

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Indian Management Schools Under Threat?

The last six months in India have seen a heated conflict between the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and the Human Resource Development Minister, Dr. Murali Manohar Joshi. At the root of this debate is the question of autonomy: Although the IIMs were established by Acts of Parliament and are technically fully funded by the central government, they have become financially self-sufficient, building a substantial reserve from a wide range of sources. From ordering the IIMs to contribute to an emergency fund, to establishing a Common Admission Test for all business schools in India, Dr. Joshi has been at the forefront of the government's efforts to reign in the Institutes.

The most recent maneuver involved the scaling back of IIM fees from the "exorbitant" (a Joshi term) Rs. 1.5 lakh (\$3,340 USD) to Rs. 30,000 (\$690 USD). Dr. Joshi argues for equal access to quality education, while the IIMs contend that those students admitted to these prestigious institutions can usually secure loans easily (as a degree from any IIM often guarantees a job that pays well). Currently, only two of the six Institutes have refused to comply with the government's directive.

Higher-Edge's "Government Watch" Report, from the March/April edition of *Insight, On-site: India*, will detail the tenuous relationship between the IIMs and the central government, in "The IIM Imbroglio." For more information on ordering, please contact Nick Yeo: nick@higher-edge.com.

OVER THE COUNTER

Sea Turtles

A term used in China these days to describe Chinese students who study overseas is *haigui*, which translates to "sea turtles." The sea turtles are facing increasingly difficult obstacles upon their return to China, the most notable being fewer job opportunities. What is at stake then, is how the Chinese government is responding to the situation, and what is in store for universities that recruit from China.

The government expects to increase the number of students going abroad, through providing increased funding for scholarships (the value ranging between \$5000 and \$7000 USD), to increasing the number of countries that scholarships are available for (from five to ten). At the same time, greater efforts to entice overseas students to return home are also being encouraged.

Sea turtles and government policies are examined in Higher-Edge's upcoming "Government Watch" report from the March/April edition of *Insight, On-site: China*.

Source: "[State helps more students go abroad](#)," *The People's Daily*, 17 February 2004.

THE PLAYING FIELD

International Students In The Media

The headlines from the past week paint a grim picture for international students: "Fewer foreign students spells trouble." "Strict border control bars foreign students." "Tightening the US borders takes a toll on foreign students." While international educators and university administrators are well aware of the difficulties facing international students, it seems that the rest of the country is finally grasping the gravity of the situation. Although there is no one cause agreed upon (reasons range from delayed visas to aggressive recruitment strategies from competitor countries) the articles all agree that the declining numbers of international students will have a detrimental effect in the future.

Increased security measures and the new Student Exchange Visitor and Information System (SEVIS) are commonly cited as causes, to which some international students have responded by refusing to pay certain SEVIS-related fees. According to Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, however, SEVIS has been successful. Speaking at the 2004 Homeland and Global Security Summit he said, "This year, 300,000 actual students entered the country, while almost 300 fraudulent users were stopped and sent home."

The balance between recruiting legitimate foreign students and preventing fraudulent ones is the topic of Higher-Edge's session at this year's NAFSA Conference. "Fighting Back Fraud: Insuring Integrity & Internationalization" will be held on Friday, May 28, from 9:30 to 10:45am.

Source: "[International students refuse to pay new fee](#)," [CNN.com](#), 21 March 2004; "[Remarks by Secretary Tom Ridge at the Center for Homeland Security's 2004 Homeland and Global Security Summit](#)," [Department of Homeland Security](#), 31 March 2004.

GLOBE TIPPING

Upcoming Holidays

With Easter around the corner, here is a list of upcoming holidays to remember if you're traveling abroad:

April 13 – Baisakhi (Punjabi New Year)

April 15 – Songkran (Thai New Year)

April 29 – Buddha Purnima (Day that Buddha was born, attained enlightenment and Nirvana)

May 02 – Mawlid-al-Nabi (Prophet Muhammad's Birthday)

[Earth Calendar](#) is an excellent resource for international holidays and festivals.