

Newspaper Clips

February 6, 2011

Hindustan Times ND 06/02/2011

P-15

DOLLAR DREAMS GO BUST

TRI-VALLEY Many students went to this university to pursue their dreams. Now they find themselves hit by a scam

Yashwant Raj
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Sumana G wasn't content being a housewife. But in the eight year after moving to the US after marriage, she couldn't find anything to do primarily because she was on a dependent visa, prohibited from working.

But no one could stop her from studying — change her visa status as a student and then some day hope to get a job — if she could afford the high tuition fee. For many years she couldn't.

And then she heard of Tri-Valley University from a friend.

It was everything she and her husband had wanted: cheaper than any other university in the US, classes were online so she could stay home; and they were quick to grant visa status and give students permission to work.

It worked for many like Sumana (not her real name; many of the Tri-Valley students interviewed refused to be identified for fear of attracting the attention of the authorities here and let family back home know of their plight).

Intentions are hard to pin in a situation such as this. Tri-Valley was approved by the authorities, and for

those enrolled everything came as a part of the deal — everyone knew; everyone approved and everything was above board.

Students came from India, some transferred from other universities and still some others were like Sumana, dependent-visa spouse finding finally their chance to try their luck here.

But it all came crashing down January 19 morning, when the university was raided by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and the students melted away to wait for a knock on their door.

Over 1,500 students find themselves facing an uncertain future, 95 per cent of them from a single state, Andhra Pradesh.

ICE refused to discuss the case. "Due to the ongoing nature of our investigation into Tri-Valley, we are not able to discuss any details related to the case at this time," said Virginia Rice, an ICE spokesperson.

In a court filing, Tri-Valley University was described as a "sham university ... to facilitate foreign nationals in illegally acquiring student immigration status that authorizes them to remain in the United States."



■ A protest in the Capitol against the detention of Indian students of the Tri-Valley University. The future of more than 1,500 students hangs in the balance

HT PHOTO

VALLEY OF DESPAIR

HOW THEY GOT HERE

■ The first lot came from India straight, some of them allegedly lured to the University by its hired agents in Andhra Pradesh. But none of them admit it, claiming steadfastly their intention was only to study.

■ The second group was of people already in the US enrolled in costlier universities. They transferred to Tri-Valley for their own reasons — lower fee, online classes made it convenient for them to continue where they were and CPT.

■ The third lot was made of Indians already here such as Sumana, but not studying or working. For them Tri-Valley was a cheap and easy opportunity to change their visa status to be able to start earning here some day soon.

WHERE THEY GO FROM HERE

■ Some have already been into detention, though not a large number.

■ Some may be able to continue to stay here according to procedures laid down by ICE enabling them to seek transfer to other universities here.

■ A few of them are likely to be deported, with no chance of early return. And this process can often stretch for long periods.

■ Still others might be able to revert to their earlier status of a dependent.

January, TVU president Susan Su has called the charges a "sham", throwing back at ICE a word it used to describe her institution.

No matter what is the outcome of the case against Tri-Valley, the students have no hope or plans of ever returning to the disgraced university. They are ready to move on when the authorities allow them to.

Past imperfect, future tense

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They didn't trust strangers, didn't answer calls from unfamiliar numbers and were startled by the slightest sound outside the door. And then, they found each other, joined by the same cause: how to survive.

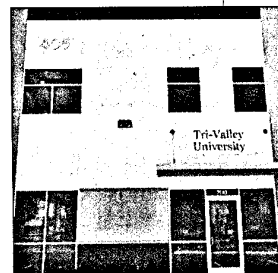
"Does anyone know a good immigration lawyer," went out a plea on an online group formed by students of the disgraced Tri-Valley University, a torrent of offers followed.

"Hi all, if anybody (knows) any lawyer in Maryland please give me details how much they are charging," went another request. Well, replied a fellow TVU student, "you have the best in the land, but she is expensive."

Indian students of the Tri-Valley University in California shut down by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement department on January 20 have formed an online support group to fend for themselves and each other.

They have some support from such organisations as the Telugu Association of North America — most students are from Andhra Pradesh — and the Indian embassy and its consulates but they are largely on their own.

Hindustan Times was allowed into this closed world for a couple of hours one day recently till some members — students of Tri-Valley — decided they didn't want the media meddling around. As a group they don't trust the media.



■ The University office in San Francisco, California

Individually, they court it. Sunil G (not his real name) is one of them. "I didn't even talk to you till today. Well just fy I was live with ... yesterday from USA. I have some shocking news, which can be broadcasted (sic) live. If interested call me on ..."

