

Newspaper Clips

February 3, 2011

Hindustan Times, ND 03-Feb-11 P-1

Email fraud dupes JNU Phd of ₹3 lakh

Karan Choudhury

■ Karan.choudhury@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: A student (name withheld) of Jawaharlal Nehru University has been duped of ₹3 lakh in an ingenious email scam. He may well be one of several hundreds across the world.

The fraud started with the student receiving an email from

an organisation calling itself the Global Watch Institute, inviting him to attend two seminars it was holding — one in New York and the other in Madrid — on the same subject: Racism and Human Rights.

“I got the first email on December 17,” said the student. “The group boasted a mailing address on Lexiton Avenue, New York. As my area of study is relat-

ed to the subject they claimed they would discuss, I replied saying I was interested.”

Initially, the fraudsters told the student that his entire trip would be sponsored. But gradually, they began seeking funds from him for some expenses like his hotel booking in Madrid and health insurance, claiming these would all be reimbursed once he got to New York.

“I wire-transferred the amount to them,” the student said. But there was no seminar or foreign trip in store for him. “All the documentation sent was fake,” the student said.

“The modus operandi of these fraudsters was authentic to the core,” a police source said. “The documents they sent looked absolutely genuine.”

» SPAMMED AND SCAMMED, P2

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P-1

IIT penalises professor for sexual harassment

Staff Reporter

MUMBAI: Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, has meted out exemplary punishment to a faculty member found guilty of sexual harassment.

Professor S. K. Gupta of the Centre for Environmental Science and Engineering department was the offender.

“On March 12, 2010, the Board [of Governors] passed an order to impose the penalty of compulsory

retirement with reduction in pension and gratuity by one-third,” said a statement by the premier institution. The Institute had earlier suspended Prof. Gupta after verifying the complaint. “IIT-Bombay received a formal complaint, made by the victim, against Prof. Gupta on January 21, 2009. Before this, the case was informally reported to the Student Counsellor attached to Dean of Student Affairs office.”

Hindustan Times, ND
03-Feb-11

P-2

J N U S C H O L A R D U P E D

Series of fake emails convinced scholar

Karan Choudhury

● karan.choudhury@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: An all-expenses paid trip to the US and Spain to take part in an international seminar on 'Racism and Human Rights' would have looked great on any scholar's curriculum vitae. But little did this scholar from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) know that he would be falling into a well-laid trap and lose his life savings.

THE TRAP

Things changed on December 17, when this scholar got a forwarded email from his friend. The email claimed that a seminar would be organised between December 24 and 29 in New York and January 30 and February 4 in Madrid. "The mail had the logo of Global Watch Institute (GWI, New York). It also said the whole trip would be paid for. There were a lot of grammatical errors in the mail but as it pertained to my thesis I mailed them back," said the scholar.

HOW HE FELL INTO IT

In the first reply to his mail, one Dr Patrick Raymond, the secretary-cum-registrar of GWI claimed that all that he needs to do is book a hotel in Madrid.

GW I SENT A NUMBER OF PAPERS, CLAIMING TO BE FROM THE DEPT OF JUSTICE IN THE US.

"I said the hotel tariff was too high and I could not pay that much. So they then said that they would pay 40% of the tariff and I wire transferred the amount." Again in the second email, Raymond allegedly asked for 1095 euros for health insurance. "I again sent them an email, as I could not pay the amount. But they said that they would reimburse the money as soon as I reach the US. So, I parted with my savings and also asked my parents send me ₹1 lakh. I wire transferred the money to them."

FAKE PAPERS

In a series of emails, GWI sent him a number of papers that claimed to be from the Department of Justice in the US. They even sent a paper that they claimed the victim had to get signed from the Spanish embassy. "I went to the Spanish Embassy and when I asked them, they claimed that no such paper was issued by them ever and the person undersigned was not known to them," he added.

HINDU ND 03/02/2011

P-7

Notices to UGC, AICTE

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday sought the responses of the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and Sikkim Manipal University (SMU) on an allegation that the private varsity was illegally running off-site campuses at various places in the national Capital.

