

# NOT-SO-FOREIGN

## Overseas Insight For American International Educators

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### Abroad Perspective

Higher-Edge COO Mel Broitman travels to Pakistan four times a year and reports the country is hungry for higher-education opportunities. In the country's capital, government banners and signs promoting the study of science and technology hang in many important street corners.

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has openly criticized his own country for not turning out enough scientists and PhDs, and is active in education reform. "Education is key to Pakistan's progress" says Musharraf.

The Chronicle for Higher Education reported this spring that Pakistan is opening 10 new information-technology institutes. One recently opened in Abbottabad, and similar institutes are being planned for the cities of Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, and Quetta.

Of course, many Pakistani students with enough funds, study abroad. According to IIE's Open Door Report, 6,948 Pakistanis studied in the United States in 2000/01, representing a 13.8% increase from the previous year. However, since the tragic events of September 11, 2001 the numbers are not growing. Due to extended security checks, Pakistanis are experiencing difficulties in successfully obtaining student visas as well as having acute anxiety about travel to, and living in the United States. Mr. Mazhar Saleem Akhtar, the Guidance Counsellor at Aitchison College in Lahore (a famous elite school with a long history of sending students to top U.S. universities) stated that only a handful of approximately 45 students who applied for U.S. visas were able to make their September 2002 classes. A possible second war between the United States and Iraq will not help this situation. ♦

### Travel Update

In the aftermath of the tragic bombing in Bali, Indonesia - Australia has cancelled an education exhibition in Malaysia. Malaysia is one of Australia's most important markets for student recruitment, and the decision to cancel is a very strong message about the current uneasiness. The Associated Press reports that there have been 40 anti-Islamic attacks in Sydney alone since the October 12 blasts, as a backlash against Muslims in Australia continues. New South Wales state police commissioner Ken Moroney called the actions "offensive, ignorant and arrogant." ♦

### Over the Counter

Fraudulent academic documents from India are on the upswing. Recently, New Delhi police uncovered a racket in fake education certificates in Timarpur, Delhi. The alleged perpetrator had unsuccessfully contested the Delhi state assembly elections. He was charging up to Rs 20,000 (over 400 USD) for fake Class 10 and Class 12 certificates. Part of the scheme involved setting up a fake education board: All India Board of Secondary Education, Delhi. Police said the scam operated through a network of agents, spread across north India and other states.

We asked Higher-Edge staffer, Ms. Shipra Roy, of Kolkata to get some local perspective on this report. Shipra reports: According to Mrs. Sudeshna Sengupta, an experienced educator and the Head of Class XI and XII programs at the highly reputed St. Xavier's School, Kolkata, there are many of these fake Board cases. Sengupta urged that registrarial personnel investigate transcripts from Boards which are unheard of as, in most cases, these will turn out to be fictitious. She suggests corroboration with recognized Indian Boards such as the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

Higher-Edge offers verification of Indian high school board exam results, as well as university transcripts, as part of its "Studentscreen" and "Gradscreen" services. For more information, check [www.higher-edge.com/screen.html](http://www.higher-edge.com/screen.html) ♦

### Globe Tipping

Planning a trip to China in 2003? Travelers should make sure their business plans do not overlap with any of the major Chinese holidays.

1-2 January	: New Year's Day Holiday
1-3 February	: Chinese New Year (moveable Holiday)
1-3 May	: International Labor Day
1-3 October	: National Day

\*\* Travelers should always double-check these dates before their departure. \*\*

When a holiday falls in the middle of the week, there is a tendency to take the remaining weekdays off to bridge over to the weekend, thus making it a 9-day holiday.

Source: [www.holidayfestival.com/China.html](http://www.holidayfestival.com/China.html) ♦

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