

THE PLAYING FIELD

Bergen Summit to review Bologna Process

This week, ministers responsible for higher education in 40 European countries will meet in the Norwegian town of Bergen on 19 and 20 May, 2005 to review the progress of the Bologna Process. The Process has been signed by 40 European countries and will come into effect in the year 2010. According to the terms of the agreement, the signatories have agreed to revamp their education systems to keep pace with the demands of the twenty-first century workplace.

The new system, similar to a British-North American degree system will have three or four year Bachelor's degrees and one to two year Master's degrees. Countries like Germany and France have had Bachelor's degrees of longer duration, considered higher than the standard three or four year degrees. With a uniform system of education across the European continent, students will be free to move to other countries to pursue higher education.

The Bergen summit will focus on three vital points: quality of university programmes in Europe, standardisation of degrees awarded by the signatory countries, and finally encouraging participating countries to sign the Lisbon Recognition Convention. The Convention has been drawn up by the Council of Europe and UNESCO, and aims to foster an awareness of the relatively high-level qualifications in the European region.

Source: [The Bergen Summit 2005](#)

GLOBE TIPPING

Meningitis outbreak in Delhi

There is an outbreak of meningococcal meningitis in Delhi which is still spreading. The total number of reported cases being treated in the city is 313. Meningococcal Meningitis is an infection of the fluid in a person's spinal cord and the area surrounding the brain. It is caused by the *neisseria meningitis bacteria serotype A* and spreads through droplet infection and close contact. For more information about meningitis, please consult the World Health Organisation (WHO) website, link given below..

[World Health Organization](#)

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Asia-Pacific business schools form association

Leading business schools from eleven countries in the Asia-Pacific region have collaborated to form The Association of Asia-Pacific Business Schools (AAPBS). The AAPBS has been set up along the lines of accrediting agencies such as the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business and the European Foundation for Management Development.

After the AAPBS has been established, another association with representatives from all the three accrediting agencies has been formed. The Global Foundation for Management Education (GFME) will now be the highest accrediting agency in the world.

Source:

["Asia-Pacific B-schools form association," Rediff, May 2, 2005](#)

OVER THE COUNTER

English will not be compulsory in South African schools

With the introduction of the revised Further Education and Training (FET) system, students in South African schools will be allowed to study in any two of the 11 official languages. English will not be a compulsory subject in schools under the new system, which will replace the senior certificate matriculation exams. The current grading system will also be changed to a numerical system (1-6) corresponding to percentages.

While the FET system will serve as an incentive to the Government's plans of promoting the study of indigenous languages at universities, it has been criticized by a section of the academic community for not paying attention to improving the standard of English in schools.

Source:

["English to become optional at school," Daily Dispatch, May 16, 2005](#)