

OVERSEAS, OVERWHELMED

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Abroad Perspective

Higher-Edge COO Mel Broitman travels to Pakistan every few months (he's there again in mid-May) and reports the country is hungry for higher-education opportunities. In the country's capital, government banners and signs promoting the study of science and technology hang in many important street corners.

In May of last year Mel met with Dr. Atta-Ur-Rahman, Pakistan's Minister for Science and Technology. Dr. Rahman told Mel he will personally attend to any proposal for education collaborations from Canada. Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has openly criticized his own country for not turning out enough scientists and PhDs, and is active in education reform. "Education is key to Pakistan's progress" says Musharraf.

The Chronicle Of Higher Education (April 5, 2002) reports that Pakistan is opening 10 new information-technology institutes. One recently opened in Abbottabad, and similar institutes are being planned for the cities of Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, and Quetta. Of course, many Pakistani students with enough funds, study abroad. These days, concerns with travel to the U.S. have more families exploring opportunities in Canada. ♦

Let's Go Canada!

With Asian students comprising over one-half of all international enrollments in the United States, there is tremendous interest within the Asian media concerning the new U.S. visa restrictions. Last week, newspapers from Beijing to Jakarta to Delhi, were full of headlines warning of new difficulties in travelling to the States.

The usual anxiety associated with applying for a U.S. student visa has intensified to an unprecedented high. There is also a palpable fear among students and their families to have one's passport stamped with the U.S. rejection mark. The two countries trailing the U.S. for most foreign students, the U.K. and Australia, are both attempting to capitalize on this opportunity.

Higher-Edge staff in Delhi recently attended the Aussie Fair. Seventeen hundred students came and were able to apply directly and get admission to 23 universities. IDP Education Australia's country head for India, Mr. Henry Ledlie, told Higher-Edge that he is working hard to keep up with the British promotion. Recent advertising in education supplements in the *Times of India* and *Hindustan Times* have been packed with promotions for Australia and the U.K. Canada continues to remain a relatively unknown study abroad option, as ads for Canadian institutions are rarely found in the large education sections of Asian newspapers. ♦

Over the Counter

Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia met recently at a Commonwealth conference and held a one-on-one meeting. Mrs. Zia wanted to talk about education and told Mr. Chrétien she wants more Bangladeshis studying in Canada.

Mrs. Zia also asked if the current student visa process in Dhaka can move applications along any quicker (there has been a significant growth in student visa applications to Canada, both bona fide and fraudulent). Canada is sending two Temporary Duty officers to its High Commission in Dhaka this summer to help handle the growing number of applications.

Higher-Edge has had its own office and staff in Dhaka since 1997. It performs student screening and verification and assists institutions in carrying out transfer credit assessment.

Since the Higher-Edge office opened 5 years ago the number of Bangladeshis studying in Canada has increased 10 fold. ♦

Globe Tipping

Landing at Hong Kong International Airport? No need for expensive taxis to the main areas of Central or Kowloon, you can take the Airport Express train (http://www.mtr.com.hk/eng/train/ael_index.html).

After you have passed through customs/immigration, collected your bags and exited into the "Meeters and Greeters Hall", look for a large Airport Express booth on your right, close to the Hong Kong Tourist Association booth. If you know you will use the Airport Express train to return to the airport, you can save by buying a round-trip ticket. You can use credit cards to pay at the Airport Express booth. There are also ATM bank machines nearby, which accept most Canadian major banks' cards. The Airport Express train runs from 5:50am to 1:15am, and takes 23 minutes from the Airport to Central, or 19 minutes to Kowloon. You can transfer free to the MTR subway.

There is also a free shuttle bus to major hotels, available on fixed routes from Kowloon and Central stations (also available to the airport). Due to current security concerns, downtown check-in for many North American airlines at the Central and Kowloon stations has been temporarily suspended. You may check with your airline to confirm before you leave Hong Kong, but it is most likely that for the time being you will have to check in at the airport. ♦

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