

OVERSEAS OVERWHELMED

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Abroad Perspective - Nigerian government involvement in higher education

Due to government-imposed fuel cost increases, Nigeria has recently experienced nationwide strikes and other disruptions to life in a country all too accustomed to strife. Of the effects of the strife, Nigerian education has suffered tremendously. This week's July 10, 2003 issue of The Vanguard (Lagos), examines the deterioration of the Nigerian education system, including its post-secondary level. Heavy-handed government involvement since the 1970's is postulated to be root cause, while the absence of initiative and leadership from the parent community is seen to perpetuate the poor conditions in the country's schools.

Our Dani Zaretsky will be in Nigeria next week to meet with leading educators and education institutions, and to examine more closely the prospects and pitfalls of internationalization work in Nigeria for universities around the world. Look to this space for in-depth reporting in the weeks to come.

Source: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200307100705.html> •

Let's Go Canada - Education Fair in Santiago

The latest figures from the Canadian Embassy in Santiago indicate that there is a growing appetite among Chilean students for study abroad opportunities. Between January to September in the year 2000, 127 student authorizations were granted by the Embassy - this represents a 40% increase as compared to the same period in the previous year.

Further, "most students who are authorised to study in Canada participate in ESL or other programs that range from 2-6 months in duration", says Kristen Mallory, a spokesperson for the Embassy. As such, it is difficult to arrive at an accurate illustration of the additional number of Chilean students who enter Canada on tourist visas.

The Canadian Education Fair, to be held from August 29-30, will focus on ESL/FSL recruitment, as well as recruitment for programs such as Information and Communications Technology (ICT), agriculture, multi-media, environmental science, hospitality, and distance learning. For further details, contact Magdalena Larraguibel or Tracy Diehl at santiago.commerce@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, or visit www.santiago.gc.ca •

Over the Counter - Fake IELTS sitters

Due to the high-stakes nature of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) language test, several students sitting in New Zealand test centres have been found using fake IDs, or paying as much as \$2,000 NZD for a replacement test taker. Cambridge Examinations and IELTS International deny that this is a widespread problem, and that several measures have been implemented to combat any cheating. Beryl Meiron, Manager, North America, elaborates on the group's measures against fraud: "candidate identity is checked throughout the testing day and a thorough training program has been implemented throughout the global network of test centers to ensure staff are skilled at detecting fraudulent IDs, substitute candidates, and other forms of cheating."

Receiving institutions are also kept up-to-date on the security issues, and the organization is continually doing more to thwart those attempting to "beat the system". Ms. Meiron also told Higher-Edge, "more security features have been introduced including a special laser-guarded paper, and the development of a secure, on-line verification of results for receiving institutions to check the validity of IELTS scores and candidate photographs directly".

Source: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,2471534a7694,00.html> •

Globe Tipping - SARS coverage in China

Foreign students and teachers in China are required to purchase medical insurance with SARS coverage beginning this September. Foreigners are required to purchase at least 400,000 RMB worth of coverage, which can be obtained either in China or overseas. Approximately 24 Chinese companies have been approved to offer SARS-related products and coverage. Chinese universities and the Ministry of Education have assisted foreign students in obtaining SARS coverage with the Ping'an Insurance Company.

Sources: http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200307/04/eng20030704_119447.shtml, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2003-06/09/content_911067.htm, and <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/SARS/65576.htm> •

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