There are no leaders in this movement. They all want to just survive; some want to do it with prayers, others by leveraging the plight of others they claim to help.

"Has anyone been interviewed by ICE," went another plea. That's their biggest dread: getting a call or a visit from ICE. They know it's an eventuality they can't avoid. They will at some stage or the other speak to ICE agents, over phone or email. But they still dread it. "What did they ask?" It's like another exam for some.



■ A photo from the Tri-Valley University website

IIT-Kgp pushing pricey laptops

ht **EXCLUSIVE**

Charu Sudan Kasturi

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NEW DELHI: The Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, is pressurising faculty to purchase official laptops at 35-50% higher rates than the market price, thus causing a financial loss to the exchequer.

Internal correspondence between faculty and administrators accessed by HT shows that IIT administrators denied faculty the option of purchasing laptops directly, even after they were alerted that the listed rates were vastly exaggerated.

A Dell laptop purchased directly costs ₹79,000, but the same laptop will cost of ₹1,07,120 — a jump of 36% — when bought at institute-listed rate. With as many as 470 faculty members on the rolls, the buy at the exaggerated rates could cost about ₹15 million loss. Teachers at the institute can seek laptops for either their projects or under any of the several government schemes.

But top administrators — including the Dean of the Sponsored Research and Industrial Consultancy (SRIC) and officials in charge of purchase in the computer science department have allegedly ignored requests from faculty to probe

INSTITUTE IS FORCING FACULTY MEMBERS TO PURCHASE LAPTOPS AT 35-50% HIGHER RATES THAN THE MARKET PRICE

the “scam”.

The correspondence shows the IIT administration had asked senior computer science professor Rajeev Kumar to either purchase the laptop under the institute rates, or not purchase it at all. “We are only insisting that institute-determined rates are followed in the purchase. The institute rates are official,

those obtained by individual faculty members are not,” an administrator said.

But he could not explain why the IIT has not bothered to review its rates even after officials were alerted that the rates were inflated.

NOTICE TO IIT REGISTRAR

The Central Information Commission on Saturday issued a show-cause notice to IIT Kharagpur registrar TK Ghoshal after concluding that he lied in denying information under the RTI Act to computer science professor Rajeev Kumar. The CIC has asked Ghoshal to explain why he ought not to be face disciplinary action.

Hindu ND 06/02/2011

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Alcohol too is injurious to health!

Dr. Araveeti Ramayogaiah

First you take a drink, then the drink takes a drink, then the drink takes you.
— Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald.

According to the World Health Organisation, every year about 2.5 million people die from alcohol-related diseases all over the world, accounting for 3.8 per cent of total deaths. Alcohol-

related heart disease, cancer, accidents and suicides contribute to these deaths.

Further, alcohol causes loss of 69.4 million disability adjusted life years (DALYs) annually in the world. (One DALY is “one lost year of healthy life”). Alcohol abuse is more or less a universal problem. There is hardly any effort to discourage the consumption all over the world. Neither are there any statutory warnings.

Alcohol (ethanol) is a drug

Alcoholism is characterised by compulsive swallow despite clear, deleterious social and medical consequences. Every organ/system gets affected.

and may be classified as a sedative, tranquilliser, hypnotic or anaesthetic depending upon the quantity consumed. It is the only drug whose self-induced intoxication is socially acceptable. Consumption of alcohol is legal in

many societies and its abuse is a societal problem. Alcoholism is characterised by compulsive swallow despite clear, deleterious social and medical consequences. Every organ/system of the human body gets affected.

Daily consumption of alcohol in large amounts leads to cardiac problems, viz. arrhythmia (irregular heart beats), cardiomyopathy (enlarged heart), etc. Heavy alcohol consumption can raise the blood pressure, leading to alcohol-induced hypertension.

A progressive illness

Alcoholism is a progressive illness and damages the central nervous system (CNS), resulting in varying degrees of dysfunction — deficit cognitive functioning, dementia, etc. People given to prolonged binge drinking are prone to strokes — a condition of haemorrhage or deficient blood supply to brain.

Alcoholic abuse is also responsible for a variety of psychiatric symptoms, viz. anxiety, depression, confusion, panic disorders, bipolar disorders and narcissism. Chronic alcoholics develop polyneuropathy — a disorder of peripheral nerves.

Chronic, heavy and daily drinking alcoholics develop skeletal myopathy which is irreversible even on practising abstinence.