“Issue notice to the respondents [UGC, AICTE and SMU],” said a Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justice Sanjiv Khanna.

The Bench was hearing a petition filed by Bhupendra

Chaturvedi against the private university, alleging that it was not authorised by the UGC to open campuses outside the territorial jurisdiction of Sikkim.

The University has 52 unauthorised study centres in New Delhi alone and the fate of hundreds of students is hanging in balance, senior advocate Arvind Nigam said.

The UGC through its notifications in April and June 2009 had disapproved of the university’s move to open off-site campuses.

The court asked the respondents to file their responses on March 15. — PTI

B-schools are up in arms over AICTE guidelines

KALPANA PATHAK
Mumbai, 2 February

Several management institutes across the country plan legal action to seek a reprieve from recent guidelines issued by the All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

Representatives of at least five B-schools in Delhi and Mumbai told *Business Standard* they are in discussions with others to form a consortium and approach the Bombay or Delhi High Court to either seek an interim injunction or reversal of the AICTE guidelines. Over 200 B-schools are scheduled to meet in Delhi next week to discuss the issue and decide a future course of action.

"We must allow market forces to determine admissions. In the age of liberalisation, we seem to be going backward. There can't be a diktat on ad-

OFF COURSE

- B-schools are in discussions to approach Bombay or Delhi HC
- B-schools oppose a common entrance tests for PGDM
- AICTE has said admissions to PGDM (e) not before Mar 31
- AICTE also says course fees must get state panel approval

missions. We will discuss this matter with other B-schools and take necessary legal steps," said Suresh Ghai, director, KJ Somaiya Institute of Management Studies & Research.

"B-schools have a right to go to court. We will put forth our views, too. These guidelines were not abrupt decisions. If other technical educational institutes, including those for engineering, architecture and hotel management, agree to AICTE's guidelines, why can't B-schools?" asked a senior

AICTE executive.

In December 2010, AICTE issued guidelines on post-graduate diploma in management (PGDM) courses. Of the clauses, B-schools strongly oppose the norm that admission to PGDM courses must be through common entrance tests such as the Common Admission Test (CAT), Management Aptitude Test (MAT) or examinations conducted by state governments.

"By allowing students to give CAT, MAT or state-level exams, we are diluting the quality of students. A proper comparison cannot be made since the level of difficulty differs in each of these exams. Also, we cannot say that a student who secures 60 per cent in CAT, 50 per cent in MAT and 85 per cent in state-level exams are at par," said the director a business management institute run by a Mumbai-based university.

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B-schools are up...

AICTE ALSO directed B-schools not to start admissions to their PGDM (executive) courses before March 31 of any academic year. While some B-schools may agree to this regulation, others say they have already begun the admission process.

"We had finalised CAT admission details with IIMs last year. We cannot reverse that now. We will seek an interim injunction from the court on this issue," said the director of a Mumbai-based B-school with four campuses and over six executive education centres.

AICTE has also said admission to PGDM programmes must be conducted by state governments through a competent authority. B-school directors say if a college does not have a good reputation, it will be unable to fill seats. For instance, last year many institutions that had permission from AICTE to start management programmes without infrastructure, faculty or library but a seat capacity of 240 had to be content with just 60-100 students. This led Maharashtra Directorate of Technical Education to issue a circular stating that colleges could admit students, even without the mandatory scores.

AICTE has also suggested that fees to be charged for PGDM, PGDM executive and PGCM programmes be approved by a committee of respective state governments. B-schools say when PGDBM executive programmes, which are one-year or 15-month programmes, are not recognised by AICTE, where is the need to fix the fee?

B-schools say fee restrictions may impact the quality of infrastructure, remuneration to attract good faculty and, worst of all, may lead to the malaise of capitation fees. "B-schools oppose this regulation as they want to fleece students. How on earth can a farmer's son pay ₹15 lakh for management education? We have brought in these guidelines in everyone's interest," added the senior AICTE official.

