

WORLD education NEWS & REVIEWS

A Publication of World Education Services Vol. 9 No. 3 Summer 1996

TRENDS

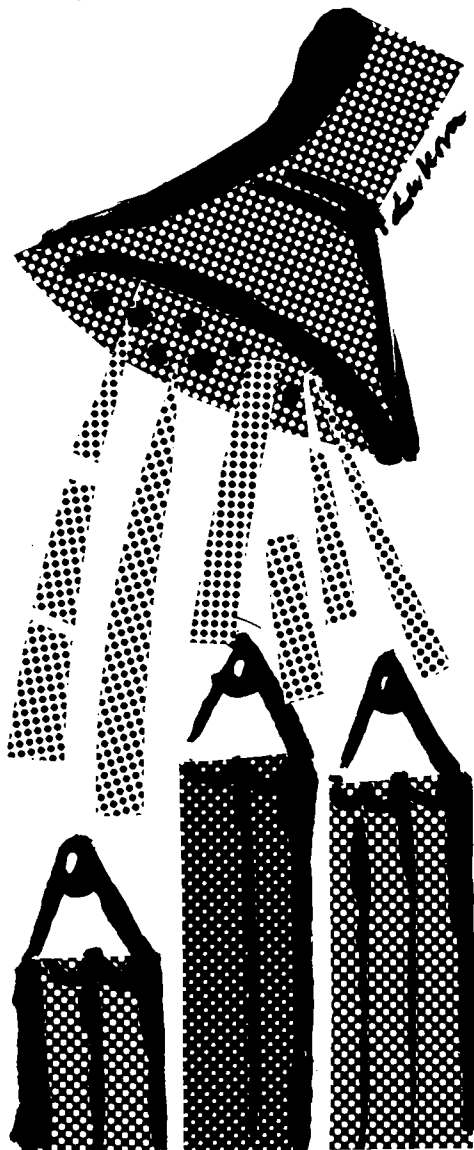
Update on Mexico

by Alan Adelman

Until a year and a half ago, many Mexican families had finally become convinced that after years of sacrifice, the country was about to make good on promises for a better life. The stores were full of products unseen in Mexico and which they would soon be able to afford. Unprecedented numbers of international companies were coming to Mexico and good employment opportunities were rapidly increasing.

These hopes were dashed when the peso devalued. The cold statistics are that: 15 of each 100 working Mexicans receive less than the daily minimum wage of approximately US\$3.00; 68 of each 100 workers receive incomes between US\$3.00 and \$15.00 daily. These two levels account for 83 percent of workers. And if one thinks there is a solid middle class among the remaining 17 percent of workers, consider the impact of the 32 percent rise in the minimum wage last year against the 61 percent increase in "basic" goods and services. According to the newspaper *Mexico City Reforma*, the privileged workers in Mexico with

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five times the minimum wage must earmark about 50 percent of income for food (an average family of five persons), 33 percent of income for housing, electricity, and other domestic necessities; and 15 percent for round-trip transportation via bus and metro. That leaves two percent for the luxuries of life.

Education

In education, there is some reason for optimism about further progress, given that President Ernesto Zedillo, who was educated in the public school system as a working class youth, repeatedly lists education as his administration's top priority. It was none other than Zedillo, who, as education secretary in 1993, oversaw the educational reforms that extended from six to nine (through the completion of junior high school) the years of obligatory school attendance. For these reasons, there are many in Mexico who still hold out hope that Zedillo will succeed where past presidents have failed.

But the challenge ahead is considerable. Owing to a baby boom which has doubled the population every generation, the Mexican education system mirrors the Mexican economy in forming a pyramid with a wide base and a narrow apex. *Continued on page 20*

Published by
World Education Services, Inc.

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Editor *Marilyn Arko Umehara*
Designer *Luba Lukova*
Circulation *Montroe Headd*
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Printed by *Northeastern Press*

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World Education News & Reviews (ISSN 0897-6724) is a quarterly publication of World Education Services, a private, not-for-profit organization founded and incorporated in 1974. The views and opinions expressed in articles and information submissions published in *WENR* are those of the authors and contributors and not necessarily those of WES.

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PUBLISHER'S CORNER



**The World
at Our
Fingertips**

The internet has placed the world at our fingertips. With so many institutions now developing home pages, World Education Services evaluators routinely use the web for research and, if nothing else, to obtain e-mail addresses, which make communication all that faster and easier.