Alcohol ingestion causes a feeling of early warmth, then increased sweating, then lowered body temperature — hypothermia (cold damage) and, finally, death.

Alcohol is responsible for cancer of the oesophagus and chronic gastritis. Heavy consumers develop chronic pancreatitis.

Due to mal-absorption of food, alcoholics develop frequent diarrhoeal episodes. Ten to 20 per cent of alcoholics develop liver problems, viz. fatty infiltration, hepatitis and cirrhosis. They suffer from jaundice, abdominal pain, edema in different parts

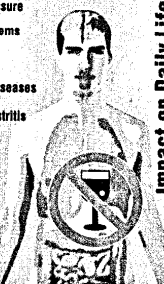
Alcohol Woes

Long-term intake of alcohol in excessive quantities can cause damage to most organs and systems of the human body. It also adversely impacts a person's day-to-day functioning

Impact on Health

- Central Nervous System/Brain Disorders & Psychiatric Symptoms
- Cardiovascular Disease/High Blood Pressure
- Breathing Problems
- Sleep Disorders
- Chronic Liver Diseases
- Pancreatitis/Gastritis
- Sexual/Reproductive Disorders
- Bone and Joint Ailments

BK&I Infographics



Workplace/College

- Inefficiency
- Poor performance
- Frequent absence
- Accidents
- Suspension

Family

- Frequent fights
- Neglect of family duties
- Violence with family members
- Running away from home
- Rejection

Social

- Distance from friends
- Misbehaviour and bad social reputation
- Loss of position and isolation
- Constant borrowing
- Low self-esteem

Legal

- Disobeying rules
- Drunken driving
- Thefts and petty crimes
- Involvement with criminal gangs
- Arrest and court cases

Impact on Daily Life

Kerala, a sinking State

Dr. Philip Umman

Flash floods in Sri Lanka, Australia and Brazil. Biting cold and fog in north India. If there is one thing linking all these in the minds of the doomsdayers, it can be summed up in two words — global warming, preferably in capital letters. Cities and shorelines drowned under water a la “Waterworld” is how it is imagined. So we have the Maldives government holding a Cabinet meet under the sea, while the Nepalese government hikes up the Himalayas. And is Kerala immune?

Trapped between the devil of the ghats, on one side, and the deep blue sea (or should it be muddy grey) on the other, this narrow strip can ignore such a threat only at its peril. But there is an even greater threat looming over this State and it is a clear and present danger. Liquid death

in another form. No not H₂O but C₂H₅OH.

Yes, ethanol aka alcohol aka elixir (of death). There was a time in the 1970s and 1980s when the Gulf oil boom was at its peak and many a young man from the State made his fortune there. Then the efflux of nurses to the U.S. Lush houses sprang up as a result, with the only occupants being the elderly grandpa and grandma. The situation is now similar but because of a sinister reason.

The young men are drowning in alcohol and inviting slow death. They are in hospitals, ravaged with pancreatitis and liver diseases. In the peak of life, they are battling alcohol withdrawal syndromes in de-addiction centres. Meanwhile their parents drown in tears, their wives struggle to keep aloft and children are afraid.

The Grim Reaper is busy and happy and every once in

a while hurries some to a faster death in their two-and four-wheelers. In fact, a day spent in the surgical casualty of any government medical college in the State will reveal the fact that almost 95 per cent of vehicular accidents involve people who are driving after having consumed alcohol in some form or the other.

And these do not happen only in the night. Alcohol-related accidents have no time of the day now, as the crowd throughout the day outside any beverages outlet will show. Alcohol has replaced water and tea as the favourite drink of Keralites. Spine chilling it would have been, but the senses have been numbed by the drink.

The churches in Kerala woke up to the danger some time ago. Cutting across denominations, they have started raising their voices. It is necessary for the Church to join hands with

other organisations like the NSS and the SNDP to fight this evil. The political parties were used to using the drink to keep their people together and ready to fight at every call. It was like the proverbial Sheikh Chilli cutting the branch on which he was sitting.

Responsible consumption

Realisation has dawned on them too, albeit a bit late. But better late than never. It is time for the leaders and thinkers on the Right and the Left to join together to face this situation. Complete prohibition may not be possible or practical but at least responsible consumption should be possible. The time to stand up and act is now; else there will not be many standing.

