

THE PLAYING FIELD

Declining Interest From China?

Forty-eight percent of 216 institutions that responded to a recent survey on international students reported a decline in graduate applications from China. American universities experienced an overall decline in international student applications at the graduate level, according to the survey conducted by five educational organizations. At the undergraduate level, only 22% of the respondents reported a decline in Chinese applicants.

According to Ursula Oaks, Director of Press Relations at NAFSA, the Chinese question posed in the February 2004 survey was in response to recent stories about Chinese students experiencing trouble when applying to American universities. Both American (The New York Times) and Chinese (Shanghai Daily) media have reported how heightened security in the US has left Chinese students stranded, waiting for their student visas, and unable to continue their studies.

The Council of Graduate Schools is currently conducting a survey that includes applicants from other countries, as well as fields of study.

Source: "[Fewer International Graduate Students Applying to Study in the United States.](#)" NAFSA Press Release, 25 February 2004.

OVER THE COUNTER

Working With Malaysian Institutions

In the December – January 2004 edition of *EI-Asia*, the bi-monthly publication looked at the evolution of collaborative programs in Malaysia. The special report charts the growth of 'twinning' programs in the early 1980s to 'anchor schools' and 'articulation arrangements' today. The majority of institutions with some form of partnership are collaborating with Australian and British universities.

According to *EI-Asia*, "the education market is intensely competitive and extreme care and vigilance is required – never accept what a local institution tells you at face value because it is highly likely that they are also thinking about 'getting into bed' with a rival."

North American universities looking to partner with Malaysian university-colleges (who are allowed to grant their own degrees) should also be aware of a new concept being considered: "double badging," where degrees are awarded in association with foreign university partners.

Source: "Survival of the Lucrative - The Evolution of Collaborative programs in Malaysia..." *EI-Asia*, December-January 2004.

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ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Private Universities In Nigeria

Earning a university degree in Nigeria can be an arduous task, with student protests, teacher's strikes and cultism on campuses disrupting the normal course of study. One solution was offered by the Nigerian Baptist Convention, who told *This Day* (a Nigerian daily newspaper) that "only private institutions can guarantee graduation of their students at set times." Even so, the National Universities Commission (NUC) has stopped issuing applications to establish private universities. There are currently 8 licensed private universities and 7 awaiting approval, and the NUC believes that only 5 more will suffice in meeting the demands of the Nigerian university system.

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Source: "[Private Varsities, Panacea to Unending Student Strikes.](#)" *This Day*, 3 March 2003; "[NUC Suspends Application for Private Varsities.](#)" *This Day*, 2 March 2003.

GLOBE TIPPING

Cricket & South Asia Travel Tips

The India-Pakistan rivalry in cricket may have adverse affects on travelers in South Asia this March. With India playing a 5-game series in Pakistan for the first time in almost 15 years, expect the region's, and especially India's, attention to be riveted to television screens and radios, especially during the first three dates (March 13, 16 & 19). While businesses, banks and other public services are officially open, you might find them to be not too productive. If in either country during the matches, expect jubilation on the streets with a win.