

EYE-ON: WEST ASIA

Higher-Edge is pleased to announce our latest addition to our successful Eye-On Media Series. Eye-On: West Asia will deliver the latest West Asian and Gulf education news on a weekly basis.

Eye-On: West Asia will debut early next year.

For more information contact: editor@higher-edge.com

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

"Diploma Mills" In The Philippines

The term "diploma mill" usually conjures up images of fake schools and degrees, but this is not simply the case in The Philippines. For President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, a diploma mill is any institution that graduates students who fail national professional licensure examinations. These exams, administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), allow students to enter fields like medicine, accounting or law. According to the President, the lack of a regulatory board has resulted in schools producing "scores of inept graduates." The only authority that deals with post-secondary education, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), is only involved with "policy coordination" and does not enforce any regulations.

President Arroyo said, "we will close down the schools with track record of students failing the exams." It seems that this effort has already begun, as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reported that 23 nursing institutions were recently closed, where only half of the students wrote the PRC exams.

Source: "[Arroyo orders closure of diploma mills,](#)" *Manila Bulletin*, 19 August 2004; "[Philippines Shuts Down 23 Nursing Schools as Substandard,](#)" *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 9 November 2004.

GLOBE TIPPING

International Calling Codes

Have the number of a colleague in India, but are unsure of the area code? The Quick Reference Phone Book at CountryCallingCodes.com keeps track of every country and area code in the world. This free online tool also allows you to make fast country-to-country searches: if you need to call Islamabad, Pakistan from Paris, it can tell you the exact numbers to dial (00+92+51+ the number). The country-to-country searches also provide the current local time, so users will know whether it is the right time to call, or if they will be interrupting dinner.

Visit: <http://www.countrycallingcodes.com/>

THE PLAYING FIELD

International Education Week: November 15-19, 2004

International Education Week (IEW), from 15-19 November 2004, is being celebrated in the United States through a series of events being held at various institutions and organizations. With over 300 events already planned, international education and its benefits are being recognized, and in particular, student exchanges. In a statement released on 15 October 2004, US Secretary of State Colin Powell believes that exchanges "strengthen bridges of international understanding."

Despite this optimism, a series of reports have been released in the past week that reinforces the concerns of many in the international higher education community. Institutions are enrolling lower numbers of international students, while interest in American education has also suffered. Why enrollment and interest are down is a question that is continually discussed in the higher education community. A question that should also be addressed is whether or not the lower numbers are an indication of future trends, or are simply fluctuations. *Not-So-Foreign* will examine the reports and their findings in next week's issue.

For more information about IEW and the events being planned, visit: <http://exchanges.state.gov/iew/>

OVER THE COUNTER

Examination Malpractice

Two Ghanaian students were recently banned from writing national examinations after it was discovered that the same "student" wrote both tests. In other countries, those caught cheating face expulsion or even criminal charges. The prevalence of cheating, or examination malpractice, can be extremely high in certain countries; often high school leaving tests and university entrance exams are the most afflicted. Intense competition and the social status that post-secondary education can deliver are factors that drive students to cheat.

As punitive measures against cheating vary worldwide, so too do the prevention efforts. China has turned to technology to combat cheaters, with the implementation of a device that blocks cell phone transmissions. Commentators in Nigeria and other West African countries believe that cultivating an environment where the practice of cheating is frowned upon is the key to reduce the number of cases of malpractice. Heightened security and more vigilant administrators are also suggestions that have been considered.