



ACUMA Inc.: the Association representing tertiary campus service organisations in Australia & New Zealand  
*International higher education items in the press • January 2010*

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#### **Support centre to ease foreign student fears**

ABC News  
January 28 2010

A support centre for international students has opened in Melbourne as the Victorian Government tries to allay fears that the city is a dangerous place to study.

The taxpayer-funded centre in Carlton will be open during business hours and take calls from concerned students 24 hours a day.

Premier John Brumby says the \$500,000 facility, which was set up amid outrage over a spate of violent attacks on Indian students, will offer assistance to all foreign students.

"For students who have got any sort of issue, whether they need support, whether they need counselling, whether it is accommodation, whether it has been an issue about violence, whatever the issue, they are able to contact this centre," he said.

"It is open 24 hours a day and I think it's a world-leading step."

Wesu Chau of the Australian Federation of International Students says the centre will assist foreign pupils greatly and says more should be built.

"Some are quite serious problems including facing homelessness, mental health issues. and at [this] time students have nowhere to go to," he said.

"They come to us for support and we have to find ways to support these students. But this service will provide an excellent service for international students.



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"And I know the centre, they have a system in place to monitor all the needs that are required from international students.

"And hopefully later on the Victorian Government will invest more money into supporting international students."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/01/28/2804233.htm?section=australia>

#### **Working holiday scheme with Vietnam proposed by New Zealand government**

New Zealand Visa Bureau  
January 27 2010

The New Zealand Government will soon commence talks on a working holiday scheme for young Vietnamese and New Zealanders to travel and work in the other country.

New Zealand will enter into talks for a new working holiday scheme with Vietnam.

New Zealand Foreign Affairs Minister Murray McCully made the working holiday comments at a speech in the Vietnam National University in Hanoi.

"Already upward of 1000 New Zealand tourists visit Vietnam each month. I hope that in the future we will see the tourist flow increase in the other direction too," he said.

Mr McCully's speech marked the 35th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries, and coincided with Vietnam assuming the chair of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and the East Asia Summit.

The new free trade agreement between Asean, Australia, and New Zealand offers the countries benefits through liberalisation of trade in goods, services and investment, reducing tariffs and boosting the movement of people between treaty partners.

The agreement would also open up New Zealand immigration to chefs and engineering professionals looking to work in New Zealand for up to three years.

<http://www.visabureau.com/newzealand/news/27-01-2010/working-holiday-scheme-with-vietnam-proposed-by-new-zealand-government.aspx>

#### **Survey: More Chinese students considering studies abroad**

People's Daily Online - China  
January 27 2010

According to a recent report by the Information Times, China's well-known educational group, Beijing International Education Institute (BIEI) released China's first 2010 survey report on Chinese students' intentions to study abroad.

The survey covered nearly 6,000 university and middle school students and their parents in 13 major cities - Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Nanjing, Wuhan, Changsha, Jinan, Qingdao, Dalian, Shenyang and Chongqing.

It aims at researching the Chinese students' target countries for their overseas studies, their current educational background, their goals for overseas studies and comprehensive considerations on overseas studies.

Target countries: 31 percent of students in Guangzhou select the U.S.



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According to the report, the favorite countries of Chinese university and middle school students who are seeking overseas studies are the U.S., the U.K., Australia, Canada, France, Singapore and Germany. The first 3 countries remain the major traditional target countries – the U.S. (favored by 43 percent of the respondents), the U.K. (19 percent) and Australia (12 percent).

The main body of overseas Chinese students: junior middle school students become the third largest source of overseas Chinese students

Among the Chinese Students who intend to study abroad, those with a bachelor's degree account for 60 percent while senior middle school students and those with a master's degree account for 22.6 percent and 10 percent respectively. On the other hand, 37.56, 24.67 and 12.29 percent of these Chinese students plan to go abroad in 1 year, 2 years and 6 months respectively. Therefore, studying abroad will become a strong trend in China for 2010.

More than 50 percent of the above-mentioned Chinese students plan to obtain a master's degree at a foreign university. According to analysis by Li Zhu, a senior expert, 25.09 percent of the students are senior middle school students who intend to study at foreign universities. In addition, statistics show that nearly 12.96 percent of the above-mentioned Chinese students are junior middle school students. They intend to enter senior middle schools in foreign countries, becoming the third largest source of Chinese overseas students.

Business sciences remain popular among Chinese students

However, as for the "favorite majors," nearly 30 percent of the Chinese students chose business sciences including finance and accounting, marketing and business administration. Business sciences are even more popular among the students bound for Britain, the U.S. and Australia. It is said that about 70 percent of Britain-bound Chinese students plans to study business sciences.

<http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90782/90873/6880405.html>

#### **New matriculation programme**

The Star - Malaysia  
January 24 2010

SCHOOL-leavers seeking an internationally-recognised matriculation programme prior to university now have the option of obtaining the New South Wales Higher School Certificate (NSW HSC) at INTI College Subang Jaya (ICCSJ).

Regarded as the most prestigious of the Australian matriculation credentials, the NSW HSC was developed by the New South Wales Board of Studies. The qualification is accepted by universities in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom (UK), United States (US), Canada, India, Singapore, and Malaysian private universities into popular degree courses in medicine, pharmacy, engineering, business, information technology and more.

Comparable with the A-Level and South Australian Matriculation, the NSW HSC can be completed in 11 months.

This duration can be shortened to just eight months for students who choose to enrol in March.

A wide range of subjects is available in the sciences and humanities, and students may combine subjects from the two for broader options in tertiary studies.

An attractive feature of the qualification is the assessment method, which comprises 50% internal assessment based on coursework, and a 50% final external examination. The average of these two marks is used to determine eligibility for university entrance.

"The progress of every student enrolled in NSW HSC will be closely monitored," said the college's president Joyce Yuen.



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“We understand that parents are particularly concerned at this critical stage in their children’s education and they can rest assured that we will keep them informed of their children’s performance.”

Since its introduction in 1994 at INTI International College Penang, around 3,000 students have gained the qualification, many of whom go on to pursue medicine or pharmaceutical studies either locally or overseas.

“University placement services are provided at no charge our students,” said Yuen.

“This additional service enables students to apply to any university that they are interested in and includes university application and scholarship information, as well as the most updated information on course fees and cost of living incurred abroad.”

The fully accredited programme commences in January, and the deadline for students to enrol is Jan 29.

In another event, the Higher Education Ministry recently presented Metropolitan College, a member of INTI Education Group, the Best Website 2009 (Private colleges category) award.

The college’s website was evaluated by a panel of 30 judges and came out tops amongst 210 competing private educational institution websites.

Websites were judged on user friendliness, interactivity, multimedia and language presentation, and other areas.

INTI Education Group regional campuses management senior vice president Wong Gon Kiang, who received the award on behalf of the college, said: “We are proud of this achievement which speaks volumes for the effort by the management and staff of Metropolitan College.

“With the Internet being such an important educational tool today, we cannot shy away from implementing creativity and innovativeness in our business.”

Wong received the award from Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin during the ministry’s Innovation Day, which celebrates ICT (information and communication technology) and its application in the higher education sector.

<http://thestar.com.my/education/story.asp?file=/2010/1/24/education/5422137&sec=education>

**Australia: Exporting education worth billions**

University World News  
January 24 2010

When the Australian economy was struck by galloping external debt and a poor export performance in the mid-1980s, the then Labor government decided to create an export education industry it hoped would be worth millions of dollars. A quarter of a century on, the current government claims that industry generates A\$17 billion (US\$15.5 billion) for the national economy every year.

At the time of this momentous change, Australia’s existing overseas student aid programme was costing \$70 million in government subsidies but was not finding its mark. Until 1986, most foreign students were able to study for their degrees under various aid programmes that were either partly or fully subsidised. From that year on, however, the free honeymoon for students from Asia and the Pacific was over and universities were given permission to charge them full fees.

In 1990, selling education overseas was effectively privatised and government subsidies were replaced by full fees for all new foreign students. There were no imposed limits on their numbers so a university could enrol as many as they wanted. At the time, their fees and living costs supported an industry worth more than \$1 billion a year to the beleaguered Australian economy.



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While the universities constituted the formal arm of the new export industry, an army of specialist colleges sprang up in the non-formal sector offering everything from English and business studies to kung fu and computing. Thousands of overseas students also began enrolling in private and public secondary schools while an increasing number started 'foundation' year courses to prepare them for university for which they also paid full fees.

By September last year, more than 585,000 full-fee paying international students were in Australia on student visas - a 19% growth on the previous year's figures. China and India were the largest source countries with Chinese students comprising nearly a quarter of all enrolments and Indians almost one in five.

At the time, higher education institutions enrolled more than 200,000 foreign students, the vocational education sector 211,500 and English language colleges another 114,000. Government claims that this vast group of foreigners spend more than \$17 billion to live and study in Australia - making education the nation's third biggest export earner - are deeply suspect as Monash University sociologist Dr Bob Birrell has found.

Birrell says the sums quoted do not take account of the heavy commissions charged by overseas migration agents whose fees can range from 20-50% of the full cost of a course in Australia. Those fees are paid by the students before they arrive in Australia but the statisticians only add up the total cost of their courses and do not deduct these charges.

Nor do they include the money that students themselves earn by working in Australia outside their study hours to defray the costs of their tuition and living expenses. When estimates of earnings and commissions are deducted, Birrell says the actual contribution to the economy is probably around \$8 billion a year.

But arguments over the monetary worth of the industry have been overshadowed by the poor monitoring by state and federal governments of the educational quality provided by universities and private colleges - and by the diplomatic row with India over increasing attacks on Indian students in Melbourne and Sydney.

At least a dozen private vocational colleges have been forced to close in the last 12 months, leaving thousands of students to wonder how they will complete their courses. This followed a sudden tightening of immigration rules that have slashed the number of visas issued to Indian students and those from certain other countries.

As well as the students already in the country affected by the closures, the Chinese and Indian governments have warned their young citizens at home to be careful about enrolling in Australian colleges of doubtful integrity and to be ever watchful if they go out at night.

Australian higher education's strong reputation in Asia, across the Pacific and further afield was built and then fortified over years in the 1950s, '60s and '70s. It was this reputation, ironically, that then underpinned the rapid growth of the export education industry in subsequent decades.

Yet, like an errant child set prematurely loose, many of the institutions, including the universities, involved in this big growth industry have done much in a few short years to undermine the goodwill generated by decades of educational aid.

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=2010012309163040>

### **Shoddy schools sully sector**

The Australian  
January 27 2010

A RECURRENT theme in the Senate report on the welfare of international students is criticism of the link between education and migration. Indeed, the submission from the Department of Education,



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Employment and Workplace Relations is that Australia is in the process of decoupling education and migration.

This suggests the government has failed to recognise why Australia's education industry has prospered to become one of our largest foreign exchange earners.

The growth in international student enrolments is dependent on the prospect of students getting permanent residence after they have finished their studies here.