The recently announced European database "Ortelius" is even more promising. When finished, it will provide information on all academic institutions, programs, and awards in Western Europe. Information on Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America is also available on the net, although not all countries or all institutions are represented. Only Africa and the Middle East remain largely absent.

We are accustomed to obtaining our information from comprehensive country monographs that present education sequentially from elementary school through the university level, including occupational and professional training offered in the non-university sector. A key component of these publications are the placement recommendations that provide guidelines on how credentials might be viewed in the US context. The sources available to us today give us current information, but not always in a manner that we can readily use and without the guidelines on how credentials might be assessed in the US. Our new challenge is not only to learn how to use the new technologies effectively, but to develop the instruments that will help us use information when we find it.

Mariam Assefa

COUNTRY UPDATES



AFGHANISTAN Kabul University Reopens

What is left of Kabul University was reopened by the government in April. Kabul University had been closed since April 1992, when a coalition of resistance groups overthrew the Soviet sympathizer, President Najibullah, and then turned their guns on each other two

years later. The campus was one of the frontlines, taking the brunt of the rocket and bomb attacks.

Hand-to-hand fighting took place in the dormitories. Most of the faculty buildings were badly damaged. Equipment was looted and sold in Pakistan, and the campus was heavily mined and littered with unexploded devices.

The government decision to officially reopen the university followed months of relative calm and a decision to try and force out the Taliban, an Islamic fundamentalist faction which has closed the country's two other chief universities in Kandahar and Herat and also stopped the education of girls and women.

The University has always reflected the tragic events that have shaped Afghanistan this century. Founded in 1932 with the faculty of medicine serving as a nucleus, it has closed only once before—in 1969 for six months following a student rebellion.

Its educational system has always been influenced by whichever foreign power has dominated the country, starting with the French, followed by the Germans, the British, and more recently the Russians, who occupied the country from 1979 to 1989. Before the Russian occupation, Kabul had 11,000 students, of whom over 60 percent were women, and was one of the top ten universities in North Africa, Asia and the Middle East, according to Unesco standards. For University Chancellor Amir Hassanyar, the worst period was during Russian occupation when "all academic freedom went."

Sixteen years of war have had their impact. Only the bullet-sprayed walls of the engineering faculty building remain standing. But there are signs of hope. The campus has been de-mined, buildings repaired and windows replaced. Students have begun to move into the dormitories, even though there is no electricity and no cooking facilities.

Over 16,000 students sat for the university entrance exam in February. Those with perfect scores gained a university place. About 5,000 new students were expected to start the academic year. Students have seemingly insurmountable obstacles: no money, no books, no electricity, family responsibilities, empty lecture rooms, and worn out

lecturers. The fact that they wish to continue is a testimony to their courage and fearless optimism.

The Times Higher 4/12/96

AUSTRALIA Asian Students to Be Major Consumers of Australian Law Studies

Asian students will be seeking more legal education places in Australia over the next decade according to a report, *Australian International Education and Training: Directives, Issues and Opportunities*, by the International Legal Services Advisory Council/ILSAC.

The report states that law is playing an increasingly important role in international affairs, government, trade and commerce in the Asia Pacific region.

According to the report, Australia's strengths in legal education are being recognized by non-common-law countries in the region, which represent a new source of demand for international legal education.

Malaysia is already an established market. India, China, Indonesia and Vietnam have potentially large demand. Cooperative links between Australian law schools and university law schools overseas will also become more important. Essential factors in future success for Australian legal education in the region will include active promotion of courses and institutions. Increasingly, Australian university law schools will see competition from Asian universities.

The report concludes that overseas demand for legal education has changed in the past three years. There has been an increase in demand for postgraduate and special courses to meet particular needs, while the demand to study law as a vocation is expected to slow. This has led to a move by Australian universities to make international law a significant part of legal education.

Campus Review 1/25-31/96

CHINA Foreign Experts Sought

China will hire more foreign professors to teach agricultural, technical, economic and legal subjects in its colleges and universities under a regulated employment process, said Xu Zhenyuan, deputy-director of the State Bureau of Foreign Experts.

China now employs more than 70,000 foreigners each year, including 14,000 cultural and educational experts and teachers working in more than 1,100 universities, press, art, health, and sports institutions. Even kindergartens have begun to hire foreign teachers.

The Bureau established a regulation in May 1993, requiring all foreigners seeking jobs to go through Chinese intermediary organizations.