There are over there are over 2,400 B-schools in India, of which 1,999 are AICTE approved. Industry experts say around 400 B-schools are unapproved. Together, they have nearly 190,000 seats.

US' remarks on radio tagging disturbing, says Sibal

New Delhi, Feb 2: HRD minister Kapil Sibal on Wednesday termed as "disturbing" the comments of a US diplomat calling ankle monitors tagged on some Indian students in California as "very hip and happening."

"Comments of the US official (on ankle monitors tagged on some Indian students) are disturbing...", Sibal told reporters on the sidelines of an Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) function here.

Juliet Wur, Public Affairs Officer at the US Consulate in Hyderabad, had yesterday said, "Those anklets are used when you have somebody who might flee. And so you give them the choice—would you go to the prison or would you like an anklet. The anklets are very hip and happening. Many of our movie stars caught in drunken driving or else choose the anklets than sitting in orange suit in a prison."

Some of the Indian students at the Tri-Valley University in California, who are in danger of being deported after the college was shut down over alleged visa fraud, are being made to wear ankle bracelets so that they can be tracked. The students are mostly from Andhra Pradesh. Wurr had later apologized for the remarks. "I deeply apologise. Because I would never want to insult or hurt the feelings of any Indian and particularly of young people who are going through a very trying time now with this situation. I forgot about the feelings behind that and I think people responded when I did not mention that," she had said last night.

Asked about steps taken by the Union HRD ministry on the issue, Sibal said, "The external affairs ministry is looking into the matter." Yesterday, he had also appealed the student community to be "careful" in choosing institutes while going abroad to pursue higher studies. *PTI*

HRD said no to IGNOU doctorate for Gen Kapoor

Anubhuti Vishnoi

New Delhi, Feb 2: Former Army chief General Deepak Kapoor, now in the dock over the Adarsh housing scam besides a series of other defence land scams, has been denied an honorary doctorate that a Central government-run university wanted to confer on him.

A Right to Information (RTI) application filed by The Indian Express has revealed that while the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) had submitted a proposal seeking to confer an honorary doctorate on the former Army chief, the HRD ministry in December last year shot down the proposal terming it inappropriate. The move comes even as a series of allegations have been surfacing against General Kapoor over the



past few months questioning his role in the Kandivali land transfer scam, Sukna land scam and most notably in the Adarsh Housing Society scam.

As per established procedures, Central universities have to route their proposals on conferring of honorary doctorates to the HRD Ministry with complete information on the proposed candidates. In case of any foreigner or a significant personality being considered for awarding a doctorate by a gov-

**IGNOU'S PROPOSAL
CAME AFTER VARSITY
SIGNED AN MOU WITH
ARMY, THEN HEADED
BY KAPOOR**

ernment institution, political clearance is also required.

Once cleared by the government, the same proposal is sent to the President to be signed before the varsity is deemed to have been permitted to confer the said doctorate. While the IGNOU Vice-Chancellor had in December 2009 first formulated the proposal when Kapoor was serving as Chief of Staff Committee and Chief of the Army, this was received by the ministry in December last year.

Wiper-free: This windshield cleans itself

Washington: Researchers from Vanderbilt University have found how graphene can be used to create windshields that shed water so effectively that they don't need wipers.

James Dickerson and his colleagues have figured out how to create a freestanding film of graphene oxide and alter its surface roughness so that it either causes water to bead up and run off or causes it to spread out in a thin layer.

"Graphene films are transparent and, because they are made of carbon, they are very inexpensive to make. The technique that we use can be rapidly scaled up to produce it in commercial quantities," Dickerson said. Dickerson and his team

The windshield sheds water so effectively that it doesn't need wipers. It uses a film of graphene oxide and the film's roughness is altered so that water either runs off or spreads out in a thin layer

created graphene using electrophoretic deposition. The "wet" technique combines an electric field within a liquid medium to create nanoparticle films that can be transferred to another surface.

The team found that it could change the manner in which the graphene oxide particles assemble into a film by varying the pH of the liquid medium and the electric voltage used in the process.