I've been in education recruitment for more than a decade. Each year I spend about 180 days meeting students who are seeking places in our universities and TAFE colleges. I can confirm that the prospect of permanent residence is the main reason for more than 90 per cent of students choosing Australia over more glamorous competitors such as the US, Canada and Britain.

We need a constant, high-volume input of young people to rejuvenate our ageing society. We also have economic opportunities for which we need skilled people. There is global competition to attract young immigrants.

Forget the side issues raised during the Senate inquiry. The problem is the presence of substandard education providers. And the only parties to blame for this are the state and commonwealth governments.

The Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses registration system, under which institutions are licensed to accept overseas students, has been debased to the extent that some private cooking and hairdressing schools richly deserve the title of "permanent resident factory".

Shoddy providers do not seem worried about non-compliance once they have their registration. They may have 50 cooking students enrolled but kitchen facilities adequate for only 10 students.

These providers offer very high commissions to agents, which can encourage agents to promote them exclusively.

The government needs to tighten the CRICOS registrations, accept only good quality providers, inspect them regularly and, where it's warranted, cancel registration.

Inspection and registration is in state hands and there seems to be no national standard for accreditation. Anecdote suggests Victoria, the locus of the problem posed by sub-standard operators, is the easiest state in which to get CRICOS registration.

A bill for the re-registration of all CRICOS providers was introduced into the House of Representatives last August and is laboriously making its way through parliament.

But a casual reading of the bill does not turn up any reference to the criteria the states will adopt in the registration process. Unless there is a big shake-up at state level, unscrupulous operators will get a licence again.

The problem is not the link between education and migration but poor management of the migration program.

Australia pioneered the point-scoring system that determines who will be eligible for permanent residence. It is being emulated by Britain and Canada. However, the system tends to drive students into university accounting and vocational cooking programs.

The key point-scoring attribute that drives course selection is a list of skilled occupations. To reach the points score pass mark, students need to choose a course that brings 60 points.

The postgraduate programs that can do this are limited to information technology and accounting. In vocational education, a lack of clarity makes it difficult to match skilled occupations with a course. This drives students towards the simple solution: cooking and hairdressing.



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We need to review the points system to encourage a broader spread of students across courses, especially at postgraduate level.

Another theme of the Senate inquiry was disparagement of migration agents who are also education agents. The Law Institute of Victoria, for example, said: "There is an inherent conflict of interest between the student's interest, the interest of the education provider and the agent's own pecuniary interest. On the one hand, the agent will receive a commission from an education provider, and on the other hand, the agent will receive professional fees for any immigration work done for the student."

This is nonsense. There is no conflict of interest because the activities referred to are separate and have distinct clients. An institution needs agents to promote its services while the student needs advice to secure a student visa. The agent acts for the education provider in recruiting the student and acts for the student in providing migration assistance.

John Findley is a migration agent and education counsellor who represents various providers.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/opinion-analysis/shoddy-schools-sully-sector/story-e6frgcko-1225823752104>

#### **Study Abroad - Pricey and Priceless**

The Wall Street Journal  
January 24 2010

Patti Ristau says she was terrified when she first landed in Seville, Spain, for a semester studying abroad.

Though she had a double major from the University of Wisconsin-Madison that included Spanish and felt sure of herself speaking the language in Mexico and the Caribbean, Ms. Ristau was worried she would be like a taco at a tapas bar in Seville. And she was all alone.

"But it was an amazing, self-enlightening experience," says the 22-year-old. "I found out a lot about who I was being there by myself. And I became a lot more confident about everything, not just my Spanish."

It's a common theme from students who give up the comforts of home and campus to live and study abroad and immerse themselves in another country's culture. They come back changed. And some even admit to becoming more mature -- and with a more wide-eyed view of the world.

"One of the major values of a study-abroad experience is for the student to really come to terms with how he or she navigates an unfamiliar world, particularly in places where a different language is dominant," says Michael Cowan, executive director for the University of California's Education Abroad Program.

"I hear the term 'life changing' a lot," he says. "But not every student comes back dramatically changed. In many cases, the changes are subtle but no less important."

From Italy to India

Study-abroad programs have been around for decades, but they've grown exponentially over the past 10 years. For the 2007-2008 academic year, the latest statistics available, more than 262,000 students studied abroad, up 8.5% from the year before and 77% from the 1987-88 school year, according to the Institute of International Education, which charts the movement with the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

More than 50% of students studying abroad go to Europe, mainly to the U.K., Italy, Spain and France. A growing number are opting for China and India, which saw 19% and 19.8% increases, respectively, in students from the 2006-07 academic year to 2007-08, according to IIE's Open Doors study that breaks down student statistics.



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#### Tuition and Housing

The experience doesn't come cheap, however. And it's not without its tradeoffs.

A general rule of thumb is that the more expensive the school's tuition, the more costly the study-abroad program. Also, the student who spends a lot of money on campus is likely to spend a lot more money overseas.

For students on financial aid, those funds are nearly always transferable to an established program abroad, says Truett Cates, director of the study-abroad program at Austin College in Sherman, Texas. Some 70% of the school's students participate in the program.

There are other sources of financing available too, such as the government-sponsored Fulbright Program and the Gilman Scholarship Program for undergraduates with a Pell Grant. Some schools have alumni financing or other funds set aside for study abroad.

The living experiences differ too. Some programs offer so-called home stays, where students live with natives of the host country. It could be a young family, an elderly person or a single woman in her 40s. Some programs put students in apartments with landlords and others place them in dorms.

#### Other Considerations

Here are some other things to consider:

**Added costs.** It's more expensive than a semester on campus, no matter how it's dressed. There are class fees and living expenses and, of course, travel costs both to get to and from the host country as well as hopping around to other cities and countries. Even baggage fees should be factored into the costs. There are lost revenues, too, for many students who have jobs on campus. And don't forget that many programs require a total payment upfront.

**The pesky dollar.** Some years are better than others for the value of the dollar against other currencies. This year, the exchange rate looks more favorable than the last two. But you'll need to keep in mind that your dollars may not have the purchasing power you think.

**Expensive cities.** It's far cheaper to live and study in Granada, Spain, than it is in Paris or London. The increase in the number of students choosing to study in China or India has been partly attributed to the cheaper cost of living in those countries.

**Distractions.** There are plenty of them, from sightseeing to clubbing. That's why it can be dangerous to go abroad without a budget that you will stick to.

**Safety.** It's a concern no matter which country you're in and all reputable programs offer comprehensive information on what to be on the lookout for. Schools like the University of California, for example, have risk managers on staff who keep close track of what's happening in other countries.

**Resources.** The State Department has a Web site with planning tips, cautionary advice and lists of everything from area codes to embassies. Most colleges and universities have a section about study-abroad programs on their Web sites, as do third-party programs.

[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB126428304081634289.html?mod=WSJ\\_hpp\\_sections\\_personalfinance](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB126428304081634289.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_sections_personalfinance)

#### **From where I sit: Lost boys need direction**

The Times Higher Education Supplement - UK  
January 21 2010

Australia is desperate to protect its tertiary education market and reaffirm the country's position as a safe place for international students after a growing number of attacks on Indian students since 2008.



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These include the murder on 2 January of 21-year-old Indian national Nitin Garg, slain in a park in Melbourne's western suburbs as he walked to work. He had recently graduated with an accounting degree.

My colleagues were shocked by Mr Garg's murder, in particular one who had taught him when he first came to Australia. She remembered a most pleasant, mild-mannered person eager to do well here.

There are several other instances of Indians being attacked, abused and killed here recently, with widespread public and media speculation that the violence is racially motivated. Although the authorities have discouraged that view, Australia's High Commissioner to India, Peter Varghese, has admitted that race may have played a role in the attacks.

Certainly the view in India is that students studying in Australia are being targeted. The Indian Government has issued an eight-point warning to students to take extra security precautions.

Even before Garg's murder, The Age newspaper reported a 46 per cent drop in Indian student visa applications from July to October 2009, compared with the same period in 2008 - the first time numbers had fallen since 2000, according to the news.com.au website.

The Hindustan Times newspaper reported that Indian students accounted for 19 per cent of Australia's international enrolments, taking 117,000 places in 2009. But these statistics are likely to change: "Education consultants in India say they anticipate a sharp drop in the numbers of Indian students enrolling in Australian universities," the newspaper reported.

Whether or not the attacks are racially motivated - and it does seem likely that many of them are - it is pointless to debate whether Australia is a racist nation. More useful would be to look at the perpetrators of these crimes. They are mostly young men - the same demographic responsible for much of Australia's drunken street violence and other crimes.

Let's put this in perspective: it is a small minority. I have taught hundreds of young men over the past two years and the vast majority of them are tolerant, open-minded, intelligent people who would never resort to violence.

But on the other side is a group that Australian society has failed: underprivileged, poorly educated, abused men who see crime, drugs and thuggery as their only path through life. It's complicated when they see their sporting idols' exploits constantly reported in the media: drug busts, domestic disputes, ugly scenes outside nightclubs, liaisons with underworld crime figures, followed by the inevitable five-star rehab as a reward.

Here are some thoughts on the problem: primary education should put more emphasis on basic living skills, secondary on citizenship skills and tertiary (not necessarily universities) on vocational skills. We need more male primary schoolteachers to be role models for boys. We need sporting stars to be better educated, to spend their money more wisely and not be drunk, drugged or violent in public.

Let's look at the roots of the problem, not merely debate the causes of tragic events after they have happened.

<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=410049&c=1>

#### **Overseas student numbers dwindle because of attacks**

ABC Perth  
January 20 2010

Perth's universities say interest in courses from India has dropped as a result of violent attacks on Indian students in Melbourne.

Western Australia's industry body for international education says the number of Indian students enrolling at Murdoch almost doubled last year but that growth has halted.



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Gary Martin from Perth Education City says overseas students do not distinguish between safety concerns in Melbourne when considering courses in WA.

"There is a flow on effect that what ever happens in different parts of Australia will impact on Western Australia," he said.

A 29 year-old Indian man was set on fire by four men after returning home from a dinner party in Melbourne in January and a 21 year-old Indian university graduate was stabbed to death while walking to work in the city's west a week earlier.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/01/20/2797344.htm?site=perth>

### **Job forum here for Singapore students studying in Australia**

AsiaOne Education News - Singapore  
January 20 2010

By Sia Ling Xin

SINGAPOREAN students studying in Australia can now attend a career forum - to be held here regularly just for them - that will help improve their chances of getting a job here.

The forum, called The Meeting Point, will be held during the summer holidays of Australian schools, which last from December to February.

As part of the event, networking activities with prospective employers from both the public and private sectors, such as the Public Service Division and Bloomberg, will also be organised.

The forum is the first project by the Network of Singaporean Students in Australia (NSSA), an umbrella organisation formed last November to represent 19 Singapore student associations in universities across Australia.

There are platforms to keep overseas talents updated on job opportunities in Singapore, but they are not specific to overseas Singaporeans, or those in Australian universities, said the network's vice-president, Mr Ian Ang, 22, a fourth-year chemical- engineering student at the University of New South Wales.

