

OVERSEAS, OVERWHELMED

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Abroad Perspective

This week our West Bengal Manager, Shipra Roy, provides us with insight on the different Education Boards in this Indian state.

In West Bengal students qualify under the following Boards:

The Higher Secondary Board caters to both English and Bengali (the mother tongue in West Bengal) mediums of instruction. This Board grants a Madhyamik certificate for Grade 10 and a Higher Secondary certificate for Grade 12 completion.

The Indian School Certificate Board (ISC), under which the medium of instruction is compulsorily English, covers all of India and grants the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) qualification for Grade 10, and the Indian School Certificate for Grade 12 completion.

Finally, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is also a country-wide Board administered under an English medium of instruction. ♦

Let's Go Canada!

Indian students interested in study in Canada can now purchase comprehensive counselling services from the Canadian Education Centre.

The CEC has entered an arrangement with an Indian education agency which offers the service for 9,000 Indian rupees (approximately 300 Canadian dollars). The CEC hopes the revenues will assist in efforts to recover its costs.

In addition to this, Indian students who contact the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi to inquire about visa applications are being directed to contact the CEC. Students must then pay 1,500 Indian rupees (about 50 Canadian dollars) to avail themselves of answers to their questions from the CEC.

This procedure is aimed at assisting the Visa Office to lighten an increasingly growing workload, and to improve the quality of documentation of applications for speedier processing. ♦

Over the Counter

Two dozen Australian universities are currently on an education fair circuit in India. The schools are working hard to recover Australia's market presence after a recent sharp rise in visa rejections from India.

Australian immigration officers have criticized its country's institutions for admitting South Asian students who never attend classes. In what appears to be a compromise between the Visa Office and Australia's universities, all Indian students must now submit an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) certificate. This English proficiency test is required, regardless if the student comes from outstanding English language schools (there are many in India, where English language skills rival and surpass North America ones).

The cost of writing the IELTS test is 5,000 rupees (165 CAD) and is offered exclusively in India by IDP, the prolific Australian national recruitment service. ♦

Globe Tipping

Here are a few helpful resources on safe travelling for women who are exploring international markets:

www.infoexport.gc.ca/businesswomen/exportlibrary/femaletravel-e.asp

This site offers comprehensive information - from lessening culture shock to safety tips - adapted from the publication *Her Own Way: Advice for Women Travellers*.

www.voyage.gc.ca/destinations/menu_e.htm

Travel reports are given for countries, and countries that have travel warnings in effect are listed. The site's 'BEWARE' section pinpoints destinations with high crime or political instability. Travel reports providing information on safety and security conditions, health issues, and entry requirements for over 220 travel destinations can also be accessed:

Tel.: 1 800 267 6788 Fax: 1 800 575 2500

This information is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

www.travelhealth.gc.ca

Health Canada offers the Travel Medicine Program, which is responsible for providing information specifically designed for Canadians planning to travel outside Canada. ♦

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