

The Telegraph

calcutta, india

| Friday, June 24, 2005 |

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High alert, little alarm

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New Delhi, June 23: Padlocked and patrolled by guards, the snazzy complex that carries the address where Kkaran Bahree claims to work is taking no chances.

"No photographs, please," a guard told **The Telegraph's** photographer outside the Golfview Corporate Tower at Gurgaon, on the outskirts of Delhi. The Gurgaon address figures on the official website of Infinity eSearch, the purported employer of Bahree.

The caretakers of the complex may have turned cautious because of the unwelcome media glare but established Indian business process outsourcing (BPO) companies said there is little cause for alarm yet for the industry.

The companies, however, conceded the incident should not be glossed over, especially since the sting operation comes close on the heels of another scandal in Pune. In April, the industry was rocked by a cyber fraud after a few employees of a Pune-based BPO siphoned money out of US bank accounts.

The latest controversy should serve as a reminder to companies that they need to scale up the level of alertness, several big players said.

"It is a rare episode. But we are not dismissing the incident and will look into it. The BPO company mentioned in the report (Infinity) is not a member of Nasscom, hence we do not have much data on them," Kiran Karnik, the president of the National Association of Software Services Companies, said. "We would extend our expertise and help to all the agencies that may investigate the case."

A senior executive at Wipro Spectramind, a BPO company, echoed Karnik. "It is disturbing news. But serious players in the market are not alarmed as they take all safety measures. The incident will make us more alert," he said.

Others cast doubts on the claims made in the report. Raman Roy, considered a pioneer of BPO service in India, said: "The report claims even the password was made available. It is just not possible. A good security software will neither show the password nor can it be downloaded."

Roy added: "I have no knowledge about the company mentioned. It is strange that major financial companies from the UK would give business to a company that does not seem to have basic security systems in place."

Others said the government should enact a data protection law if it wants to instil confidence among foreign clients. Pawan Duggal, a cyber law expert, said: "The Information Technology Act alone cannot give that confidence. The government should show urgency in making data protection an important part of the act."



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