He said: "Many Singaporeans who go to Australia for their degrees later face difficulties when trying to enter the Singapore job market, because their graduation period is...in conflict with the hiring windows of many companies."

More than 300 students attended the event's first run yesterday.

It was promising turnout, said Mr Ang.

Guest of honour Vivian Balakrishnan, who is the Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, said that it is "pertinent to address the issue of employment opportunities for our returning graduates" because of the large number of Singaporeans studying overseas.

About 7,800 Singaporeans enrolled for studies in Australia last year, he said. He added that while there may be concerns over the job market, as long as one possesses the qualities and aptitude needed for a job, one will be gainfully employed.

Ms Joanne Tham, 20, a first-year communications student at the University of Melbourne, found the seminar "insightful and enriching".

It made her think about her plans for the future, she said.



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"I plan to work in Australia for a couple of years but, eventually, I want to return home, so such networking sessions are very useful for keeping me connected," she said.

In addition to yesterday's event, Contact Singapore - an alliance between the Economic Development Board and the Ministry of Manpower - maintains active links with Singaporeans studying in Australia through a series of initiatives.

These include the annual Careers@Singapore event held in Singapore every January for students who are back in Singapore during their summer breaks, career events and talks in Australia, as well as regular updates for members of Singapore student associations in Australian universities.

Similarly, Contact Singapore reaches out to Singaporean students studying in Britain and the United States through career events and talks in various cities, as well as regular updates through electronic mailers.

<http://news.asiaone.com/News/Education/Story/A1Story20100120-193030.html>

### **English language schools fear new visa rules**

The Guardian - United Kingdom  
January 19 2010

Though the English Riviera may no longer be a huge draw for British holidaymakers, it is still, nonetheless, a magnet for many foreign visitors. Every year, English language schools concentrated by the seaside in places such as Bournemouth, Poole, Eastbourne and Brighton attract hundreds of thousands of overseas students braving the unpredictable weather.

It has been estimated that 600,000 people come to the UK to learn English, bringing £1.5bn to the economy. Just over half of them go on to more study of some kind, either in further or higher education or to take professional qualifications.

But the thriving English language school sector has been put at risk by proposals to tighten visa rules, originally aimed at closing bogus colleges, that many schools fear will put them out of business.

The prime minister ordered a review of student visas at the end of last year, in response to continuing concerns that those seeking to enter the country illegally were abusing the system.

Though a points-based system for long-stay students has been in force since April, resulting in some bogus colleges closing, an increase in the number of applications for visas from China, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh led to suspicions that forged documents were being used to gain entry.

At the core of the proposals is the raising of the level of study for which students can enter the country on the points-based system and the standard of English needed.

The effect of this will be to exclude those planning to come here for more than six months to get their English up to scratch from a relatively basic level so they can go on to further study or progress in their careers back home.

English UK, the language schools' industry body, estimates that up to a third of language students could be excluded under the new rules, with the fear that they would instead go to Australia, New Zealand, Canada and America.

Philip Hopkins, principal of the English Language Centre in Brighton, says that if the government's proposals come into force, about 40% of the school's business would be wiped out. "We are an educational charity founded in 1962 and many of the students we get for long-term courses are students who go on to a foundation, undergraduate or master's programme and will be in the UK education system for the next four or five years."



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Hopkins says many students from the Middle East, in particular the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, are sponsored by their governments and are given security screenings before they arrive.

Others, from countries such as South Korea, come in a gap year after university to learn the English needed to advance their careers back home.

"I am totally in support of any clampdown on bogus colleges, and their use to abuse the visa system should be stopped," he says. "It has a very bad impact on genuine schools like ours who have very high standards of teaching and facilities.

"I understand the government's concerns, but the solution isn't to close every language school in the country."

Shane Wilkinson, managing director of Bournemouth Business School International, says the proposals run contrary to the prime minister's own wish to connect the UK to the world education market.

"Hundreds of thousands of students choose to come to the UK ... because of its high educational standards and because it is the home of the English language.

"If the government goes ahead with the proposals ... then I cannot see how we could continue. We would lose more than 80% of our business.

"We are talking about the whole industry shutting down apart from a few schools running short courses for Europeans. I don't think that there is an understanding of the industry."

He says the proposals would also take away the right of language students to work part-time. "The effect of that is that students can go to any other country and work part-time, so the UK would become really expensive to come to."

The proposed new rules were debated in parliament at the end of last year and MPs of all parties, representing constituencies with high concentrations of language schools, expressed their fears about the review.

Tory MP Robert Syms said: "We can tighten up immigration policy without having a blanket change that affects every single language school. If there is a problem with certain countries, why not seek a solution on a country-by-country basis? If there is a problem with the practice by individual education centres, why not address it centre by centre?"

English UK's chief executive, Tony Millns, says his organisation has proposed measures to ensure students do not abuse the visa system. He says the move to a new system of electronic visas could allow the generation of unique identification number and a digital photo that schools can use to prove the person is legitimate. Also, the payment of upfront fees rather than simply having money in a bank account at the time of the visa application will act as a deterrent to economic migrants using student visas.

"The government has promised to come back with proposals that are not so damaging to the sector. I'm waiting for that call."

Universities, too, are concerned. A spokesman for Universities UK said that while it wanted the immigration system tightened up, it was against a "blanket exclusion of providers who offer programmes below degree level".

"International students do not come automatically to the UK. It's vital that we send out the message that the UK welcomes international students. It is of huge academic, cultural and financial benefit to the UK for these highly talented people to come to our country to be educated."

The Home Office said the prime minister is due to look at the proposals "early this year".

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/jan/19/foreign-student-visas>



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### **Big hopes from little Singapore**

The New Zealand Herald  
January 19 2010

In the second of the series, immigration reporter Lincoln Tan looks at New Zealand's need for imported skills

Immigration New Zealand is for the first time shifting its migrant marketing focus away from America and Europe to Asia.

Singapore - with a land area about the size of Lake Taupo and a population of 4.9 million - will be the agency's newest target for migrants.

Immigration Minister Jonathan Coleman told the Herald a pilot scheme was being proposed to lure Singaporeans wanting to work and study in New Zealand.

Would-be migrants will be told of comparatively cheaper housing and car ownership, and the relaxed lifestyle. Those interested in becoming New Zealanders will be invited to register their interest online.

Immigration said the programme had been successful in Britain and the United States, attracting more than 70,000 registrations.

The Singapore marketing programme will go live on [newzealandnow.govt.nz](http://newzealandnow.govt.nz) this month, Dr Coleman said.

Last year, 62 per cent of residential approvals were in the skilled and business stream. More than 27,000 people were approved under the skilled migrant category, and more than 46,000 were granted permanent residency.

The overall focus of New Zealand's immigration policy was to build the economy, and the country has succeeded in recruiting the skilled migrants required.

Eighty per cent of principal applicants - the main person listed on the skilled residence application - were approved with a skilled job or offer of employment.

"We have attracted migrants who have gained jobs as nurses, teachers, accountants, ICT technicians, electricians, retail managers ... to name a few of the more popular occupations," Dr Coleman said.

"The skilled and business stream is aimed at people who will bring needed skills and capital and proven entrepreneurial abilities into the country."

Massey University marketing researcher Henry Chung says shifting the focus to Asia will help New Zealand plug into the global economy.

"We have found Asians to be more entrepreneurial and to have better business networks, not just with their home countries but also in their industries.

"The bigger money may be with countries like China, but I think Singaporeans, being more proficient in English and having a better understanding of the Western culture, will be able to adapt better to the New Zealand lifestyle," he said.

Immigration expert Paul Spoonley said marketing aimed at Asian migrants was a first, but he doubted it would attract many Singaporeans.

[http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=10620873](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10620873)



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#### **Youngsters identify with culture**

Howick and Pakuranga Times - New Zealand  
January 19 2010

MUSLIM youth are adapting well to life in New Zealand, despite the challenges of being part of a religious minority.

A Victoria University survey showed 180 Muslims aged 13-19 demonstrated more positive outcomes on all of the study's indicators than Maori and Pakeha peers.

The study looked at life satisfaction, psychological symptoms, school adjustment and behavioural problems as indicators of psychological and social well-being.

It found Muslim youth strongly identify themselves as New Zealanders, but it is their religious identity that predicts better psychological and social adaptation.

Professor Colleen Ward, of the university's centre for applied cross-cultural research, believes religion, strong family support and the relatively tolerant atmosphere in multicultural Aotearoa promote psychological and social well-being among Muslim youth.

"Immigrant and minority youth thrive when they are able to maintain their religious and cultural traditions, and participate in a fair and equitable way in New Zealand society," she says.

Leadership development workshops are being held for Muslim youth during January in Christ-church, Wellington and Auckland.

For more information, email [cacr@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:cacr@vuw.ac.nz)

[http://www.times.co.nz/cms/news/2010/01/youngsters\\_identify\\_with\\_culture.php](http://www.times.co.nz/cms/news/2010/01/youngsters_identify_with_culture.php)

#### **Jump in links with UK, NZ**

The Nation/Asia News Network  
January 18 2010

More channels are opening for Thai students who dream of studying in an English speaking country.

The United Kingdom and New Zealand will focus this year on expanding their student exchange programmes in many universities and secondary schools across the country.

Partnerships have been built between universities in the UK and institutions in Thailand in a bid to create joint degrees called "cross national education", according to Pred Evans, director of programmes at the British Council Thailand.

Currently, there are nine links under this project.

They are Birmingham City University with Silpakorn University, Coventry University with St Theresa INTI College, the University of Exeter with Assumption University, London South Bank University with Assumption, University of Nottingham with Srinakharinwirot, the University of Nottingham with Thammasat, University of Warwick with Chulalongkorn, University of Newcastle upon Tyne with Naresuan University and Keele University with Payap University.

Pred said the project was launched last year to offer opportunities to Thai students who want to study for UK qualifications. They can do half the study in Thailand and half in the UK.

"Our aim is to encourage more universities to do the same," he said.



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There are three to five more potential tieups, which will be able to receive applications from students in Thailand from this year up to 2012.

Meanwhile, NZ has initiated collaboration with schools facing a shortage of English speaking teachers and lacking chances to give their students experience of studying aboard as exchange students.

Gewalin Lertrasameewong, country manager of Thailand for Education New Zealand, an organisation working to promote "Kiwi" education in Thailand, said the project had offered chances to secondary students to study in "the Land of the Long White Cloud".

It will also bring teachers from New Zealand to teach Thai students.

Schools in Chiang Mai, Phetchaburi, Korat (Nakhon Ratchasima), Chanthaburi and several other provinces have already joined the project.

"We joined up with schools upcountry - not only focusing on ones in Bangkok - because we wanted to offer good chances to top students in those provinces as well," Gewalin said.

"The excellent students who don't have enough money to study abroad could take this chance and many of them have brought [a good] reputation, as they've done very well in their studies. They also showed their classical music talent by organising a concert in New Zealand.

"This group of students has good experience to share with other Thai students here, which is sure to get others interested in studying in New Zealand," she said.

