

# With cheque, he returns to DU



Dr A.K. Ganguli waiting with his wife Jean before giving a cheque of 85,000 US Dollars to the Vice-Chancellor. *Newsline photo by RENUKA PURI*

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IT rained money in the IITs after alumni — which included Big Givers Nandan Nilekani of Infosys and US-settled Vinod Gupta — paused to give a thought to their alma mater. Now it's Delhi University's turn. Renowned scientist Dr A.K. Ganguly, settled in the US, made out a cheque of 85,000 US Dollars (around Rs 38 lakh) and handed it over to Vice-Chancellor Prof V.R. Mehta today.

It is the largest-ever donation to the university.

The Jean Ashit Ganguly Educational Fund, named after the doctor's Briton wife, will sustain six fellowships in the B.R. Ambedkar Centre for Bio-Medical Sciences and the Department of Chemistry. According to the scheme, two research scholars will receive Rs 5,000

(fellowship) and Rs 1,500 (HRA) per month in the first year and Rs 5,600 and Rs 1,680 in the second year. They will also receive a yearly book allowance of Rs 5,000. Four post-graduate students will receive Rs 1,500 per month.

"When I first came up with the idea, everyone asked me one question: Why do you want to give away your hard-earned money? I have one answer to that," said Dr Ganguly. "When I was a research scholar at DU, I worried a lot about money. My father was a government employee. I had six brothers and a sister. I want students to concentrate on their research without bothering about finances."

Dr Ganguly was a BSc student in the early 1950s. "All the students came by bus to college then," remembers Dr Ganguly. "I used to board a DTC bus from my house in the Gole Market area. There

weren't many private cars then. There were few students and fewer teachers. We had perfect interaction with the faculty then."

Today, the scientist spent a few hours at the Chemistry Department, looking around the classrooms and laboratories. "The labs were better equipped in the 50s. Of course, the building's the same. A fresh coat of paint, perhaps."

Dr Ganguly joined the Schering Plough Research Institute at Kenilworth, New Jersey, USA in 1968 and rose to be the senior vice-president, chemical research department from where he retired in September this year. Holding 75 patents and having published 151 research papers, Dr Ganguly was recently appointed distinguished research professor of chemistry at Stevens Institute of Technology, New York, while continuing as consultant at Schering-Plough.