(The writer is Assistant Professor in Surgery, T.D. Medical College, Alappuzha, Kerala. His email id is: Philip.umman@gmail.com)

B-schools moot alternatives to AICTE policy

BS REPORTER

New Delhi, 5 February

Irked by the recent guidelines issued by All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the directors of various B-schools in the country have come out with a white paper on possible alternatives to AICTE's notifications.

A group of directors, headed by Director General JD Singh of Jaipuria Institute of Management, will put up the paper for discussion at a national convention of B-schools on Monday. The Association of Indian Management Schools (AIMS) and Education Promotion Society of India (EPSI) will hold the convention in which over 200 B-schools will decide the next course of action. The agenda includes moving court to seek an interim injunction or reversal of AICTE guidelines.

The white paper on PGDM programmes will also highlight the contribution and achievements of PGDM institutions in meeting industry requirements and facilitating employability.

Dr H Chaturvedi, alternate president, EPSI, and director, BIMTECH, said, "We have already prepared a white paper wherein we have discussed the issues and given some suggestions to address the problem."

Times of India ND
06/02/2011 P-7

CIC indicts IIT-Kharagpur for giving false info

Akshaya Mukul | TNN

New Delhi: The Central Information Commission on Saturday severely indicted IIT-Kharagpur, and its former public information officer T K Ghosal, for giving false information under the RTI Act about the Joint Entrance Examination-2006.

"It appears to the Commission that false information has been given knowingly by the then PIO T K Ghosal," CIC said. It also said, "The commission is surprised, pained and horrified at this complete falsehood to which the PIO of one of India's leading education institutes has resorted to." Ghosal is now the officiating registrar.

CIC has asked the chairman of the board of governors of IIT-Kharagpur to inquire into the allegations made by appellant Rajeev Kumar, a professor of computer science in the same institute. CIC has also asked the additional superintendent of police, Kharagpur, to provide security to Kumar after making an assessment of the threats to him. "If any physical harm comes to Rajeev Kumar the police will be held responsible for not having performed their duty," the order said.

The commission took strong note of the fact that instead of appearing personally, Ghosal asked law firm Fox Mandal & Associates to represent it in this case. CIC said three people appearing on behalf of Ghosal — A Patra, public information officer, IIT-Kharagpur, Brigadier A K Joshi and Rajan K Sarkar, law officer — "are clueless as to why false information has been provided... Public money and interest could have been better served if Ghosal, who is officiating registrar, had appeared before the commission in this matter."

CIC has issued show-cause notice to Ghosal and asked him to be present in the commission on March 17 with a written submission as to why penalty should not be imposed on him and disciplinary action should not be recommended.

Economic Times ND 06/02/2011 fp-2

Indian Institute of Management (Ahmd) pips ISB to the post in Financial Times global ranking

Rajat Gupta's Indian School of Business, may have slipped a few notches in the last couple of years if the FT ranking for B-schools is correct. Pallavee Dhaundiya Panthry looks at the world where the IIM-A ranks higher than the globally celebrated ISB, Hyderabad and its yet to fructify cousin, the ISB, Mohali

Indian B Schools are now bringing laurels to the country. Unlike earlier, they are being recognised across the globe. This year, for the first time, India has got three schools ranked in the Financial Times, London, B School rankings 2011, namely, IIM Ahmedabad, Indian School of Business Hyderabad and S P Jain Centre of Management, Dubai/Singapore.

The Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) of the Indian School of Business (ISB) has been ranked number 13 in the Global Top MBA rankings 2011. It also recorded the highest "Salary percentage increase" among all the top 100 schools.

Marking a new development, two programmes from Indian institutions have entered the rankings for the first time this year - PGPX of IIM Ahmedabad (at 11) and GMBA of SP Jain Center of Management, Dubai / Singapore (at 68). The increase in the number of Indian, and other Asian B schools in the rankings over the past few years, reflects the rise in prominence of the region.

Many business and management educators feel that this is a positive development and it could help spawn a cluster of high quality management institutions in the region that will attract the best talent from across the world, and create an environment conducive to path-breaking research. Here, ISB takes pride in being a vital catalyst in this trend.

This is the fourth successive year that the ISB has featured in the top 20, reinforcing its reputation as a world class institution. During

this four year period, the ISB's PGP class size grew by over 35 per cent to a current size of 570 students reflecting the institution's commit-

ment to world-class quality and scale.

Announcing the ranking, Ajit Rangnekar, dean, ISB said: "The ISB entered the global rankings in 2008, and with each passing year, has cemented its position among the top 20 schools globally, while simultaneously growing significantly. Our commitment to providing a world-class experience to all our stakeholders remains unwavering, and is reflected in our consistent showing at the rankings. I take this opportunity to thank the entire ISB community, and extended community of

stakeholders across the world, for being part of this success."