Gewalin said New Zealand had a campaign to send educational experts from their country to work here and form networks in provinces such as Khon Kaen, Chiang Mai and Songkhla, to give parents and students advice about studying in their country.

The collaboration of foreign groups such as these with the Education Ministry will also benefit the Thai system.

Pred said UK universities had systems for best practice and quality assurance at the higher education level.

They had arranged comprehensive educational seminars to bring people together to look at curriculum development and leadership skill creativity.

"We have targeted highlevel policy makers in the (Thai) Education Ministry, including the minister, deputy minister and permanent secretary.

"We'll continue to work on regional projects and on local bilateral projects," he said.

"Every year we look at the need of Thailand and the government, which direction Thailand is going in education, which areas Thailand is interested in developing, and then we have to decide which areas we'll work with, which fit our regional project.

"We are committed to continue a deeper relationship with Thailand through education, science and sports to make Thailand and the UK understand each other better and to develop systems in both countries," Pred said.

The UK universities' focus this year is developing skills for social entrepreneurs to boost social enterprises in Thailand. And as the Thai government is currently focusing on a creative Thailand campaign, Pred believed it was good timing to talk to the government about bringing experts from UK to work here to develop ideas to support entrepreneurs, workshops, networks and partnerships.

New Zealand, meanwhile, has cooperated with the ministry to organise a camp for 3040 students to select finalists who will further their education Down Under.



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It is also linking up with the Science and Technology Ministry to use virtual programmes to help Thai students access learning with foreign experts as well as viewing places where the experts conduct their studies via computer.

The number of Thai students in the UK increased dramatically last year - by more than 2,000 students. The majority of Thais studying there are postgraduate students.

"We expect to increase [the number studying in the UK] by a minimum of 5 per cent every year," Pred said.

New Zealand saw a 15percent rise in the number of Thai students (seeking their first visas) last year. Most of the young Thais going to New Zealand are secondary students.

Gewalin expected that number would increase by 1520 per cent this year.

<http://news.asiaone.com/News/Education/Story/A1Story20100118-192561.html>

#### **International medical graduates could soon buy internships**

The Courier Mail - Brisbane  
January 17 2010

FOREIGN medical students could soon buy training places in Queensland Health, potentially shutting out local students, secret Government documents reveal.

A Queensland Health medical advisory panel will look at developing a policy with Queensland medical schools to sell internships overseas – possibly for up to \$200,000.

But the panel has also expressed concern about international medical graduates being able to "buy a place and subsequent issues of them being placed over Australian students" and "patient safety".

The move has angered the State Opposition, which claimed it contradicted Bligh Government measures to ensure more Queensland doctors were trained in Queensland to reduce the reliance on foreign-trained doctors.

Opposition Leader John-Paul Langbroek said the "cash-strapped" Government was looking at more ways to "raise revenue to pay for spiralling debt".

"If the Government is faced with having to pay a \$60,000 salary for a Queensland intern or actually getting paid \$200,000 to take on a foreign intern, does anyone really think Bligh and Labor aren't going to maximise the number of international fee-paying spots at the expense of Queenslanders?" Mr Langbroek said.

In documents obtained by the LNP under Right to Information, it was revealed that 16 members of the high-powered medical advisory panel met last July to consider the controversial option.

The panel noted: "Concerns have been raised over the equity of allowing international medical graduates to buy a place and subsequent issues of them being placed over Australian students.

"(There are) concerns around taking money from students for internship and if this contracts Queensland Health to get the students 'registrable'."

The panel suggested it would be good for the health system if overseas-born, Australian-trained medics stayed in the country.

Mr Langbroek said a "debt-ridden" NSW Labor Government introduced a similar scheme last year where it allowed international students to buy a spot for \$200,000.



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"But the scheme blew up in the government's face when it chased so much cash from overseas applicants that in the end there wasn't enough staff to actually train them," he said.

He accused Ms Bligh of keeping the plan secret.

"Queensland medicine graduates will start losing their internship places in hospitals because dumbed-down full fee paying foreign students will get the places.

"As Queensland Health becomes reliant on the income from the 'cash for job' positions, this will jeopardise the quality of young doctors in Queensland," he said.

Health Minister Paul Lucas said the Government was not considering a scheme to make overseas students who graduated as doctors from Queensland universities to pay for their internships.

He said the Government would increase the number of internships from 515 in 2009 – 75 of these for international students – to 643 (90 international) this year and 727 (120 international) by 2014.

"Our first priority is and always has been to provide internships for Australian graduates from our medical schools," he said yesterday.

<http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,26595830-3102,00.html>

#### **International student security**

University World News  
January 17 2010

I want to take up an issue that goes to the heart of higher education, especially research universities, around the world. It is about global mobility, especially the mobility of human subjects. It also highlights the implications of changes in higher education for the larger world: that issue is the human security of international students, by which I mean people who cross national borders for the purposes of formal study.

Global connectedness continues to grow, despite the global recession. The recession has dealt a powerful temporary blow to some national higher education systems and parts of systems, including many American states. It has created downward pressures on access and quality.

The long term growth of access will not stop. It will be harder to undo the damage to the quality of teaching and learning. Some equity battles now have to be re-fought. The recession has also led to cuts in international programmes. But perhaps less than might have been expected.

In the past a sudden increase in cost pressures would have taken international activity right out, because international activity was marginal to nationally defined activity. Not now. Consider the strategic importance of the global market in doctoral education, for nations investing in k-economy talent. Even in first degree study, cross-border student movement within and out of much of Asia has continued to grow, throughout the recession. The long-term trend to globalisation is robust. The issues arising will become larger.

Higher education and research are highly globalised compared to most sectors. Universities are active in the local, national and global dimensions at one and the same time. Research universities are building a global education space.

Faculty, administrators and students are more likely than most people to have international experience and acquire a cosmopolitan outlook. Many university leaders have become centrally concerned with global strategy. In an increasing number of countries, cross-border student passage will be the norm not the exception, as has been foreshadowed by Erasmus in Europe.

The world is wholly globalised in the ecological sense, and partly globalised in culture and communications, knowledge, finance, the economy and higher education. There are signs that world



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society is slowly emerging. But systems of governance and regulation are almost entirely national in character - or rather, nation state in character.

'Nations' are culturally constructed and spread across the formal boundaries of states. But 'states' are territorially defined and bound. They cannot be other, and are limited in their capacity to handle cross-border matters, such as the human security of international students. The limits of states put international students at greater risk, unless something additional is done.

Issues of global people mobility - and of the lack of fit between national public good and global public good - are found in other sectors, not just education and research: short-term business and worker migration, tourism, and of course, refugees. Problems of the human security of mobile persons in the university sector have broad resonance.

Solutions in this sector will set precedents, and help to develop new thinking about the tense relationship between the global and national dimensions of human action, again so apparent in Copenhagen.

But let's turn to a more locally grounded story. Sometimes studies in which  $n = 1$  can tell us more than surveys of whole populations. Consider Nitin Garg whose home was Jagaraon in the Ludhiana district in the Punjab.

He entered Australia three years ago and late last year he completed a masters degree in accounting at Central Queensland University at only 21 years. He achieved a permanent residence visa in Australia and planned to stay.

Living in Melbourne, he secured an evening job at Hungry Jacks, a burger franchise in West Footscray, on the west side of the inner city, where many Indian families and students live. He shared a house with seven other Indian friends in Newport, an adjoining suburb.

From all reports, Nitin was cheerful and positive. He was warmly liked by his friends, someone for others to trust and rely on. He kept in touch with his family in the Punjab, visiting them late last year: he returned in mid December.

On the evening of Saturday 2 January, Nitin Garg left home for work at Hungry Jacks. One of his friends offered to drive him but he said not to worry and he would take the train. He travelled to Yarraville station, a couple of kilometres from his workplace. The walk took him through Cruikshank Park.

During the day Cruikshank Park is pleasant open area, once a creek-bed, fringed by native Australian plants and used by many. It is a less comfortable place at night. Despite years of complaints by residents it is poorly lit. Houses adjoining the park are often burgled and invaded by intruders.

As Nitin passed through the park he was approached by a gang of youths. One had a sharp knife. After a brief argument Nitin was stabbed. The knife went deep, from his stomach to his heart, almost disemboweling him. It appeared that his attacker had experience in slaughtering animals.

The attackers fled. They did not take Nitin's wallet and mobile phone, which were left lying in the park. Nitin managed to stagger 300 metres to Hungry Jacks but he was dying when he reached his workmates and by the time the ambulance reached the hospital he had gone.

Nitin's death follows a series of incidents over three years, affecting young South Asians in Australia, largely students. Australia has more than 110,000 Indian students. The attacks are mostly centred on the western suburbs of Melbourne, which have a high concentration of non-European people.

There is a syndrome among certain local male youth, often unemployed and outside education. They call it 'curry bashing' because South Asians are targeted, though sometimes it is extended to Chinese, Southeast Asian and African youth.

Gangs, often of mixed ethnic composition, come into the western suburbs from different parts of Melbourne. We know about 'curry bashing' because of court testimony, because some attacks are



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accompanied by racist abuse, and because car loads of attackers turn up at train stations late at night and wait for South Asians to get off the train.

The victims are always bashed but not always robbed. In the last few months, carloads of Indian students have turned up at the stations to protect the train travellers. There are gang fights. Nitin Garg is the first person to die, an innocent, an involuntary participant in the urban cultural wars of tolerant Australia.

Death comes to all of us. But in a few special cases, a person's death takes on a great significance because of its timing within the circuits of public exchange. Nitin Garg's passing triggered a furore of media reports and outpouring of grief, rage and accusations and counter-accusations in India, in Australia, and between India and Australia.

The Chief Minister of the Punjab, the External Affairs Minister of India, the Australian High Commissioner to India, the Ministers for Trade and for Education in Australia all made statements. Both Prime Ministers are involved. Dozens of organisations and thousands of individuals have had their say in blogs, newspaper letters and talk-back radio. The debate rages on.

South Asians in Australia, and Indians in India, say there is racist targeting and their students are at risk. They protest to the Indian and Australian governments. They say the Australian government is doing little to protect international students or to police or correct violent and racist behaviour at home.

But many voices in that debate in Australia, including police and politicians, say that this is 'just another murder' and has no special significance. Australia is not a racist country. There is no particular problem for Indian students in Australia. (The 'curry bashing' syndrome is on record but is side-stepped.)

The official government stance is shared by the mainstream public culture in the media. One senior journalist argued there were more violent deaths per head of population in India. Others point to bride murders - a form of 'two wrongs make a right' arguments.

The public media are as nation-centred and bordered as is national government. There is no halfway point, no part acceptance of the Indian position. Equal cultural respect is hard to secure in Anglo-American countries in which systems are mono-cultural, there is usually an innate belief in Western superiority, and cultural difference is accepted and tolerated provided it is confined to private networks and not exercised as a pluralisation of the national public space.

But while some generalisations in India are overdrawn or wrong, and there is no lack of national stereotyping, essentially the Indian position on the central issue - the students themselves - is right.