One pair of settings lay down the particles in a "rug" arrangement that creates a nearly atomically smooth surface - it causes water to spread out in a thin layer, while the brick surface causes water to bead up and run off.

The find could lead to self-cleaning glasses and clothes to antifogging surfaces to corrosion protection and snow-load protection on buildings. The study is published online by the journal ACSNano. ANI

Times of India ND 03/02/2011 P21

Now, walk through galleries online

Google Ties Up With 17 Museums To Put Up Super High-Resolution Images Of Paintings

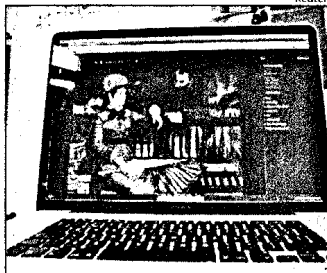
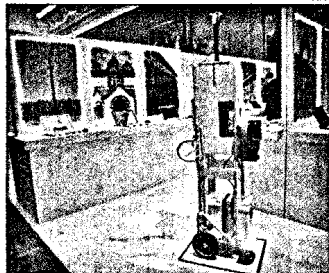
London: Art lovers will be able to stroll through some of the world's most famous galleries at the click of a mouse after Google put the venues online on Tuesday using Street View technology. In a collaboration with 17 leading galleries in nine countries, the US internet giant has taken equipment from the cars it used to map cities and recorded the galleries so they can be enjoyed by anyone with web access.

The Museum of Modern Art in New York, London's National Gallery and the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid are three of the galleries that art aficionados will be able to explore by logging on to www.googleartproject.com.

Art by Vincent van Gogh, James McNeill Whistler and Sandro Botticelli are among more than 1,000 works that have been photographed and "hung" in the virtual galleries.

Visitors will be able to look around more than 350 gallery rooms containing work by more than 450 artists. While many big galleries have already put their work online, Google claims its Art Project takes the experience to a new level. As well as the Street View-style tours, the site offers an application to build up a virtual private art collection, and super high-resolution pictures which allow enthusiasts to look at works in minute detail.

The project represents "a major step forward in how a lot of people are going to interact with these beautiful treasures," said Nelson Mattos, vice pres-



FOR ART'S SAKE: (Clockwise from top) A Tate Britain staffer poses in front of 'The Cholmondeley Ladies' while looking at the digital version of the painting on the Google Art Project website, at the gallery in London; the website is seen on a laptop during its launch; the modified Google Street View camera used for the initiative

ident of engineering at Google. "We hope it will inspire ever more people, wherever they live, to access and explore art," he told journalists at a launch event in the Tate Britain gallery in London, one of the venues involved in the project.

For the website, Google used cameras from their Street View cars and took them inside for the first time, filming with specially designed trolleys in the galleries to create the 360-degree virtual tours. Each of the 17 galleries photographed one super high-resolution image - each image contains around seven billion pixels and took between four and eight hours to capture.

This means visitors can see details in pictures that were previously impossible to view with the naked eye, such as the tiny Latin Couplet in "The Merchant Georg Gisze" by Hans Holbein the Younger, in the Gemaeldegalerie, Berlin. Other works to get the super high-resolution treatment include Van Gogh's "The Starry Night", which is in the Museum of Modern Art, and "In the Conservatory" by Edouard Manet from the Alte Nationalgalerie in Berlin.

The project organisers played down concerns that putting art works online would slash the number of visitors to the museums, and instead said they expected the site to boost attendance. "In our experience, people - once they get a glimpse - want to see the real thing," said Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate. AFP

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AIIMS doc sacked for molesting kid

**Durgesh Nandan Jha &
Indrani Basu | TNN**

New Delhi: A doctor of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences lost his practising licence on Wednesday after he was charged with molesting an eight-year-old boy. This is the first time in the history of AIIMS that a resident doctor

►Nurse's testimony, P 6

has been sacked on charges of sexual misconduct.