Expressing happiness on this development, Rajat Gupta, chairman, ISB said, "The ISB is committed to its vision of grooming leadership for emerging world, and has established new paradigms for management education in India. The ISB's accomplishments in the

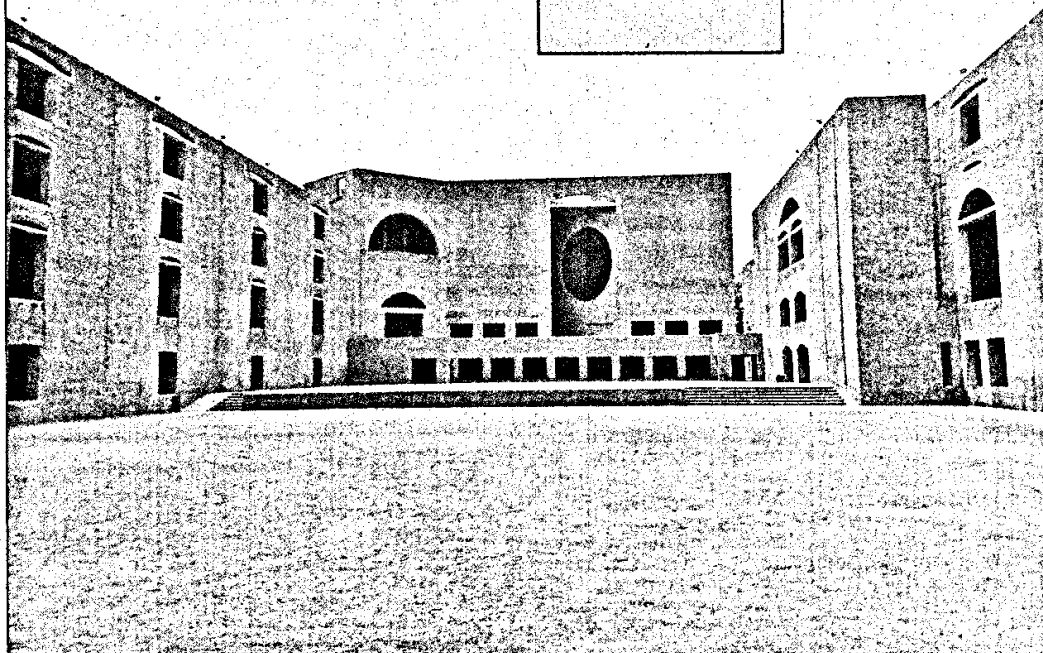
short span of its existence pales in comparison to only one aspect - its potential."

Within 10 years of its inception, ISB boasts to have established itself as a global business school of repute, with a demonstrated record of growth and accomplishment. The school is in the process of setting up its second campus in Mohali, Punjab, which will also have specialist Institutes for promoting research and education in areas critical to India's development. The Mohali campus is slated to be operational from April 2012 onwards this way.

ISB entered the global rankings in 2008, and with each passing year, has cemented its position among the top 20 schools globally, while simultaneously growing

ISB boasts to have established itself as a global business school of repute, with a demonstrated record of growth and accomplishment in all respects

More than 3idiots came out of IIM-A



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We should be ready to pay a price for going green: Montek

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Planning Commission deputy chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia on Saturday urged power companies in India to divert a part of their profits for research on alternative energy sources and called for government guidelines to make this mandatory. In the bargain, if there is a tariff hike, it would have to be lived with, he said.

"Public sector power companies are doing abysmally in this respect. Companies may say to do that we will need to increase tariff, to which my reply is that there is a lot of room in our country for energy pricing because they are way below global rates," Ahluwalia said while addressing the 11th Delhi Sustainable Development Summit organised by The Earth Research Institute. He said this is the practice of energy companies in developed countries but is yet to be adopted here.

Referring to the inflated consumption patterns of developed countries, he said he was "disappointed at what is happening globally" on the climate change front. But sustainable development is not just a policy jargon because "80% of what we need to do for it is anyway things that need to be done for energy security," Ahluwalia said.

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India pulls the plug on yoga as business

Kounteya Sinha | TNN

New Delhi: India is all set to give hot yoga the cold shoulder.