Racist targeting is involved. Indian students do have a special problem. And there is not enough official and civil concern about international student security in Australia. The Indian government has responded with a travel warning that points to a pattern of increased crimes of violence and property affecting Indian nationals in Melbourne, and advises precautions.

For its part, the Australian government is in denial. Australia is one of the safest and most tolerant countries in the world, it says. Yes, that is true but it does not address the issues. The question is not about whether Australia is racist 'as a whole' but about action on racism in Australia.

And Australia has taken little action to tackle the problem of international student safety, while denying racism is a factor. This undermines statements that Australia is a non-racist country. Because non-racism lies not in colour blindness - in pretending there are no issues of cultural discrimination, in abstract pretences that everyone is the same - but in the capacity to identify and eliminate actual racism. Freedom from all forms of discrimination and abuse is basic to student security.

Australia's Educational Services for Overseas Act regulates international education by placing mandatory requirements on provider education institutions. Student safety is not mentioned in the Act. Once the students leave campus and enter the general community where most of the problems are, they are not covered by the Act. It is a matter for the police.



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There have been modest increases in policing in trouble spots - less than implied by Australian politicians in India - but the increases are likely to be temporary. Australian government is not prepared to acknowledge that international students need special additional public money.

Its reflex is always to push responsibility back to the provider education institutions. There is no community education campaign and no expressed solidarity with the students, who have campaigned hard but are relatively isolated in Australia. Indian student organisations that tell the truth about what is happening complain of being frozen out by police and government.

We can see why. The issues are not just politically charged but economically sensitive. There is talk of trade sanctions. Education is Australia's third largest export, US\$15 billion a year - the largest export in the state of Victoria where Nitin died.

Australia regards these temporary migrants, its international students, as economically significant. But this has not triggered an instinct to provide better protection for individual students because there are 560,000 students and this would be expensive. It would undermine Australia's cost advantage over the other English speaking countries in the global education market.

It is more efficient to focus on impression management, not individual student welfare. Market research shows national reputation is the chief factor in international student choice, bigger than educational quality. So the Australian government spins the national reputation, and waits for Nitin Garg to be forgotten.

This is not working. The problem of student security will not go away and will continue to affect family choices in the education market. And the problem will recur. Nor is it confined to Indian students.

In Sydney and Melbourne in Australia, the Chinese consuls have made public concerns about crime and student safety, and student difficulties with accommodation, depression while away from home, the heavy-handed regulation of student visas by the immigration authorities, and obtaining professional jobs.

Nor is the problem confined to Australia. The gangs in the western suburbs are not representative of Australian urban culture, they are one of its pathologies. Overall, I suspect the position of non-white international students is better in Melbourne than it is in most parts of the US and the UK, where racism is broader and deeper, though the UK government is smarter in its handling of student safety and crime.

In 2003 and 2004, abuse of Chinese students in New Zealand, including hostile media, and the collapse of some private colleges, led to official complaints by China to the New Zealand government. When New Zealand responded with spin, with the pretence there were no real problems, China issued an official warning to families contemplating international education. There was a sharp fall in Chinese student enrolments in New Zealand in 2005 and after - another reminder that student security has market power, though it is more effective at the aggregate than individual level.

But if a strategy of denial and do nothing is ineffective, and if there are economic and political risks in neglecting student security, why are normally competent governments caught out by this issue?

The answer is that states handle some kinds of international security issues better than others. What a contrast there is between the ill-focused and ineffective responses on student security, and the rapid moves by states in response to the threat of a would-be al-Qaida suicide bomber!

National governance is effective in dealing with the threat to the security of nation-states posed by 'stranger danger'. It mobilises well, if not always with complete success, to protect inner territory and static persons against mobile persons. It is ineffective in protecting the security of strangers, mobile persons, against static persons on national soil. The prima facie bias of states in favour of their own citizens does not help.

States are deeply ambivalent about student strangers. Education and economic ministries imagine mobile students as sources of revenue and research talent. Immigration and defence ministries imagine



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them as a threat. Thus on one hand international education is a cross-border market where the student-as-consumer is sovereign and devolution is the order of the day.

On the other hand international education triggers border anxiety, old style bureaucratic regulation and force. In the export countries governments want to build skilled migration and stretch categories such as identity and residency to accommodate it. But government is also concerned with border threats, trusts no one but itself, uses exclusive categories, and is not fully persuaded that it wants the alien at all. International education is simultaneously shaped by these two different regimes of governance and regulation, and the tensions between them. It is a mess.

But it is a mess with a large group of mobile persons attached. There are 3 million cross-border students. The numbers will continue to grow. This is ensured by the globalisation of professional work and educational opportunities, the global nature of knowledge, and university strategies.

International students are investors in geographical and social mobility. They face many difficulties. Some have good backup. Others do not. But most will enter the top quintile in their home countries, or somewhere in the world. They will not live on a dollar a day. They are not a proletarian subject, they are not among the most disadvantaged people.

But they are at the cutting edge of two problems of global governance, or rather its absence. One is an old problem: the extent to which regulation should modify market forces. The other, less familiar, is that of the disjunction between mobile populations and national regulation.

Let me summarise the issues and questions arising from the case of Nitin Garg: Australians are concerned about their position in the international education market, and more generally, national pride. Indians are concerned about a dead man and more generally, dangers to young Indian people in Australia. None of the humanist concerns are shared in Australia, except in token ways. The humanism is nationally bordered.

Amid the official flurry, little has yet been done in Australia to enhance international student security. In fact in both countries the issues are addressed almost entirely by symbolic politics. All the energy and heat and the activist and formal pressure have achieved little in practice.

But there are underlying ambiguities in the position of mobile persons in a national setting. Who is really responsible for their security? National government in the country of education? Local government and police? The educational institutions? NGOs and community-based welfare? Or just the student families and the students themselves?

Governments push the problem on to the universities. Universities often seem to displace it to the student's family and to informal friendship networks. The commercial character of the international education industry in Australia, New Zealand, the UK and Malaysia and elsewhere weakens attention to human security.

The commercial approach treats fee paying international students as subjects of trade, with consumer protection rights - not as quasi citizens with the full range of human rights, or even as traditional educational subjects entitled to full pastoral care. Policy focuses on their net contribution to the national economy, not their human needs.

In the export countries, there are no protocols that enable national government to determine whether and how it should differentiate, in matters of security provision, between its own citizens and non-citizen foreign visitors and migrants. Should government provide less to foreigners as a matter of policy?

In relation to Australia, a colleague of mine has identified 28 policy areas, programmes and entitlement systems where international students are disadvantaged, compared to locals. On the other hand, should national government in the country of education offer international students more help when their outsider status makes them vulnerable, as in the case of Indian students in Australia at present? But if so, how far can it go without prompting a backlash from the local citizens that elect government and pay lifetime taxes?



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Does the student's home country government have a practical role in student security, as distinct from engaging in political rhetoric, and if so how is it best expressed? Bilateral negotiation is more effective than are international students themselves in putting pressure on the education country government, but sanctions and warnings are blunt instruments.

Cross-border migration, whether permanent, or temporary for work or study, is challenging for those that undertake it. Mobile persons move from familiar rules, conventions, supports and citizenship rights, to a country less familiar where they have less personal support, they lack citizen rights and the rules may be unknown.

Global mobility demands adjustment by mobile persons. On the face of it, global mobility also demands adjustments by the institutions and systems that mobile persons encounter, especially when there are many such persons. But institutions and systems in the country of education rarely adjust to 'strangers'.

The core of the problem for mobile students is that in matters of their protection and the active exercise of their rights, they fall between the two different national citizen regimes. Though they have rights in their own country, where they are citizens, the home country government can do little to help more than a handful of individuals abroad, except by generating diplomatic and economic pressures.

These are indirect mechanisms that depend on a response from government in the country of education. But in the country of education, government does not treat international students as equivalent to national citizens in respect and rights. The students are at greater risk than they should be, not because they are a danger to the country of education but because they are strangers, because legal protections and policy obligations are sparse, and because there is no political mechanism for translating concerns about their welfare into action.

This suggests that the welfare and rights of mobile persons should be seen not as a matter of national private good, or national public good, or global private good that is created in global markets, but one of global public good.

At the global level, we all have a common interest in the freedom and security of cross-border movement. Mobile persons who breach that common security should be dealt with as exceptions, rather than by reducing the freedom and security of all.

As Amartya Sen remarks, "any affirmation of social responsibility that replaces individual responsibility cannot but be counterproductive" (1). We find ourselves in an Orwellian world in which in the name of security, states create punitive visa regimes and discriminate on the basis of nationality, ethnic identity or religion. For example, the US Patriot Act and the surveillance of international students.

But to achieve the common freedom and security of international students, we need to look beyond the economic market, and place one foot beyond the nation state. First, the logic of market consumption, which secures maximum price for minimum cost, and devolves security to the individual student and family, must be regulated and where necessary, overridden.

Second, entitlements to national public goods such as security are essentially confined to citizens, and extended to visitors as a matter of grace and favour, if at all. Global student security cannot be effectively realised by single states. It can only be done jointly.

But the problem of providing global public goods is that there is no global state. And right now few want a global government. It would reflect one or another national political culture, not a global culture. Global civil society is emerging but cannot provide universal rights and protections.

For the foreseeable future, short of ecological catastrophe we continue to rely on bilateral and multilateral international negotiation, supplemented by global agencies. Somehow this creaky system has to be mobilised to create the global public good of cross-border student security. That discussion has not begun. It needs to be started.

Let me move to summarise. First, the global public good of international student security will be constructed by an incremental process of voluntary agreement, whereby each nation makes its education



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system into a globally responsible space. This could begin on a bilateral basis but would need to become a multilateral process, supported by global agencies. And ultimately, the security of mobile persons is complete if it is backed by a cross-border agency. If necessary, students need a point of appeal and of resolution against states.

Second, we need to change the language and conception of 'international security'. The term 'international security' is derived from a long history of military strategy discourse, pre-dating the Enlightenment. That discussion of international security is about the security of states - and at a second level of importance, it is about the security of particular national populations within the borders of those states.

A double move is wanted here. We need to shift the focus of discussion of 'international security' from states to people. And we need to extend the security discussion from the citizens of one state, to the citizens of all states, and the stateless, and include people moving between states.

In a book on International Student Security to be published by Cambridge University Press by June this year (2), we suggest that security is an elemental human need that can only be met by a comprehensive approach. We argue that international students should be understood as active agents with human, educational, civil, industrial and other rights (except for a small number of rights exercised only by citizens, such as the right to vote for a national parliament).

We define international student security as 'the maintenance of a stable capacity for self-determining agency'. This recognises that a measure of change enters into the lives of mobile students, and that they are self-managing individuals responsible for those lives, within a social framework. Thus their security encompasses both protections and active rights, in every domain of life.

Security includes the physical safety of the person, financial issues and work experiences, housing, health and welfare services, language, and experiences in dealing with government and university authorities. It is affected not only by formal policy and legal regulation, but also by institutional practices, social networks and private life. The informal domain is not subject to exhaustive regulation.

