

OVERSEAS, OVERWHELMED

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Abroad Perspective

Canada's Embassy in Egypt is getting into the education game in a big way. Recent surveys conclude that this mission has been among the most successful in promoting Canadian interests abroad. Now the Embassy plans to extend itself directly to assist Canadian universities and colleges. A Canadian Education Fair will be held from October 12 - 14, 2002, at the Nile Hilton Hotel in Cairo. The objectives of the fair are the recruitment of Egyptian students and the creation of partnerships between Egyptian and Canadian educational institutions.

Egypt, with its central position in the region and large population (68M) offers an excellent opportunity for both English language and French language Canadian institutions. An increasing number of Egyptian students and educational institutions are showing a high interest in Canadian education.

A report on the Egyptian education market is available in both English and French: www.infoexport.gc.ca/ie-en/DisplayDocument.jsp?did=7883 & www.infoexport.gc.ca/ie-fr/DisplayDocument.jsp?did=7883.

For more details contact: jean-philippe.tachdjian@dfait-maeci.gc.ca at the Canadian Embassy in Cairo. ♦

Let's Go Canada!

Japan wants many more international students and is addressing the language concerns regarding study in that country.

The Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has recently introduced a new examination to assess Japanese language ability. In order to make the exam more accessible, students can take the test in eight locations in Japan and 10 locations outside the country - mostly in Asia, where 90 per cent of Japan's foreign students come from.

Japan's target is to increase the number of international students studying in the country to 100,000 within the next 10 years. That goal appears attainable, as the number of foreign students studying at the post-secondary level in Japan in 2001 totalled 78,812, an increase of 23 percent from the previous year.

In contrast, Canada's post-secondary international enrollment increased by only 10.3% (to 58,845) from 1993-94 to 1999-2000.

Sources: www.hothousemedia.com/etm/etmbackissues/apriletm02/apret02news.htm and *National Report on International Students in Canada 2000/2001*, CBIE. ♦

Over the Counter

Last week O&O highlighted the growth of the IELTS English language test. The increase of tests written (50,000 in 1995 and 350,000 this year) have been accompanied by concerns regarding the integrity of the results.

Not surprisingly, with its popularity, IELTS fraud has shot way up. As an example, Tim Fowler, Director of Victoria International (Victoria University) in New Zealand told Higher-Edge of regular advertisements in Chinese newspapers in Wellington to buy fake IELTS certificates for 3,000 NZ dollars. Fake IELTS is also commonly found in South Asia. In response to this type of abuse, IELTS has come up with new certificate paper with more security features, and has committed to placing the photographs of the test-taker on the certificate itself (similar to TOEFL). As well, IELTS expects to be on-line in the near future with a verification system to allow institutions to check test scores.

A more pressing problem is that in order to grow the IELTS business, distribution of the tests has been privately contracted, which challenges the historic and perceived confidentiality of a process more commonly found inside a British Council. In Pakistan, Higher-Edge has learned of students being asked to pay up to 500 dollars for a desired result from a private IELTS test provider. Higher-Edge has also been informed that some Visa Officers prefer IELTS tests taken at the British Council rather than at private providers.

In response, Ann-Marie Cooper, the Manager of IELTS Australia (a subsidiary of IDP Education Australia who market IELTS in Asia) says that IELTS is aware of the allegations in Pakistan and says that spot-check audits have failed to reveal any abuses. ♦

Globe Tipping

The Canadian Institute of Travel Counsellors (CITC) warns travellers they should not feel overly secure with having all their valuables tucked away in their waist pouch. The reality is that clever scam artists and thieves often carry razor blades and scissors for the purpose of slashing tourists' purse strap or waist pouch, while they are being distracted.

CITC recommends having a plan of action when travelling in unfamiliar areas. One's passport can be secured in a pocket with a safety pin, and cash should be carried and stored in different pockets and locations. Finally, the hotel safe should be used to store all those valuables that are not needed for the day.

Source: <http://www.citc.ca/consumer-awareness.html#track> ♦

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