In order to stop self-styled yoga gurus from claiming copyright on ancient "asanas", like Bikram Choudhury's "Hot Yoga" — a set of 26 sequences practised in a heated room — India has completed documenting 1,300 "asanas", which will soon be uploaded on the country's Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), making them public knowledge. Around 250 of these "asanas" have also been made into video clips featuring an expert.

According to the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Union health ministry's depart-



Bikram Choudhury

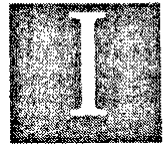
ment of Ayush, "Once the database is up online, patent offices across the world will have a reference point to check on everytime a yoga guru claims patent on an 'asana'."

CSIR's V P Gupta, who created TKDL, told TOI: "All the 26 sequences, part of 'Hot Yoga', have been mentioned in Indian yoga books written thousands of years ago. However, we will not legally challenge Choudhury." At present, anybody teaching "Hot Yoga" has to pay Choudhury franchisee fee because he holds copyright on them.

Nine well-known yoga institutions in India have helped with the documentation. TKDL will have photos and explanation of the postures. Gupta says, "A voice-over will also point out which text mentions the posture."

Wake-up call for India

The plight of US students at Tri-Valley University is one more reason why we need to open up higher education to overseas investment



IT TOOK Juliet Wurr's tasteless comment on radio-tagging of Indian students to turn the heat on the Indian government and make it lodge a strong protest with the US authorities. Her subsequent apology is unlikely to mollify most of us. Nonetheless the furor over her remark might just have a salutary effect. At the very least it will put Indian students more on guard against unscrupulous foreign varsities. And, equally important, it might reduce opposition in the country to opening up higher education to Foreign Direct Investment.

For the 1500 students of Tri-Valley University, California caught unawares (?) by tricksters in the US education sector it will be too late. But it might save countless other gullible students from a similar plight.

In some ways last week's incidents bring to mind what happened in Australia two years ago. There the spate of attacks on Indian students revealed the dirty underbelly of higher education Down Under, where sham universities offering degrees were actually acting as conduits for residency permits and eventual immigration.

The controversy saw a massive clean up act on the part of the Australian government. Rules regarding student visas and permanent residency were modified to stop shady private institutes from offering cheap courses to students with the aim of securing permanent residency. It also resulted in increased awareness among the student community in India as evidenced by the sharp fall in enrollment by Indian students in Australian universities in subsequent years.

But clearly we have not learnt our lesson

yet. Why else would so many students face the prospect of deportation; not to mention the ignominy of being tagged like common criminals after the University was shut down by US federal authorities following investigations that it was a front to help foreign nationals acquire residential status illegally?

Scores of students have been detained. A few have been released on bond, though the high bond amount means many are unable to rustle up the required sum. Many have been fitted with radio-frequency tags to track their movements. Predictably the US action had aroused a great deal of anger in India even before the US official's ham-handed remarks. External affairs minister SM Krishna called it 'unacceptable' even as US authorities defended it

kaleidoscope

MYTHILI BHUSNURMATH

as a legitimate means to track potential illegal immigration and an alternative to confinement during a pending investigation.

But the bottom line is the students are in a soup. They will have to join some other university, and quickly, if they are to maintain their visa status and complete their studies. But fresh admissions to any other university are out of question as the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), the web-based programme to track foreign students in the US is presently not accepting any applications.

Until it is reactivated no university and academic institution can admit any foreign students to their campus. All of which rais-

es the same questions that were raised earlier in the Australian context. Why are Indian students sitting ducks for unscrupulous operators overseas? Part of the reason, undoubtedly, is the lure of settling in these countries and, let us be honest, there is a section that is using this route only to that end. But there are some genuine students too for whom the only incentive is the lack of access to quality education in India and whose only folly is their gullibility.

All the more reason then to expedite passage of the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill 2010! The Bill allowing overseas universities to open campuses in India should go far in filling the yawning gap between demand and supply in higher education. Many believe this Bill will help save an outflow of foreign exchange. The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) estimates that annually about 160,000 students from India study abroad, spending about \$4 billion.

But that is the least of it. More importantly, it will reduce the absurdly intense competition for seats in higher education institutions—30,000 students compete for 9,600 IIT seats—that often compels students to go abroad for education; at times without doing proper due diligence, in the process falling prey to unscrupulous elements overseas. Unfortunately the Bill does seem not seem high on the government's agenda. However Congress general secretary, Rahul Gandhi, supported it strongly at the meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee last week. In the present scheme of things that is the highest possible endorsement! So hopefully, it will get the much-needed traction.

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