But there must be a capacity to intervene when student security is compromised, just as states intervene in the domestic population, for example in relation to family violence. In short, we need to de-nationalise, globalise and humanise the concept of 'international security'.

We should think about cross-border security not in terms of national strategic interests but in terms of global humanism - a global humanism in which every person is understood as a self-determining subject and worthy of equal respect. Charles Taylor argues that it is "utterly wrong and unfounded" to draw the boundaries of our respect and concern for people any narrower than the whole of humanity (3). We must agree. This is key to the issue.

No doubt states will find it easier to extend the humanist compact to economically significant non citizens like international students, than to non citizens such as refugees. There are 3 million international students, but hundreds of millions of mobile persons, and numbers are growing.

We all know that in future there will be many climate refugees. In Bangladesh, the displacement of persons by rising sea-tides has already begun. The wider significance of the evolution of a universal humanist regime of international student security is the implication for the other mobile populations. Isn't this always the logic of the politics of rights? Rights and protections, such as the right to own property and the right to vote, and the right to gender equality, tend to be first won by the middle class and then become extended to all.

If we can get the systems and values right for mobile students, we create precedents for other mobile populations. National governments could cease to use the denial of human rights and the imposition of barriers and harsh conditions on mobile persons, as a way of managing global population flows by forcing people to go elsewhere. Instead the resettlement of those who have no choice but to be globally mobile would be managed on a multilateral basis.



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The promise of education is that it advances the human subject by conferring on each person a greater measure of ability, sociability, dignity and agency, greater power to form themselves and make their own lives in their time on Earth.

The promise of higher education and research is that we might find ways to better order the world so as to universalise ability, dignity and agency, and work together to solve our problems collaboratively. I am struck by the gravity of the issues at stake in this messy and unresolved debate about international student security.

International student security is not just about higher education or the global knowledge economy. It concerns the future world society and civil culture. It is about giving meaning to every life, not just the lives of those born in our own country, who might look like us, speak like us or share a religion.

We all want our lives to have meaning. If Nitin Garg's death helps to focus world attention on the problems of mobile persons, the gaps in their human security and the need for a workable global regime of human security, his life has achieved a greater meaning. Give him that honour. That way, he still lives.

\* Simon Marginson is a professor of higher education in the centre for the study of higher education at the University of Melbourne. This is an edited version of a keynote address he gave last week at the World Universities Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

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#### **Newcastle landlords rejecting overseas students**

The Herald  
January 16 2010

LANDLORDS and tenants are discriminating against house-hunting overseas students in Newcastle, making it harder for them than for Australian students to find accommodation.

A survey of flatmate websites has found share households and landlords in Newcastle who say they will not consider foreign students.

One Carrington listing included the phrase "native-English speakers wanted", another Cooks Hill advertisement said "young international students need not apply" while a Macquarie Hills tenant went with the heading "Wanted: No people from overseas [sic]".

Others were more welcoming, with one Newcastle listing saying "all nationalities welcome", while a Mayfield advertisement was for a household that would "suit international students".

On Wednesday The Herald revealed that a University of Newcastle report said American and Scandinavian students found it easier than African and Asian students to get housing in Newcastle.

The report included confirmation from staff that foreign students faced hostility and resentment in the community.

Real Estate Institute of NSW president Wayne Stewart said agent listings would never contain those phrases because they were discriminatory, but said some landlords did not want people on short-term



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leases such as overseas students or students in general.

He said people should not avoid overseas students because they often made the best tenants.

"The overseas market is quite happy to pay whatever is necessary to get accommodation," he said.

"Most overseas students come from good families, they're disciplined and very respectful with property."

Newcastle University student association international convener Eduardo Carvajal said language barriers, poor knowledge of rental laws, no Australian references and lack of support networks also made it harder for foreign students.

"In a tight rental market they often go to the bottom of the list," Mr Carvajal said.

A group of Chinese students said that because they were in Australia for only two or three months they either made use of billeting programs or found share house places through friends.

<http://www.theherald.com.au/news/local/news/general/newcastle-landlords-rejecting-overseas-students/1726515.aspx>

#### **A new front**

The Star - Malaysia  
January 17 2010

Private higher education institutions are urged to take risks and set up privately-run polytechnics.

PRIVATE universities and university colleges have been encouraged to establish their own polytechnics to offer engineering and technical programmes.

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin extended the invitation after ministry data showed that five out of 10 students enquired about the aforementioned programmes at the ministry's overseas expos.

As public varsities have a 5% cap on international students, private universities and university colleges were poised to benefit.

However, the same did not apply to local polytechnics as there were barely enough places for Malaysian students.

"More than 120,000 local students apply for around 30,000 places in polytechnics each year," said Mohamed Khaled in a press conference during The Star Education Fair 2010 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

"Private universities and university colleges must be willing to take the risk and set up polytechnics as international students are interested in these programmes."

He added that the ministry was looking at either private universities or university colleges as they were in a better position compared to colleges which were smaller.

Students in search of study options from various institutions at the fair.

"These institutions could use their entrepreneurial and creative abilities to develop these programmes," he continued.

"It is a unique opportunity for them to capitalise on, and the ministry is willing to facilitate any move."

Mohamed Khaled said the Government would look into providing incentives in the budget for this purpose.



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“Higher education is an industry by itself,” he added. “It is one sector which can make Malaysia a serious global player in higher education.”

According to Unesco’s Global Education Digest 2008, approximately 2% of the world’s 2.5mil international students are studying in Malaysia.

Malaysia is currently ranked as the 11th most preferred study destination behind Singapore. The top nine are the traditional big names in education like the United States, Britain, France and Australia, among others.

Mohamed Khaled also said that the ministry was confident that its target to have 75,000 international students this year would be met.

The number of international students in Malaysia currently hovers around the 70,000 mark.

Mohamed Khaled told The Star that the ministry would be willing to consider any serious applications, as the establishment of privately-run polytechnics would boost Malaysia’s higher education standing.

He expressed his hope that private universities and university colleges would be willing to step up to the plate.

“There are two private companies that have applied to set up polytechnics so far, but they are not private higher education providers,” he confirmed.

Mohamed Khaled also threw his weight behind the education fair and thanked The Star for its long-standing commitment to higher education.

Describing the fair as instrumental in providing educational outreach, he added that students and parents would not be the only beneficiaries, as Malaysia’s many private higher education institutions stood to gain as well.

“Participating institutions stand to gain a great deal by being able to see themselves in comparison with other providers,” he said.

“This will encourage them to improve the quality of their service as well as to educate the public on the type of degrees and specialisations available in Malaysia.”

Mohamed Khaled also recognised that the fair was the biggest of its kind in Malaysia and one of the largest in Asia.

“An education expo and fund as large as this is very rare indeed and I’m happy that The Star recognises the country’s effort to be a regional education hub,” he said.

Thanking the institutions which pledged scholarships, Mohamed Khaled expressed the ministry’s hope for the fair and the Fund to continue to expand.

Also present were Star Publications (M) Bhd group managing director and chief executive officer Datin Linda Ngiam and executive director Ng Beng Lye.

In her speech, Ngiam said that The Star had always been more than just a newspaper that covers stories and events.

“We see ourselves as an integral part of the community and a responsible corporate citizen. We believe that a sound education system is central to our growth of a developed nation.

“We will continue to play our part in promoting our Prime Minister’s goal of developing a creative and innovative nation,” she said.



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The fair, which ran for the 23rd time this year, took place in Kuala Lumpur on Jan 9 and 10.

It will also be held at the Penang International Sports Arena (Pisa) on March 6 and 7.

<http://thestar.com.my/education/story.asp?file=/2010/1/17/education/5473382&sec=education>

### **Indian assault response decried**

The Australian  
January 13 2010

AUSTRALIA is in denial on racially motivated attacks against international students and has failed to take action to deal with the issue, an internationally respected Australian academic has told a major conference in Switzerland.

Melbourne University professor Simon Marginson, delivering a keynote address to the World Universities Forum in Davos, said the Australian government was trying to spin itself out of crisis following this month's murder of Indian accountancy graduate Nitin Garg in a west Melbourne park. "The Australian government is in denial," Professor Marginson told the high-powered meeting of academics. "Racist targeting is involved (in the attacks). Indian students do have a special problem. And there isn't enough official and civil concern about international student security in Australia."

Garg's unsolved murder has sparked diplomatic, government and public protests in India, further weakened one of Australia's most important education export markets and prompted a defensive response from Australia's political leaders and Victoria Police.

Foreign students are Australia's third-largest source of export revenue at \$15 billion a year.

Professor Marginson, a professor of higher education and a globally recognised expert on international education, called for the establishment of a "cross-border agency" to help safeguard international students globally.

India's Foreign Minister, S.M. Krishna, yesterday warned that continued violence against Indian students could damage relations and called for immediate "corrective action" by Australia. This followed a decision by the Indian government to issue a travel warning advising expat students to take precautions while living in Australia generally and Melbourne in particular.

Foreign Minister Stephen Smith was yesterday in talks with Mr Krishna. "We both agreed this was an issue we did not want to disturb or get in the way of what the External Affairs Minister described as an excellent relationship," Mr Smith said.

In a statement released after their conversation, Mr Krishna "reiterated the need for immediate corrective measures, pointing out that the issue had consistently figured in our parliament".

"Australian leaders had, time and again, reassured India that Australian authorities were treating the assaults with utmost seriousness," the statement said. "However, the incidents seem to be continuing."

In his address on Saturday, Professor Marginson told the World Universities Forum there had been only "modest" increases in policing at trouble spots. He accused Australian politicians of implying to India that greater action was being taken.

"The Australian government is not prepared to acknowledge that international students need special additional public money."

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/indian-assault-response-decried/story-e6frg6nf-1225818580004>



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### Why are Indian students being attacked in Australia?

BBC - United Kingdom  
January 12 2010

What is happening to Indian students in Australia? Why have they been mugged, knifed, set alight, and murdered, mostly, in Melbourne, Australia's proud multi-racial melting pot city where, according to my colleague Nick Bryant, people from 140 nations live side-by-side?

Nearly a year after the attacks began, nobody is quite sure. Already, in the new year, two Indians have been attacked - one murdered; and the other allegedly set on fire in Melbourne. What we know for sure is that the number of Indian students wanting to study in Australia has slumped by almost 50%, diplomatic relations between the two countries have soured and grim travel advisories have been issued by the Indian government to students in Australia.

People here say they still don't know why Indians are being targeted. Have the attacks followed a pattern? Do the victims have some kind of a common profile or background? How do the number of attacks on Indians compare with attacks on other expatriate groups? Are the attacks concentrated in a specific area? How many of these attacks could have had a racist motive?

Australian police have said the attacks appear to be random with no evidence they were racially motivated.

In the absence of any clarity - I have not read a single major investigation into these attacks in the Australian media, or the outcome of any official probe - the shrill sections of the Indian media, especially TV news networks, have gone ballistic.

Every other night, we have news presenters telling us over on-screen captions like 'Indian Burnt In Australia' that Australia is a racist country, and that Melbourne is the most racist city of all. An Indian newspaper cartoon even portrayed the Australian police as the Ku Klux Klan.