The doctor of the neuro-surgery department allegedly molested the boy on January 23, three days after he was operated upon for a brain tumour. The doctor took the boy to the duty room on the pretext of "pre-discharge examination". The boy was to be discharged the following day.

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NCERT thinks lab-in-a-box to teach computers



OUT OF THE BOX: A computer lab has been set up in the shape of a shipping container to at the NCERT office in south Delhi

Neha Pushkarna

New Delhi: Now NCERT has a computer lab that can literally go places. NCERT – National Council for Educational Research and Training – has installed a ‘lab-in-a-box’ on its campus, which is a computer laboratory or a cyber café made in the shape of a shipping container. Developed in collaboration with an IT giant, it can be lifted and transported to rural areas where computers are still to make inroads into school education.

The unique lab-in-a-box was inaugurated by HRD minister Kapil Sibal on Wednesday through video-conferencing from Sanchar Bhawan. The lab-in-a-box, also called ‘Tatkal Kaksha’ (instant classroom) has 20 computers with Internet connectivity, printer and electricity supply. NCERT is now planning to invite children from various government and MCD schools in the city.

“It’s the first prototype in the country. We have kept it on our campus to see how children and other users respond to it. This idea can be later utilized to introduce ICT in the rural areas,” said Professor Vasudha Kamat, joint director, Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET), a unit of NCERT.

innovation will cut down on the time required for rolling out ICT infrastructure in rural schools. Though government is supposed to provide computers to add value to primary education, few schools in villages and remote areas are ready with infrastructure, like a laboratory or even electricity. This lab-cum-box can be run using a generator or on solar power.

“The lab-in-a-box has features like online textbooks, open-source software and touch-screen computers that can provide quality IT education at a much reduced cost along with easy access. It has overcome the challenges of power, space and infrastructure currently faced by schools in India,” Kamat said.

Sibal, too, acknowledged it as an “enormously innovative project”. He said, “What we have here is an excellent example of aligning technology innovation to meet the social and educational challenges we face in the country. It uses a very unique and modular approach that is sustainable and cost-effective.”

Though neither CIET nor NCERT is entrusted with the job of introducing IT facilities in schools, the officials do hope the concerned agencies will utilize the idea of lab-in-a-box in the real situations.

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e-paper

Subrahmanyam spent all his life teaching Indians strategic thought

He Was Of View That Strategic Naivete Was A National Weakness

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: It was 1979. A group of senior bureaucrats were debating the fate of Pakistan president Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Naresh Chandra, former cabinet secretary, recalls his take — he felt Bhutto would be let off. K Subrahmanyam disagreed. “Zia has no choice but to execute him,” he said. And he was right.

Subrahmanyam (“Subbu” to those close to him) died here on Wednesday at the age of 82, after a remarkable life during which he emerged as India’s top strategic guru, wrote dozens of insightful articles for this newspaper, educated a lot of journalists, turned down the Padma award to retain his independence and battled cancer, among other things. He finally succumbed to a heart ailment.

Congress chief Sonia Gandhi termed him the “doyen of India’s strategic and defence studies”. “He served as an inspiration to a new generation of analysts and thinkers. He was an influential commentator and through his numerous writings, helped shape public policy,” she said.

His years as a civil ser-



LESSONS IN STRATEGY: K Subrahmanyam delivering the Field Marshal SHFJ Manekshaw annual lecture in Pune in 2005

vant — he was secretary, defence production, head of the Joint Intelligence Committee, among others — gave him an intimate knowledge of India’s external security matrix. Subrahmanyam never said what you expected him to say. He could silence uninformed rambling with a withering look or a caustic remark that was little short of devastating.

In the next moment though, he could turn around and graciously acknowledge an intellectual hit. Raja Mohan, journalist, who counted Subrahmanyam as his mentor, said, “Subbu never suffered fools, but equally enter-

tained no rancour or malice.”

As consulting editor of TOI, he had a pedagogue’s patience. Colleagues who worked with him recall that before Google, the one-stop information kiosk was Subbu. “We joked about sending him to KBC and sharing the spoils,” said a colleague. “But I will get stuck on film questions,” he would say. “You can always use phone-a-friend to call us,” he was told.

