, which counts Microsoft, Ac-



centure, ICICI Bank and the governments of Gujarat and Orissa amongst its customers. Its AuthenTrac device is pending a patent.

Even though the number of exam imposters caught is low, the potential for masquerading is as much as 15 percent, says Madan Padaki, CEO of MeritTrac. "The current process to nail impersonation is weak because it relies on easily forge-able signatures and photographs which can be smudgy and grainy," says Padaki, adding, "There is very lit-

tle chance in this system of the impersonators being caught."

The new device has huge ramifications in populous India where the demand-supply gap in education and employment is skewed and high-stakes tests have lifelong consequences. Now, technology could help stave off a challenge that India's institutions have faced for decades.

The potential for masquerading on behalf of candidates is as mind-boggling as the scale of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Med entrance goes biometric

testing itself, says Padaki. Annually, 10 million students take the qualifying exams to win coveted engineering, medical and MBA seats in colleges. Some 20 million applicants take exams to qualify for public sector and bank jobs each year. A further 30 million appear for exams to secure central and state government jobs.

AuthenTrac has already been deployed as a pilot by a leading Indian energy PSU where thousands of candidates took exams for jobs. Padaki says his company will target 5 million candidate authentications in the next three years.

At Sunday's exam, invigilators will take the handheld device—equipped with a fingerprint scanner, cam-

era and barcode—to each candidate. They will capture the left and right ring finger prints as well as take a photograph of each candidate. They will match the signature and photo with the candidate's application data.

The process will be minimally intrusive and take a couple of minutes. The device has time stamps for every authentication action, providing a rich audit trail for later use or for RIT queries, if any. The data is stored in a high-security data center. MeritTrac's solution costs a few hundred rupees per candidate. The captured data can be subsequently used to re-authenticate the candidate at the time of interviews, subsequent exams or, as in the case of JIPMER, seat allocation.

समाज का ऋण लौटाने का समय

अभियान

मोहिनी माथुर

कुछ दिन पहले टीवी चैनल पर खबर आई कि बिहार के एक रिक्शा चलाने वाले का बेटा इंजीनियरिंग के सबसे बड़े कोर्स आईआईटी में दाखिला पाने में सफल हो गया था। टीवी में लड़के के पिता का इंटरव्यू दिन भर आता रहा। स्वाभाविक था कि पूरा परिवार इस उपलब्धि पर बेहद खुश था। परिवार को लग रहा था कि कई दशकों के संघर्ष के बाद उन्हें भी एक खुशनुमा सुबह के दर्शन हुए थे। परिवार के एक सदस्य ने एक पुराने फिल्म गाने- 'ये सुबह कभी तो आएगी' को गुनगुनाकर कहा कि वो हमेशा इस गाने को सुनकर सोचता था कि वो सुबह कब आएगी, क्योंकि उनके जीवन का अंधेरा मिटने का नाम ही नहीं ले रहा था। लेकिन अब लगता था कि उनके जीवन में भी एक नई सुबह आई थी।

आशा का ये सूरज बिहार के कई परिवारों में उजाला लेकर आया। और ये अकारण नहीं हुआ, और न ही अचानक। जैसा अक्सर होता है, समाज के आर्थिक रूप से पिछड़े वर्ग में न तो दिमाग की कमी होती है और न शारीरिक परिश्रम करने की इच्छा की। इस वर्ग को केवल अवसर प्राप्त नहीं होते, और न ये बताने वाले व्यक्ति मिलते हैं जो उन्हें सही रास्ता दिखाएं।

बिहार एक ऐसा राज्य था जो दशकों से दरिद्रता में रहने को अभिशाप था पिछड़ेपन के घटाटोप अंधेरे में युवकों को रोशनी की किरण दिखनी भी मुश्किल थी। हताशा के इस माहौल में भी कुछ युवकों ने हिम्मत नहीं हारी। हर साल जब आईआईटी की प्रवेश परीक्षा होती थी तो हर साल इन छात्रों में कुछ बच्चों को दाखिला मिल जाता था। ये बच्चे जब पास हुए और इनको अच्छी नौकरियां मिल गईं (कुछ युवक विदेशों में भी काम कर रहे हैं) तब इन