Nobody contests the fact that Indians have the right to feel worried, very worried, about the spate of attacks. More than 70,000 Indians are studying in Australia; nearly a fifth of the international enrolments are from the subcontinent. There have been reports that a number of the victims have enrolled in vocational courses, and live in poorer neighbourhoods to save money.

Australia has reason to worry about the attacks too. Education is the country's biggest export - after coal and iron ore - and international students contribute \$13bn to the Australian economy every year. Australia, by one estimate, could easily lose \$70m because of the attacks.

It's a no-brainer that Australian authorities need to investigate each of these attacks thoroughly to come to a considered and precise explanation as to why they happened and quell the growing mistrust between the two countries.

If Australians believe that sections of the Indian media are hyperventilating over the attacks and behaving irresponsibly, Indians believe that there is not enough information coming out from the Australian authorities over the attacks. They - and Indian student groups in Australia - feel the Australian media isn't doing enough to highlight the issue.

Many Indians I have spoken to find the discourse in the Australian media on the spate of attacks superficial. Tim Colebatch, an editor at Melbourne Age, writes that such incidents happen "because human beings are imperfect creatures. They can be selfish, they can be hateful, they can enjoy hurting, even killing, other humans. It happens here, it happens in India, it happens everywhere."

Mr Colebatch then tries to offer some clues to why Indians may have been attacked. One of the victims, Nitin Garg, was taking a short cut through a park when he was murdered, while Australians "instinctively know that their parks are not safe at night, and avoid using them as short cuts". And so, he writes, Mr Garg has "become another victim of our epidemic of alcohol abuse, our tolerance of extreme violence in films and screen games - and yes, of the Romper Stomper racism that seems to live on among teenagers in the western suburbs, now directed against Indians instead of Vietnamese."



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Alcohol abuse and exposure to violent films can hardly be a problem with Australian youth alone. And fringe racism exists in many countries in the world. Mr Colebatch's interesting observations notwithstanding, Indians feel that they are in the dark about the spate of attacks.

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/soutikbiswas/2010/01/why\\_are\\_indian\\_students\\_being\\_attacked\\_in\\_australi.html](http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/soutikbiswas/2010/01/why_are_indian_students_being_attacked_in_australi.html)

#### **India calls for end to 'exploitation'**

The Age  
January 11 2010

THE crisis involving Indian international students has widened with the Indian Government calling for an end to the exploitation of students in Australia by dodgy colleges and greedy employers, on top of increased efforts to curb violent urban attacks.

Following a week of heated argument over whether attacks on students are racially motivated, India's Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi, focused attention on other problems that students face. He said Australia should crack down on unscrupulous college operators and employers who paid students less than the minimum wage.

"The Government must check that," he told The Age.

He said Australian police were quick to arrest students for visa violations, such as working more than the allowed 20 hours a week during term time, but did little to catch those responsible for exploiting them.

"If the Government can be so strict in arresting the students who work more than 20 hours because they are violating the law, why can't they arrest the employer who is not paying the minimum wage?" he said.

The Indian and Australian governments were aware of bogus training colleges that effectively acted as visa factories, he said.

Mr Ravi said the Indian Government was trying to "control" the number of students enrolling at colleges suspected of operating for the express purpose of obtaining permanent residency in Australia rather than education.

In May last year The Age revealed concerns by senior Australian Government officials that widespread rackets among private trade colleges were "out of control" and undermining Australia's education, immigration and employment systems.

Complex networks linking colleges, migration agents and businesses indicated the involvement of organised crime, one official said.

The leading body of overseas student educators, the International Education Association of Australia, has also warned that criminal networks operating within Australia's \$16.6 billion international education industry are abusing the system to smuggle people into the country.

More than 500 Indian nationals were refused student visas in the three months to September last year because of bogus financial documents, according to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

The private vocational education sector is bracing for more college closures following a sharp drop in Indian demand resulting from a visa crackdown, violent assaults and revelations of dodgy colleges.

Student visa applications from India fell by nearly half between July and October 2009 compared with the same period last year. A spokesman for the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin, Munish Gupta, said Indians around the world were concerned about the attacks experienced by Indian students in Australia.



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"We are also cognisant of the fact that all of the cases may not be racially motivated. We've seen similar incidents in the US, Canada, UK and other parts of the world," he said.

He said the rapid migration of students to Australia in the past four years had prompted an increase in colleges offering courses such as commercial cookery.

"Somewhere along the line the students from India got skewed in that direction," he said.

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/india-calls-for-end-to-exploitation-20100110-m0oc.html>

#### **Global Education: Wooing students to Japan and China**

The New Straits Times - Malaysia  
January 09 2010

Japan aims to step up its recruitment of foreign students by increasing the number of courses taught in English, write SUZIEANA UDA NAGU and SHARIFAH ARFAH.

THE news that Waseda University in Tokyo had the most number of international students among Japanese tertiary institutions as of last year came as no surprise to those who are familiar with the university.

"I do feel as if I'm in a European country whenever I visit Waseda University," says Norhana Rashid (not her real name), a Malaysian who resides in Tokyo.

She was responding to a report in Japan Today, a Tokyo-based online newspaper, that the population of foreign students in the country has reached a record 132,720 as of May last year — up 8,891 from the previous year.

According to Japan Student Services Organisation, Waseda University has 3,125 students, followed by Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Oita Prefecture with 2,786 and the University of Tokyo with 2,473.

Waseda University received its first foreign student in 1899 from China and has taken in many more since then.

Similar to other institutions in Japan, students from China, Korea and Taiwan form the majority of foreign learners at Waseda University.

In the university's bid to become a truly global campus, it aims to accept 8,000 international students — 4,000 undergraduates and 4,000 postgraduates — and increase the ratio of foreign professors to local ones by 20 per cent in the near future.

Recruiting Malaysian students at the Facon Education Fair held in Kuala Lumpur recently is line with this goal, says Waseda University Southeast Asia office regional manager Masaki Tamada.

"We currently have only 41 Malaysians on campus and we would like more to join us. In fact, we hope to recruit more from Southeast Asia," adds Tamada.

If the university's ties with approximately 500 universities across 70 countries are not impressive enough, Tamada hopes that students from this region would consider Waseda based on the 34 courses— 13 undergraduate and 21 postgraduate — delivered in English.

"From this year onwards, Political Science and certain Science programmes will also be in English," says Tamada. The education sector worldwide is increasingly reliant on income from overseas students' fees.

With so many countries fighting for a slice of the international student market cake, players must be creative in commercialising their education services.



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Given international students' preference for Anglo-Saxon countries (such as Australia and the United Kingdom) as study destinations, other countries view courses delivered in English as the answer to levelling the playing field.

In France, about 500 programmes are taught in English. The move to offer English courses is driven by the notion that English — which is spoken by 500 million people as opposed to 220 million French speakers — is the tongue of international teaching.

Japan — which is among the top countries after China and India, which have been fuelling the growth of international students' market in English-speaking countries — is also seriously considering courses taught in English as part of its internationalisation efforts.

Two years ago, Japan unveiled its ambitious plan to recruit 300,000 international students by 2020.

The Global 30 Project for Establishing Core Universities for Internationalisation was the mechanism implemented to realise this goal — through select measures, which include the recruitment of foreign students and establishment of internationalisation centres.

Waseda University is among the 13 universities identified to spearhead the Global 30 initiative.

“They will receive prioritised financial assistance of between ¥200 and ¥400 million (RM14.75 million) annually for the next five years. With this aid, each university will strive to recruit 3,000 to 8,000 international students,” noted the Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Ministry website.

Yokohama National University (YNU) may not be among the 13 chosen academies but it has taken its own initiative to introduce programmes in English.

Associate Professor Yamamoto Yasuo believes this is the way forward for Japan “as it is facing tough competition for international students”.

YNU will first introduce English courses at the postgraduate level.

“Soon, those pursuing Master’s degree programmes in Infrastructure Management; Public Policy and Taxation; and doctoral degrees in Engineering, can complete their dissertations in English,” says Yasuo, who heads the YNU task force for designing English programmes.

“This will enable foreign students to study in Japan even with minimum proficiency in the language,” adds Yasuo, who was at the Facon Education Fair with his team to promote courses at YNU to Malaysian students.

“YNU is making great efforts to take on foreign students from Malaysia and neighbouring countries. We currently have only 18 Malaysian students,” he says. Meanwhile, Chinese universities are banking on the popularity of Mandarin and traditional Chinese medicine among foreign learners to boost their student numbers.

It is reported that the number of non-Chinese people learning Mandarin outside of China has soared to 30 million in the last five years.

“Many want to learn Mandarin as they believe that China will be the dominant power in the 21st century and employment opportunities for those with a proficiency in Mandarin are immense,” states a 2007-report in *The Economist*.

Beijing’s Capital Medical University (CMU) Office of International Cooperation officer David Feng hopes the growing international interest in traditional Chinese medicine will persuade Malaysians to join the university.

“The influence of traditional Chinese medicine is great and more people globally are accepting it as an alternative form of treatment. So far, we have only one Malaysian undergraduate at CMU and we hope more will join us as we are one of China’s top medical institutions,” says Feng.



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Beijing University of Technology (BUT), a multi-disciplinary university established in 1960, receives about 500 foreign students yearly.

BUT International Exchanges department officer Zhou Yuan says: "However, we don't have any Malaysians on campus. We know that about 24 per cent of Malaysians are ethnic Chinese.

"We hope the economic prosperity of Malaysia will spur them on to invest in education in China."

Re-engineer the education market

JAPANESE and Chinese universities may have popular appeal but they do not pose much threat to private educational institutions in Malaysia.

UCSI University Business Development and Student Affairs vice-president Moses Ling Wei says: "There is no real competition as Malaysia also has a wide appeal." Aside from strong government support, Malaysia has a multicultural society that many foreign students want to experience.

"Having English as a second language has also helped boost student numbers," he adds.

Foreign students are also attracted to the low cost of living, good infrastructure and political stability in Malaysia.

"Our position in the Organisation of the Islamic Conference has put us on the world map and indirectly influenced students from other Muslim countries to study here," he says.

While some foreign students may find Malaysia attractive, others may choose Japan and China for their strengths.

"China positions itself as the place to study Mandarin, Chinese Literature and traditional Chinese medicine, while Japan is the country for Biotechnology and Automobile courses.

"There is also strong government backing to attract foreign students in these two countries, which is why they have been active in promoting their courses in Malaysia." He adds that the education scene, like any other industry, is bound to face competition and this is something which local players have already anticipated.

Taylor's University College vice chancellor and president Professor Datuk Hassan Said agrees.

"We already have 70,000 international students and are aiming for 150,000 by 2020. Most other countries also aspire to raise their international profile and intake of foreign students," says Hassan.

That China and Japan are keen to recruit Malaysian students should be taken as a sign that "they recognise the quality of our students and education system".

Hassan believes that the competition for students with other countries does Malaysia a lot of good.

"This means we have to strive to provide top-notch services to our students," he says.

Ling agrees.

