

OVERSEAS OVERWHELMED

HIGHER
EDGE

Issue 6.01
June 1, 2005

A Bulletin for
Canadian International
Education Professionals

LET'S GO CANADA

70 per cent of Singapore's private schools may close shop

Predicting a major shake up in the country's private education sector, Singapore's Association of Private Schools (APS) has indicated that nearly 70 per cent of Singapore's private colleges and schools may be forced to close shop over the next two years. There are currently over 400 registered private schools in Singapore. Declining student enrollment rates, changes in industry regulations and competition from foreign schools in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia are factors responsible for this predicament. With China revamping its higher education industry, there has been a significant drop in the number of students from China enrolling in Singapore schools. Some institutions have reported a 60 per cent decline in Chinese students over the last two years. Also, foreign schools from countries such as the U.S. and Australia have set up offshore campuses in Singapore and are vying for the same students.

The government has also introduced accreditation schemes to monitor private education providers. Private schools have been encouraged to adopt CASE (Consumer Association of Singapore) Trust for Education and SHEAC (Singapore Higher Education Academic Council) accreditation. Schools can also receive Singapore Quality Class Private Education Organization (SQC-PEO) accreditation. Schools accredited under the SQC-PEO scheme get more privileges for their students - such as fast-lane for visa processing, waiver of security deposits and extended visas upon completion of studies. Private education providers without the accreditation have complained of a decline in enrolments at their institutions.

Source: ["70% of private schools could close over next 2 years in a massive shake-up: Association."](#)
[Channel News Asia, May 14, 2005](#)

GLOBE TIPPING

Spice Jet launches flights in India

Spice Jet, a private airliner owned by US-based Royal Holdings Limited, will be launching low-cost, no-frills flights between major cities in India. Prices will be as low as INR 449 (CDN \$ 13) for a Mumbai-Ahmedabad flight, INR 669 (CDN \$ 19) for a Delhi-Ahmedabad flight and INR 749 (CDN \$ 21.4) for a Bangalore-Ahmedabad flight. The service will commence by the end of May. Seats are to be assigned to the passengers at airport check-in counters, and customers can make flight reservations on the internet.

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Call for fairer visa fees in Britain

At a conference organized by UK Visas, the immigration arm of the British Government, Robert Boucher, the vice-chancellor of the University of Sheffield and chairman of Universities UK's international strategy group called for "an efficient, effective and fair immigration service" that could be delivered through a partnership between education institutions and the Government.

The British Government's recent decision to increase visa fees had met with severe criticism from the country's academic community. Over the last couple of years, with decreased government funding, British universities have become dependent on international students for revenue. University heads fear that increased visa fees could lead to a drop in the number of overseas students at British universities and colleges. UK Visas had indicated that there would be an increase in the fee for a student visa extension, currently at £155 (CDN \$ 350) or £250 (CDN \$ 565) for rush service, to nearly double at £500 (CDN \$ 1,130).

Source: ["Call for fairer fees for overseas students."](#)
[Guardian, May 24, 2005](#)

OVER THE COUNTER

Canada misrepresents itself

A list entitled "Universities across Canada" is being distributed in India as a de-facto official and comprehensive listing, despite missing major Canadian universities. Simon Fraser University, Dalhousie University, Bishop's University and the University of Windsor are all excluded by the Canadian Education Centre Network (CECN) document which is widely distributed in India. Interestingly, DeVry Institute of Technology and Lansbridge University are on the list.

The publication does not indicate that it is a "members only" list and that there are Canadian universities who choose not to join the CECN. The convenient exclusion causes anxiety for Indian families considering Canadian universities who are not CECN members and results in uncertainty that perhaps what is promoted as a major Canadian public university may be a possible fraud (bogus universities are common in India and official recognition of foreign universities are serious concerns for Indian parents paying huge sums to send their children abroad to study).

Confusing matters further is the belief that the CECN acts for the Government of Canada. Aditya Gupta, organizer of this past weekend's "Aspirations" Education Fair in Delhi, one of the most important annual education events in the Indian capital, invited the CECN to speak on behalf of all Canadian institutions. "They are the Government of Canada," Mr. Gupta explained to *Higher-Edge's* Mel Broitman. When pointed out that the CECN does not speak with any official Federal voice, Mr. Gupta said "when you call the Canadian High Commission and ask about education, they refer you to the CEC."