युवकों ने समाज व राज्य के प्रति अपना ऋण उतारने के लिए एक ऐसी अनोखी योजना बनाई, जो आने वाले समय में दशकों तक राज्य के कई वंचित परिवारों में खुशी की रोशनी फैलाती रहेगी। आईआईटी प्रशिक्षण इन युवकों ने राज्य की राजधानी पटना में एक ऐसी संस्था बनाई जहां इंजीनियरिंग पढ़ने के इच्छुक बच्चे (बिहार के) वहाँ रहकर प्रवेश परीक्षा की तैयारी कर सकते हैं। इनकी संख्या प्रति वर्ष 30 सीमित की गई है। इस संस्था का नाम भी 'सुरथ' रखा गया है। जो छात्र बिहार के सूदूर क्षेत्रों से आते हैं उनके रहने व पढ़ाई (कोचिंग) का पूरा खर्च संस्था देती है। पटना में इनके रहने के लिए कमरे भी उपलब्ध कराए गए हैं। यदि छात्र प्रवेश परीक्षा में उत्तीर्ण हो जाते हैं तो इंजीनियरिंग की पढ़ाई का पूरा खर्च भी संस्था उठाती है। उनकी शर्त केवल एक है। पढ़ाई पूरी होने के बाद जब उनकी नौकरी लगे, तब उन्हें भी संस्था के खर्च में कुछ योगदान देना पड़ेगा। इस सिद्धांत पर चलते हुए इस संस्था ने कई छात्रों का भविष्य सुधारा है। जिन छात्रों के सपने अभावों के कारण पूरे नहीं हो पाते उनके लिए इस तरह की सुविधा उपलब्ध होना एक बड़ी बात है। भारत में एक बड़ा वर्ग है जिसको यदि आसानी से मदद मिल जाए, तो वह जीवन में बहुत कुछ करने का हौसला रखता है। सरकार की तरफ से भी योजनाएं बनी हुई हैं, लेकिन सरकारी तंत्र के चक्कर में छात्र यदि पड़ जाए तो उसकी पढ़ाई के वर्ष निकल जायेंगे, लेकिन उसे कुछ शायद ही हासिल हो। ये चक्कर इतना हताशापूर्ण होता है कि युवक इसके फेर में पड़ना ही नहीं चाहते।

ऋण उतारने का कर्तव्यबोध एक ऐसी प्रवृत्ति है जिसने समाज को हमेशा से बांधे रखने में अहम भूमिका निभायी है। इस प्रवृत्ति को यदि धर्म का नाम दिया जाए तो भी शायद बहुत गलत नहीं होगा। क्योंकि शायद यही असली धर्म है। जिसके चलते आप उसकी मदद करते हैं जो स्वयं अपने लिए साधन जुटा पाने में असमर्थ है। इस प्रकार की सामाजिक मदद से कई प्रतिभागों को फलने-फूलने का अवसर मिला। इन प्रतिभागों ने आगे चलकर मनुष्य के विकास में अपना भी योगदान दिया है। इतिहास गवाह है कि भारत में साधन संपन्न व्यक्तियों ने कमजोर वर्ग के लिए ऐसे

■ शायद यह अकस्मात ही हुआ होगा, लेकिन पिछले कुछ वर्षों में मुझे विभिन्न आईआईटी संस्थानों से निकले हुए ऐसे युवकों से मिलने का मौका मिला जिन्होंने पहली नौकरी मिलते ही वंचित परिवारों के लिए कार्य करना आरंभ कर दिया। समाज का ऋण उतारने का इससे ज्यादा सम्मानजनक तरीका नहीं हो सकता।

साधन जुटाए कि किसी भी बौद्धिक या रचनात्मक प्रवृत्ति को विकसित होने का पूरा अवसर मिल सके। इसी का नतीजा था कि भारत की प्रतिभागों को उस समय भी किसी का मोहताज नहीं होना पड़ा जब आज के कई विकसित देश भी अज्ञान व धार्मिक जड़ता के घटाटोप से बाहर भी नहीं निकले थे। उस समय के कुछ छात्र नाम शिक्षण संस्थान व विश्वविद्यालय इस बात के गवाह हैं कि समाज में हमेशा ही एक ऐसा वर्ग रहा है जिसने आने वाली पीढ़ियों और कमजोर वर्ग को मदद करने के लिए समुचित प्रबंध किए।

आज भी देश में ऐसी संस्थाएं खड़ी हैं (विश्वविद्यालय भी) जो कुछ लोगों के योगदान से ही बन पाई हैं। ये उस सरकारी तंत्र के बिलकुल विपरीत हैं जिसके चलते हो ये रहा है कि शिक्षा जैसे समाज कल्याण के लिए जो पैसा निश्चित किया भी जाता है उसकी भी लूट खसोट मचती है, और नतीजा वही होता है जो सरकारी शिक्षा संस्थाओं के रूप में सबके सामने हैं। गरीब बच्चों के नाम पर शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में जो भ्रष्टाचार मजाक चल रहा है, उससे इन बच्चों के आत्मसम्मान को हमेशा के लिए कुचलने के अलावा कुछ होना जाना नहीं है। किसी प्रतिभा को विकसित होने के लिए जिस वातावरण की जरूरत होती है सरकार क्या वह माहौल उपलब्ध करा पा रही है? कितने ही युवक तो इन किससों से

इतने हताश हो जाते हैं कि उधर का रुख ही नहीं करते। शायद यह अकस्मात ही हुआ होगा, लेकिन पिछले कुछ वर्षों में मुझे विभिन्न आईआईटी संस्थानों से निकले हुए ऐसे युवकों से मिलने का मौका मिला जिन्होंने पहली नौकरी मिलते ही वंचित परिवारों के लिए कार्य करना आरंभ कर दिया।

समाज का ऋण उतारने का इससे ज्यादा सम्मानजनक तरीका नहीं हो सकता। लेने वाले के सम्मान को इससे चूँकि कोई ठेस नहीं पहुंचती इसलिए वो अगले की मदद के लिए स्वतः ही प्रेरित होता है। यदि भारत में ऊंचे पदों पर बैठे हुए व साधन संपन्न व्यक्ति में ये कर्तव्यबोध जाग्रत हो जाए तो अभावग्रस्त युवक-युवतियों को हताशा के अंधेरे में घुटना नहीं पड़ेगा।