"(Competition) creates a healthy market force which will spur on business opportunities and ultimately re-engineer the education market." As visa restrictions on those bound for Western countries become tighter, more students are looking towards Asia as their study destination.

"We in Malaysia need to be flexible in order to remain attractive to international students," says Ling.

What's on offer



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AS of last May, there are 2,395 Malaysian students pursuing their studies in Japan. They make up the fifth largest international student population in Japan after China, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam. On the other hand, there are more than 1,300 Malaysians students in China as of last year.

However, Japanese and Chinese tertiary institutions feel that the number is too small and are aggressively recruiting Malaysian students.

Representatives of these institutions which participated in the recent Facon Education Fair held in Kuala Lumpur shared what they have to offer to Malaysian students.

Senshu University International academic affairs foreign student adviser Koji Ogawa "We have never had very many Malaysians on campus and we hope that our 128-year-old history as a private university in Chiyoda, Tokyo founded at the dawn of modern Japan would entice them to join us.

In addition to this, our strength is in the Social Sciences. We are proud to have the largest number of undergraduates and postgraduates pursuing courses in the Social Sciences in Japan." Takasaki City University of Economics senior lecturer Professor Takeshi Mizuguchi "We are a municipal university located in Takasaki City in Gunma Prefecture, which began as a junior college in 1952 and became a university in 1957 with only one faculty — Economics.

Being a small university run by the regional government, we are able to keep our fees lower than most institutions in Japan.

We have participated in several education fairs to boost the number of Malaysian students who are interested in Economics, Management or Regional Policy courses. Currently we have only one Malaysian student." North China Electric Power University (NCEPU) foreign students director Wu Chungqing "NCEPU was founded in 1958 and has two campuses — in Beijing and Baoding. Support from China's seven biggest electric power plants has helped us become one of the foremost universities in Engineering studies.

Of some 35,000 students, we only have about 200 foreign students — most are mature learners. We don't have any Malaysians on campus yet, so we hope to attract some at the education fair.

If there are enough Malaysians pursuing Engineering at NCEPU, a cooperative can be established between Malaysia and China, where graduates can work in the field of Engineering in Malaysia and benefit from technology transfer.

For example, should our Vietnamese students graduate from NCEPU and return home, they would be the top choice of Chinese companies affiliated with the seven power plants when they establish projects in Vietnam." Renmin University of China (RUC) International students office officer Li Lianjing "RUC specialises in Humanities and Social Sciences but, oddly enough, most students who visited our booth were keen to know more about courses in Economics and Engineering, which we do not offer.

We are not discounting the possibility of RUC offering these courses in the future since there is demand for them.

We welcome Malaysian students as they generally perform well. We currently have about 200 Malaysians on campus pursuing various undergraduate courses." Beijing International Chinese College (BICC) teaching affairs department project supervisor Sun Wei "BICC was established only five years ago and it is devoted to the international promotion of Chinese language.

It hopes to promote Chinese language through the training of Mandarin teachers, organising language camps and standardised Chinese language proficiency tests.

BICC has around 300 international students from 40 countries, including eight from Malaysia.

We are currently seeking students to enrol on the Master's degree in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages, which emphasises the history of China, Chinese culture, and inter-cultural communication, aside from listening and speaking.



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We hope that our students can eventually teach the language at university level.”

[http://www.nst.com.my/Current\\_News/NST/articles/20100109155916/Article/index\\_html](http://www.nst.com.my/Current_News/NST/articles/20100109155916/Article/index_html)

### **'Hate crimes' spark global bad press**

The Age  
January 08 2010

THE international fallout from the murder of Nitin Garg has spread well beyond India, with media outlets in Asia, the Middle East, North America and Europe reporting the trouble in Australia.

The bad press, which until now has largely been confined to India, has raised fears that the damage to Australia's \$17 billion international education industry could spread to other countries.

In China, the birthplace of almost a quarter of Australia's international students, the major state-run television network yesterday reported the factually incorrect claim that police had confirmed that the murder of Indian national Ranjodh Singh, whose partially burnt body was found beside a country road in south-west NSW on December 29, was "racially motivated".

The official Chinese newsagency, Xinhua, this week reported that the stabbing murder of Mr Garg, as he made his way to work at a fast-food outlet in Melbourne's west on Saturday night, had taken place "in the wake of a wave of attacks upon Indian students in Australia last year".

In an editorial, Gulf News, of the United Arab Emirates, said "motive based on hatred" was "the common trend" in a number of attacks in urban Australia recently.

"This trend is simply unacceptable," the paper said. "Law enforcement authorities and judicial officials at state and federal level in Australia must take every possible measure to ensure these hate crimes are prosecuted to the fullest extent possible. There can be no velvet glove treatment for those who commit heinous crimes."

The Financial Times, The Telegraph, The Irish Times, the Voice of America and The New Zealand Herald were among publications that also produced their own reports on the situation.

The Malaysian Sun published its report under the headline: "Australian Government unable to stop crime against Indians."

As politicians and officials continued to defend Australia as a safe place to study, Australia's high commissioner to India, Peter Varghese, told journalists in New Delhi race may have been a motive for some recent attacks on Indian nationals, particularly where the attackers engaged in racial abuse. But he told a press conference most assaults on Indian students were "opportunistic urban crime".

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/hate-crimes-spark-global-bad-press-20100107-lwsg.html>

### **Indian student visa applications fall by half**

The Age  
January 07 2010

THE number of Indians applying for visas to study in Australia has plunged dramatically, heightening fears for the nation's \$17 billion international education industry.



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The latest Immigration Department data, for the period from July to October 31, shows a 46 per cent drop in overseas student visa applications from India compared with the same period in 2008.

The figures come as India seethed over the murder in Melbourne on the weekend of Nitin Garg, stabbed to death as he walked through a Footscray park on his way to work at Hungry Jack's on Saturday night.

In an eight-point warning, India advised its students to take "certain basic precautions in being alert to their own security while moving around".

The Foreign Ministry's advisory also asks Indian citizens to report "complaints" to Indian diplomatic missions.

Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard and acting Premier Rob Hulls yesterday said the travel advisory was a matter for the Indian Government, but Victoria remained a safe place for international students.

A leader of Melbourne's Indian community has meanwhile flown to Delhi to reassure Indians that Melbourne is a safe and tolerant city.

Vasan Srinivasan, president of the Federation of Indian Associations of Victoria, plans to hold a media conference in India to say that last weekend's murder was not a racist attack.

"To characterise such a criminal act as 'racist' inflames unnecessarily community sentiments and fears and presents a totally misrepresented picture of life as it really is in Melbourne," he said yesterday.

"Sadly, on the very same evening a young Australian man too was the victim of a random stabbing."

Mr Srinivasan accused some local Indians of sensationalising attacks "for their own self-promotion".

Gautam Gupta, spokesman for the Federation of Indian Students of Australia, who has been vocal about race-based attacks, said it would be unfortunate if Indian organisations were "pitched against one another".

"I won't be a party to that," he told The Age last night.

Friends of Mr Garg are making preparations to have his body embalmed before it leaves for his homeland. Aman Singh, a friend of the family, said he expected the body to be released by the Coroner either last night or today.

"Then we will prepare to take him back to India," Mr Singh said.

The decline in student visa applications follows a year in which - aside from reports of violent attacks - unscrupulous practices by some colleges and migration agents also battered Australia's reputation as a study destination.

The data also shows that overall student visa applications dropped by 26 per cent. Applications from Nepal plummeted 85 per cent, from 5696 to 845, while those from Korea, Brazil and the United States each dipped by about 20 per cent.

Applications from China increased slightly, by 0.2 per cent, while those from Vietnam jumped 19 per cent.

Universities Australia chief executive Glenn Withers said the number of Indians applying to study at Australian universities had dropped by about 20 per cent compared with last year.

He said a reduction in Indian students would be likely to have a greater impact on vocational colleges, where a greater proportion of Indians enrolled.



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Mr Withers said there were anecdotal reports that the media attention had caused some middle-class Indian parents to turn away from Australia and to other countries instead. He said part of the problem was that Indians had started studying in Australia in large numbers only recently, so there were few alumni to counter bad press with stories of their own experiences.

Dr Withers said he was more concerned by immigration data showing interest from China may be softening, and may be related to warnings published by the Chinese Government last year about the quality of some Australian colleges.

Andrew Smith, the chief executive of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training, which represents private colleges, said he was expecting a "significant" decline in international enrolments this year from several countries, including India and China.

He said reputational damage, the strength of the Australian dollar, and a tightening of the student visa application process, had all contributed to the drop, which could threaten the viability of colleges and lead to job losses.

Education is Australia's second most valuable export after metals.

Education is Victoria's biggest export, worth more than \$4 billion a year.

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/indian-student-visa-applications-fall-by-half-20100106-lubt.html>

#### **Australia 'safe for overseas students'**

The Sydney Morning Herald  
January 05 2010

Despite a number of attacks against Indians, Australia is a safe place for international students, Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard says.

Accounting graduate Nitin Garg, 21, was stabbed to death on his way to his part-time job at a Hungry Jacks fast food outlet in Melbourne's western suburbs on Saturday night.

While police investigations are underway, Victorian police have said there's no evidence the attack was racially motivated.

Ms Gillard stressed that violent acts can occur anywhere in the world.

"Obviously we've seen the death of a young man in Melbourne, that act is to be condemned by every Australian," she told reporters in Adelaide on Tuesday.

"There is a family grieving, the loss of their son as a result of this violent act.

"Australia is overwhelmingly a safe place.

"We all know, tragically, in the world that we live in, whether you're in Melbourne, or whether you're in New Delhi, you can come to grief through violent incidents."

The attack is the latest in a series against Indians in Australia and has been widely condemned in India.

Ms Gillard said that since previous attacks, policing efforts had been stepped up in known trouble spots and the government was working to educate students before they arrived on Australian shores.

"Making sure students who come here get more information and correct information before they come, regulating education agents, some of whom have not given students accurate information."

Ms Gillard acknowledged the government was cooperating with the Indian media, which had condemned the act and was questioning the safety of Australia for its students.



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"It's a question of getting accurate information to people whether it's here in Adelaide, or in Mumbai," Ms Gillard said when asked by a reporter if the federal government was kowtowing to the Indian media.

Ms Gillard stressed Australia is a safe place to study and called on Australians to go out of their way to make the half a million international students feel at home.

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/australia-safe-for-overseas-students-20100105-lqmc.html>

#### **New course caters for international nursing students**

ABC News  
January 05 2010

A group of 25 nursing students from Asian countries have begun a new three-month training course at La Trobe University's Bendigo campus.

The university has set up the course to fill a demand in the international education market.

It allows nurses with an overseas qualification and two years' working experience, to be registered to work in Victoria.

Coordinator Victor Rajeevan says it is unclear how many students are planning to work in Victoria once they finish.

"It's very hard to tell if the students want to continue staying here or if they want to finish their studies and go back to their home country," he said.

"But it's quite popular, [because] they'll be able to get their registration to practise in Victoria."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/01/05/2785669.htm>