

THE PLAYING FIELD

Saudi Arabia to revamp education system

Saudi Arabia has announced an SR 11.8 billion (\$3.1 billion U.S.) project to revamp its education system to keep pace with the economy and labour market requirements.

Research groups from different Saudi universities are preparing the blueprint for the project, and two workshops are to be held to determine the future path of university education.

The expansion plan is driven by the need to create a higher education structure at par with global standards. Significant attention will be focused on tackling challenges such as higher education access for all, global influence on education principles, ever-increasing funding demands, and labour market needs for highly qualified graduates.

Source: ["Saudi set to develop education system."](#)
[Khaleej Times, Apr. 17, 2007](#)

OVER THE COUNTER

S. Korea excluded from TOEFL exam sites

After facing flak for scrapping the revamped Graduate Record Examination (GRE), the US-based Educational Testing Service (ETS) finds itself in the middle of another debate. Students from South Korea have been barred from applying for the upcoming July session of TOEFL, the English language proficiency test administered by ETS. With ETS' Seoul office unavailable for comment, there is much confusion and anger among test-takers.

Each year, thousands of South Korean students write the TOEFL in order to qualify for overseas study and employment offers from business and government organizations. Last month, ETS cancelled the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores of all 900 students in Korea as an unknown number of students were reported to have seen the test before the exam date on Jan. 27.

Source – ["S. Korea solely excluded from TOEFL exam sites,"](#) [Yonhap News, Apr. 15, 2007](#)

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

International Student Applications to U.S. Graduate Schools Rise

A Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) study reports that graduate applications to U.S. colleges and universities have increased for a second consecutive year. While there has been an 8 per cent rise in applications overall, there has a 17 per cent increase in applications from Chinese students. Applications from students in India, on the other hand, were up 6 per cent as compared to 26 per cent last year. China and India lead the list of countries sending most numbers of graduate students to the U.S.

"This second year of strong overall growth in applications from international students is welcome news," remarks CGS President Debra W. Stewart. "However, it is clear that, even at these rates, it will still take us many years to catch up to where we were before 2001. We are by no means out of the woods yet."

Source: [Council of Graduate Schools](#)

GLOBE TIPPING

Staying healthy during overseas travel

When travelling overseas, it is important to ensure that proper vaccinations are taken before your trip. Depending on your destination, vaccinations for malaria, yellow fever and hepatitis (Types A and B) are also recommended by government organizations. The World Health Organization (WHO) has a useful manual available online detailing recommended vaccinations, protection against insects and other disease vectors, or safety in different environmental settings.

[World Health Organization,](#)
[International Travel and Health Publication](#)