

THE PLAYING FIELD

Russian varsities targeting West-bound Indian students

Russia is planning to promote its “world class” business schools to Indian students keen on studying in the United States. Inspired by the education exhibitions conducted by other leading education exporters such as the United States, United Kingdom and Australia, Russia’s Federal Agency of Education is planning a youth festival starting in April at New Delhi where university officials will showcase education in Russia.

In recent years, Russia has become a popular overseas education destination for Indian students interested in studying medicine. While previously language was a barrier, many Russian universities are now offering courses in English, especially in fields such as medicine. Other factors such as lower fees than in other developed countries and fewer qualifying exams have made Russia a viable education destination. According to ThaiIndian.com, Indian students account for nearly 10 percent of the near 100,000 foreign students in Russia.

Source: [“Russian varsities targeting West-bound Indian students,”](#) [Thaindian News](#), February 19, 2008

GLOBE TIPPING

Travel during Holi

The Indian festival of colours, Holi, will be held on March 22 this year. Travellers to North India and many cities in West and East India such as Mumbai and Kolkata be warned! Enthusiastic locals have a tendency to spray colour and water on unsuspecting passerbys so it is best to put away your fine clothes if stepping outside your hotel. Also, it is not uncommon for taxi drivers to consume *bhang*, a drink containing cannabis that can leave them too intoxicated to drive safely. So be cautious about using taxis.

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

British academic warns of ‘risky’ foreign recruiting

A senior British academic has cautioned universities that rely on a large intake of foreign students from one country. Coventry University’s ProVice-Chancellor for Enterprise, David Gillingham has said: “Universities are more aggressive in recruiting international students, but some are taking fairly high risks (by) taking large numbers from single countries. I know there are institutions with close to 1,000 students from China, and such a strategy is highly risky. You need only a minor crisis of some sort and the market’s gone; disease, a change of government policy in China - all sorts of things can happen overnight.”

According to *Times Higher Education*, seven British universities, such as the universities of Warwick, Manchester and Loughborough, have more than 1,000 Chinese students. The top ten recruiters of Chinese students account for 12,000 of the 50,700 studying in the U.K. - 24 per cent of the total.

Source: [“Coventry official warns of ‘risky’ foreign recruiting,”](#) [Times Higher Education](#), January 24, 2008

OVER THE COUNTER

Bahrain invites foreign universities to set up shop

Bahrain is revamping its education sector to reach global standards. Like many of its neighbours in the Gulf region, the government of Bahrain is looking at partnering with foreign universities to help achieve this goal. Outlining reforms plans, the Deputy Prime Minister and Education Reform Project Board chairman Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifan stated that “international universities of proven track record are being encouraged to set up their base in Bahrain.” According to Shaikh Mohammed, “Bahrain is also learning from the experience of other countries which have implemented educational reforms successfully. We are forging strong links with the private sector to offer a world class education in Bahrain.”

Source: [“Education system revamp underway,”](#) [Gulf Daily News](#), February 7, 2008