

Abroad Perspective - English-medium, Philippines

Higher-Edge COO Mel Broitman reports this week from Manila where Philippine President Gloria Arroyo has rolled back thirty years of her country's history and mandated English-language instruction for her nation's elementary and high schools. Considered by many to be a bold step, the new mandate usurps the bilingual policy of the 1972 Constitution. The old policy promoted the growth of Tagalog (along with English) in attempting to establish a single language spoken by the entire nation. But critics of the former policy stated that Filipinos were neither fluent in Tagalog nor English, but rather learning to speak a lopsided version of "Taglish".

"Our economy has been hurting," wrote Congressman Jose R. Guillas in last week's Philippine Star newspaper. "Since our vaunted competence in the use of English no longer exists, foreign entrepreneurs are less attracted to do business in our country." It is expected that this policy shift will have a significant long-term impact on the Philippines serving as both a study abroad location, and as a source of international students proficient in English. •

Over the Counter - False documents in Namibia

Namibia's Ministry of Basic Education says incidents of false matriculation certificates are on the increase as new cases come to light. Cowley van der Merwe, Director of National Examinations and Assessment, issued a warning to institutions to compare certified documents to the original before verifying a candidate's eligibility. "Original certificates have unique security features only recognisable on the original document," he said.

Approximately 30-35 students may be charged with submitting forged academic documents to institutions of higher learning in the country, including the University of Namibia and the Polytechnic of Namibia.

Source: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200302120057.html> •

The Playing Field - Open Afghanistan

Higher-Edge spoke this week with Ms. Arzo Mansury, spokesperson for the Embassy of Afghanistan in Washington, D.C., regarding the state of education in post-Taliban Afghanistan. Ms. Mansury expressed the opinion that American-Afghanistan relations remain strong, and that the U.S. is seen very strongly as the liberator of Afghans from Taliban rule. "Education is the key to reconstruction," says Mansury, as both countries are seen to support strong ties, especially in education. Ms. Mansury reports that both the University of Nebraska and Purdue University have strong links to Afghanistan.

Thomas Gouttierre, Dean of International Studies and Programs, and Director of the Centre for Afghanistan Studies at the University of Nebraska, Omaha, told Higher-Edge that the inclusion of Afghanistan in the university's internationalization programme is to "increase people-to-people connection between the U.S. and Afghanistan". He also said that stronger ties through education is the "most effective way to reduce the misunderstanding of the two worlds". The University of Nebraska has previously hosted thirteen Afghani women on a six week study program in Omaha. •

Globe Tipping - Withdrawing money in Hanoi

It helps to know that there are only about 3 locations in Hanoi at which one can withdraw money from an ATM. You should also check on the limit of cash withdrawals at particular branches, reports Higher-Edge's Jennifer Lim from a recent trip to Hanoi. For example there is a one-time withdrawal limit of 2 million Vietnamese Dong (VCD) or approximately \$200 USD from the ANZ bank that is located on 14 Le Thai To street. This ANZ ATM location is available 24 hours.

Refer to the Visa and Mastercard ATM Locator websites to determine the exact addresses for these locations in Hanoi. •