

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Choosing Asia Over Australia?

According to a report by IDP Education Australia, there has been a drop in student enrollment of 3 percent over last year. Academics have indicated that the higher tuition fees are responsible for the decrease in overseas students. One should also consider however, the stiff competition that Australia's \$5 billion (\$3.8 billion USD) education exports market faces from destinations like Singapore.

The island country has revamped its education system and is aggressively promoting education tourism as a product. There is even opportunity to earn foreign degrees, as American and British institutes have set up overseas campuses. With lower living expenses versus Australia (reported in [Not-So-Foreign 3.28](#)), countries like Singapore or Hong Kong become cost-effective alternatives.

Australian institutions, on the other hand, have not been able to improve the academic quality of programmes offered to keep pace with the rising costs and the changing requirements of the times. This has led to reports of resentment within the international student community, and could possibly explain the drop in overseas students from neighboring Asian countries.

Source: "[International students react to higher fees,](#)" *The Australian*, 5 January 2005; "[Curbs on foreign students to hit universities,](#)" *The Age*, 20 December 2004.

GLOBE TIPPING

Indian Airports To Get A Facelift

The Airports Authority of India will be spending a grand sum of Rs 100 crore (\$22.9 million USD) to renovate the airports at New Delhi and Mumbai. On the cards are larger parking bays and aerobridges to accommodate international carriers and greater international passenger handling capability. Both airports are the busiest and handle the maximum number of domestic and international flights.

The proposed facelift will also upgrade existing facilities and bring it to par with international standards. Frequent travelers to India will be greeted with passenger lounges that offer a wide range of amenities. This renovation is part of a national plan to modernize 34 airports by 2008.

THE PLAYING FIELD

Comparing Admissions Standards With Canada

College admissions have never been so easy in Canada. According to the *Ottawa Citizen*, Acadia University, the University of Ottawa and the University of Western Ontario have been admitting Canadian students on the basis of their Grade 11 final marks. Admissions officers at these universities argue that these marks are good indicators of a student's academic potential. Trying to snatch the best and brightest through early admissions may have adverse affects: it could create a breed of complacent students whose academic performance may falter and drop later on at university, or even during their final year of high school.

American institutions are being slightly more selective than their northern neighbors. Without straight A's, getting into a top-notch American college is becoming increasingly difficult. Academics feel that stiff admission criteria motivates students to be sincere with their studies and maintain good grades throughout high school. This trend is common across different disciplines of study – with certain subjects like the sciences and engineering being more competitive than others.

Source: "[Colleges toughen admissions standards,](#)" *The Times*, 16 January 2005; "[Universities race to recruit brightest,](#)" *Ottawa Citizen*, 16 January 2005.

OVER THE COUNTER

New Date To Announce Exam Results

From this year onwards, Class 12 students in India will know by June 10 the results of their board exams. The Indian Supreme Court has directed the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) and other various state boards to comply with this new schedule.

Students from certain state boards have found it very tough to gain admission to the college or university of their choice. Delayed examination results have left students little time to prepare for a host of competitive entrance exams. This new move will also be helpful for those students applying overseas – with results out early, they would be able to complete the admission formalities required by most overseas universities.

Most of the state boards will be following the new timelines for declaring the exam results. In Karnataka, results will be declared by the third week of May, while students from Tamil Nadu can expect a mid-May announcement. West Bengal has the worst reputation when it comes to publishing examination results however, and will need to improve its assessment timelines in order to meet the new deadline.

Source: "[SC: Declare class XII results by June 10,](#)" *The Times of India*, 13 January 2005.