He would happily engage you in discussion even if you held a view that was the polar opposite of his. And it didn’t matter whether you were the NSA or a reporter trying to learn complex strategy.

Subbu was committed to educating Indians about the importance of strategic thought. It was this that prompted him to write in newspapers and lecture at innumerable seminars even when he was quite ill.

Inder Malhotra, journalist, recalls how George Tanham of RAND Corporation came to see Subbu when he was working on a study on Indian strategic thought. Subbu told him, “What can I say about something that doesn’t exist?” It would take a few more years for PM Manmohan Singh to articulate the same complaint in despair.

Subbu thought he was getting somewhere when Singh asked him in 2005 to head a task force on India’s strategic development, whose report is still under wraps. Subbu did it because he believed Indians’ strategic naivete was a national weakness.

Swaminathan Aiyar brought Subrahmanyam into The Economic Times. “Many journalists have trouble coming out with even two column ideas in a week, but Subrahmanyam wanted to write almost every day, so wide was his repertoire and so deep his

enthusiasm. I once asked how he came up with so many ideas. He replied, “It’s easy. I just have to watch CNN or BBC and I get so angry that I have several things to say!”

As the first convener of the newly constituted National Security Advisory Board (NSAB), Subrahmanyam led the effort to formally articulate India’s nuclear doctrine, which was formally accepted by the NDA government. He first articulated India’s discomfort with the global nuclear regime under NPT, which he believed was “nuclear apartheid”.

One of his self-confessed happier moments was the 1998 nuclear tests. But six years later, Subrahmanyam was also the first to endorse a nuclear deal with the US, countering stiff opposition from erstwhile supporters. Some of his most difficult years were during Indira Gandhi’s Emergency. As home secretary, Tamil Nadu (he was shunted off), Subbu refused to obey a number of her draconian orders. But the same Subbu counted December 16, 1971 when Bangladesh was created, as one of Mrs Gandhi’s greatest achievements.

Tumour test for key protein can predict cancer spread

Washington: Researchers have found a way to detect if cancer has spread or if it will recur by testing the tumour for a certain protein, said a study on Tuesday in the journal *Clinical Investigation*.

The discovery could provide a more accurate indication of likely survival than the current method of grading cancer stages from one to four, researchers said. If the test can be developed for wider use, which could still be years away, it may help doctors decide when to aggressively treat tumours to try to prevent them from metastasizing, often fatally, to other parts of the body.

"This biomarker may be useful for many types of cancers," said lead study author Y Peng Loh of the US National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's (NICHD) Section on Cellular Neurobiology. "It is very important to know when a cancer is likely to spread," she said.

"Currently there are no accurate biomarkers that can achieve such predictions and prognosis is determined by staging of the cancer."

The new variant of a protein, carboxypeptidase E (CPE), usually involved with processing of hormones, such as insulin, was discovered by scientists at the US National Institutes of Health and the University of Hong Kong. The protein, CPE-delta N, was found to be present at high levels in metastatic tumour cells in numerous types of cancer, including liver, breast, colon, adrenal and head and neck cancers.

The eight-year study focused on 99 patients with liver cancer, and tested tumour cells and surrounding tissue for levels of CPE delta-N. Researchers were correct 76% of the time when they predicted tumours would not come back. AFP

BRITAIN is likely to impose new restrictions before granting visas to students from India and other non-EU countries as part of Prime Minister David Cameron's promise to reduce immigration and curb visa abuse.

Current rules allow non-EU students to work for two years after the completion of their courses. This is likely to be restricted, as immigration minister Damian Green considers the outcome of a consultation exercise on this issue.

