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NTU in tie-up to boost flow of info on terrorism and crime

Its defence institute teams up with threat analysis group World- Check to offer fellowship

By Khushwant Singh
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The Straits Times

NANYANG Technological University and London-based World-Check yesterday announced a new collaboration in the fight against global terrorism and crime.

The university's Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) is establishing a fellowship to promote the flow of information that could identify potential terrorists, criminals as well as their associates, with the assistance of World-Check.

IDSS' International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) and World-Check both specialise in analysing threats to countries and businesses.

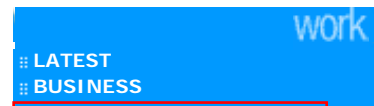
IDSS director Barry Desker said the four-year ICPVTR-World-Check fellowship would be awarded to an expert in the field early next year.

The fellowship winner, together with NTU's School of Computer Engineering, will develop software and systems to enhance the flow of crime- and terror-related information.

World-Check chief executive officer David Leppan said more than 2,000 institutions in 90 countries - including 45 of the world's biggest financial organisations and hundreds of government agencies - rely on World-Check's database.

They turn to the database on individuals and organisations to screen customers, associates, transactions and employees for potential risk.

Mr Leppan added that he was impressed by the work done by IDSS and that it was the first time World-Check had offered to support a research institution.



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Welcoming the new initiative, the head of the IDSS' research centre, Mr Rohan Gunaratna, said: 'Cooperation between public and private agencies is critical in the war on terrorism.'

He pointed out that the close cooperation between the police and banks allowed the identification of the London suicide bombers the very day the bombs went off on July 7 last year.

He said: 'Banks stayed open after closing hours to trace the perpetrators after a fragment of a credit card was found at the blast site.'

He is confident that the new partnership with World-Check will promote the flow of highly relevant information in the global fight against terrorism and crime.

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VITAL PARTNERSHIP

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MR ROHAN GUNARATNA, head of International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research



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