

OVER THE COUNTER

Ireland's Delhi office to process Bangladeshi student visas

Realizing the folly of processing Bangladeshi student visas in Dublin, instead of in Dhaka, the Irish Justice Ministry has ceased the practice, and now requires all Bangladeshi student visas to be processed by its Delhi Visa Office. In recent years Ireland has been seen as an easy mark in Bangladesh for illegal immigration via the student visa route. Ireland had a similar problem in China which was rectified in 2004 (see our newsletter [dated April 2, 2003](#))

In the last few years, private Irish institutions working with unscrupulous education agencies in Dhaka, have been sending thousands of Bangladeshis to Ireland. But as the Irish Visa office in Delhi tells Higher-Edge, recently when officials in Dublin decided to check on Bangladeshi student visa files, they found out the majority were stuffed with fake documents. Thus, the new student visa process for Bangladesh, will take place in the capital Delhi, of neighbouring India. The Irish Visa Office in Delhi, already very busy with Indian applicants, admits it does not have adequate resources to properly service Bangladesh and is likely to take months to verify applications and documents from Dhaka. The new due diligence, slow, but potentially accurate, will by itself curtail the enthusiasm in Bangladesh for the fraudulent student visa pathway to Ireland.

GLOBE TIPPING

International Calling Codes

Have the number of a colleague in Ecuador, but are unsure of the area code? The Quick Reference Phone Book 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 Cape Town from Paris, it can tell you the exact numbers to dial (00+27+21+ the local number). The country-to-country searches also provide the current local time, so users will know whether it is the right time to call.

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

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Indian media for sale?

The front page of the May 2nd edition of the *Times of India Mumbai* (Bombay) was a snapshot of how expensive promotion is in India these days. Just under the masthead of the most influential newspaper in India, the most dominant article of the day was about investor immigration to Canada and how it can benefit education for Indian families. Spun as editorial front page news and referring to a Canadian and Indian company promoting the investor pathway to Canada as significantly better than for competing countries, such "articles" are typically a result of large fees paid to the newspaper. Industry insiders in Mumbai tell Higher-Edge that such coverage costs between \$50,000 U.S. to \$100,000 U.S. It's become commonplace in India to pay off media to tell stories which look like news, but are in reality, paid advertisements.

THE PLAYING FIELD

Malaysia aims to woo 100,000 foreign students by 2010

The Government of Malaysia is on a drive to increase the number of foreign students in the country from 50,000 to 100,000 by 2010. The government, public and private universities have already started promotional campaigns to attract students from neighbouring countries. China, Indonesia, West Asia and African nations such as Kenya and Botswana are on the list of countries being targeted for marketing campaigns. The Malaysian Government is also planning to sign a memorandum of understanding for bilateral collaborations in vocational education and faculty exchange with Namibia.

Source: "Malaysia aims to woo 100000 foreign students by 2010," *New Straits Times Online*, Apr. 22, 2007