The migration of international students is worth £5 billion to the UK economy annually. Elaborating on the alleged abuse of the student visa system, Green said in a speech on Tuesday night that non-EU students could not be allowed unfettered access to the UK labour market amidst

Britain imposes tougher visa rules for Indian students to 'curb abuse'

growing unemployment in Britain. "The post-study work route was intended to form a bridge between study and skilled work, allowing all international graduates to remain for two years after graduation. Many go into secretarial, sales, customer service and catering roles. At a time when graduate unemployment is at its highest level for 17 years, we need a more targeted approach," Green said. "To allow unfettered access to the jobs market for two years to anyone with a

student visa from abroad is putting an unnecessary extra strain on our own graduates," he added.

Green recalled that in June last year in New Delhi, 35 per cent of student applications verified by the visa section were found to contain forged documents.

However, Green's restrictive measures on the student visa system have raised a welter of protest from the education sector. Professor Edward Acton, vice-chancellor of the University of East Anglia, and a spokesman for Universities UK — a committee of vice-

chancellors and principals of the universities of the UK — said the government's plans amounted to a "hostile act".

Prof. David Wark, of Imperial College London, also warned against plans to weaken the link between study and work. "If we get an opportunity to pick the cream of the crop, we shouldn't pass that up," he said.

Prof. Steve Smith, president of Universities UK, said the government's plans could cause "unintended damage" to the university sector and Britain's international reputation. *PTI*

'Go back or stay & fight it out in US'



By Tejinder Singh
In Washington

THE FIRST choice before the Indian students affected by the immigration scam of Tri-Valley University is clear: go back home voluntarily and apply again.

Those who are not willing to do so can approach the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) to let them join another university. But such requests will be treated on individual case basis, says an official familiar with the investigation.

If not satisfied with the ICE decision, the students can further knock on the doors of the US legal system.

A small percentage of the students are being investigated and, in some extreme cases the US authorities would initiate removal proceedings, the official said.

Hobson's choice for Tri-Valley students

Indian diplomats met hundreds of affected students in Washington DC, New York, Chicago and San Francisco.

However, the presence of these students — in Virginia, Maryland, Illinois and New York — thousands of miles away from the university in Pleasanton, California, itself is the biggest obstacle to an amicable end to their plight.

Indian officials are arguing that any problem between the university and the US authorities should be sorted at that level and the students should not be victimized, but the hope for this outcome is dimming with every passing day.

However, sources in the US administration hinted at just two options: departure to India or long drawn legal battles.

ROAD AHEAD

Indian diplomats say any problem between the Tri-Valley University (left) and the US authorities should be sorted at their level and students should not be victimized (above: tagged with ankle monitors). The students have the options of:

RETURN: Go back to India voluntarily and apply again. Indian diplomats say the students should be allowed to apply to other universities without any negative assessments against them

TRANSFER: Students have the second but difficult option to approach the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency to let them join other universities

FIGHT: If the students are not satisfied with the ICE's decision, they can knock on the doors of the US legal system

One student in Chicago was arrested and released on "self-recognition" bond after fingerprinting but has been asked to appear before an immigration judge. The student has to give attendance at the local law and order office every month till hearing begins.

Another student in Virginia said the lure of no classes and work visa blinded most of them as they ignored the rule that they could work only on the campus for 20 hours a week, that too while attending the classes.

Another student said the "incentives, like a 20 per cent rebate if one brings another stu-

dent, and freedom from attending regular classes" brought many of them through word of mouth — explaining how 90 per cent of them are from India, mostly from Andhra Pradesh.

The fact that the ICE is ready to let go those willing to leave voluntarily is a sign that it recognizes that not everyone is involved, an official said.

Asked to comment on ankle monitors, state department spokesman P.J. Crowley said: "This is the standard procedure for a variety of investigations... It does not necessarily imply guilt or suspicion of criminal activity." Crowley said: "Regarding Tri-

Valley University, we take these allegations of immigration and visa fraud very seriously. These allegations are an excellent example of the universally damaging effects of visa fraud."

He, however, added that the ICE "established a helpline for the Indian students affected by the closure of the university."

The investigation started after "some federal procedures" against the owner of the university brought to light the meteoric increase in the number of students to 1,500 in September 2010 from a meagre 40 in 2009. Another 1,000 have got authorization for the next semester.