

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

China's Foreign Student Population

The latest reports on the numbers of Chinese students studying overseas tell a story of decline, although the reverse is seen with foreign students going to China. The Ministry of Education recently announced that it expects 86,000 foreign students to study in Chinese universities this year, and hopes that by 2008, that number increases to 120,000 students. The Ministry attributes this fast growth to "China's opening and reform;" the bulk of the international students come from Asian countries with strong economic ties to China. South Korea and Japan, as the top two source countries, contribute 35,000 and 16,000 students respectively, while American students only number 7,000.

Will China become the destination of choice for students (a question that Higher-Edge addressed in [Not-So-Foreign 3.07](#))? According to the Director of the International Students Division of the Ministry, "Our priority is the education of the Chinese students, next we hope to create a lively and cosmopolitan cultural environment for them." As is the case for many countries, international education contributes to economic development, and this no doubt plays a role in the Chinese government's policies.

Source: "[China expecting record number of foreign students in 2004](#)," Channel News Asia, 29 September 2004.

THE PLAYING FIELD

French Visas For Indians

For Indian students intending to study in France, applying for a student visa used to mean traveling to New Delhi, Mumbai or Pondicherry (a former French colony) and waiting in line to submit the appropriate documents. Now, students from several states can, through the Internet, schedule an appointment with the Consulate in Mumbai. The eight states eligible for this service, which include Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, represent nearly 35 percent of the population of India. The main purpose of going online (students can also schedule by telephone) was to reduce the logjam of people who would wait in line to apply for visas in the Consulate.

Not only does the website ensure that an Indian student will be able to apply for his visa, it also allows them to track the status of their application. The Consulate promises that passports get processed in two business days. As Higher-Edge has stressed in previous issues of *Not-So-Foreign*, and as various surveys and reports have suggested, the student visa process is an important factor for international students and their decision to study in a particular country.

OVER THE COUNTER

Nigeria: A Culture Of Cheating

Document verification and credential evaluation hit the pages of *The New York Times* last week with an article that detailed the importance of vetting international applications. The issue of fraud is paramount in the international education arena: the integrity of an institution is at risk if it admits students with forged documents and qualifications. Institutions must also be mindful of the growing trend in Nigeria (and many other places) to use the student visa route to enter countries illegally. It is important to note that Nigeria, according to the article, is considered "near the top on anyone's list" of high-risk countries. While forged certificates are an important issue in Nigeria, the culture of cheating is best demonstrated by the high rates of exam fraud.

Over 100,000 students, about 10 percent of the total number of candidates, were suspected of examination malpractice in the May/June 2004 West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). This was an increase from last year's May/June test, where the West African Examination Council, which administers the WASSCE, withheld about 95,000 results. According to the Registrar of the National Examinations Councils (a board that administers similar assessments), private schools, in a bid to bill themselves as having the best students, encourage and even facilitate malpractice during these exams.

Higher-Edge offers a Nigeria-specific document verification service. For more information, please email: screening@higher-edge.com.

Source: "[WAEC Releases Results](#)," *Daily Champion*, 29 September 2004; "[NECO Boss Blames Private School Proprietors for High Rate of Exam Fraud](#)," *Vanguard*, 1 October 2004; "[Vetting Those Foreign College Applications](#)," *The New York Times*, 29 September 2004.

GLOBE TIPPING

Airport-Downtown Travel In Bangkok

When arriving in Bangkok, Thailand, there are two methods of travel from the airport to the downtown center. The most reliable and safest option is the airport-limo; to book a car, simply look for the booths inside the arrival hall. An airport-limo will cost around 500 baht (\$12 USD). A regular meter-taxi, which can be hired from booths outside the terminal, can cost between 250-300 baht, which includes a 50 baht airport pick-up fee. Traffic jams can add to your costs and travel time. Consider taking the express highways which have an additional cost of about 70 baht in tolls (the airport-limo fee includes this extra cost).