A job fair was held in late March where 21 intermediary organizations and 15 foreign talent agencies found jobs

for more than 400 foreigners. These job fairs will be held on a regular basis in the future.

China Daily 4/9/96

MBA Students to Be Recruited

China will recruit 1,500 MBA students this year and allow more colleges and universities to grant MBA degrees.

The MBA programs were officially begun in 1991 when the State Education Commission authorized trial programs at nine universities. Among these institutions were Qinghai, Shanghai Jiaotong, and Fudan universities. There are now 25 colleges and universities providing MBAs.

Among the newest institutions is the China Europe International Business School/CEIBS, which opened on the campus of Shanghai Jiaotong University in late 1994. This year the school enrolled 65 students in its MBA program out of a total 2,550 applicants. The school is a joint-venture training facility whose diplomas are not yet recognized by the State.

China Daily 3/14/96, 4/8/96

Foreign Students Flock to China

The number of foreign students in China has trebled over the past five years. The State Education Commission revealed yesterday that 37,000 foreign scholars studied in China last year—three times the 1991 figure.

Last year, 4,097 foreign students from 147 countries and regions received Chinese government scholarships. Of these, 40 percent studied for bachelor's degrees, 18 percent for master's degrees, 4 percent for doctorates, and 38 percent for other purposes. A total of 283 colleges and universities nationwide received 32,758 non-government-sponsored foreign students last year, up 49 percent from the previous year and four times more than in 1991.

Because of the reform of the education system and opening-up policy, a marked feature of the increase in foreign students is the fact that the number of university-sponsored places has far exceeded government-supported places over the past two years.

China Daily 4/18/96

GERMANY

Fewer Foreign Students Attracted

The government has announced that German universities are attracting fewer students from Australia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.

Among the reasons cited for the drop in enrollment were the length and complexity of German university programs, the lack of academic advisement and support, and the difficulties in gaining appropriate recognition for German credentials in Anglo-Saxon systems of education. Students were also put off by the difficulty in mastering the German language. The current climate of xenophobia added to students' reluctance to study in Germany.

Le Monde de l'Education 5/96

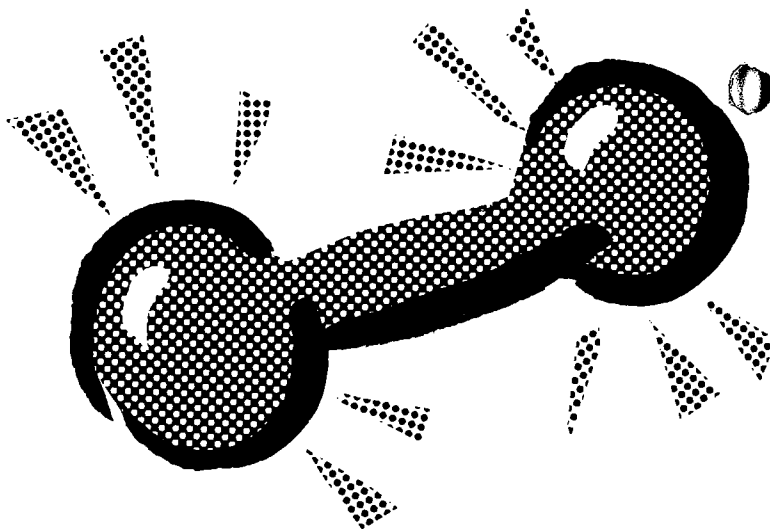
INDIA

Institutions Deemed Universities

The former Lakshimibai National College of Physical Education, established by the Government in 1957 to provide quality training in physical education, was recently "deemed to be a university" by the University Grants Commission. Its new name is Lakshimibai National Institute of Physical Education, Gwalior.

The university offers full-time study for a Bachelor of Physical Education (3 years), a Master of Physical Education (2 years), Master of Physical Education (3 years of summer coursework) for in-service candidates, a MPhil in Physical Education (1 year) and a PhD in Physical Education. The institution is co-educational and residential.

The Manipal Academy of Higher Education, granted university status in June 1993, began as the Kasturba Medical College/KMC in 1953. It currently enrolls 5,737 students and its degrees are recognized in over 40 countries. The Manipal Academy of Higher Education consists of: Kasturba Medical College, Manipal; Kasturba Medical College, Mangalore; College of Dental Surgery, Manipal; College of Dental Surgery, Mangalore; and the College of Nursing, Manipal. MAHE offers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in various faculties of medicine, dentistry, nursing and allied health sciences. It also



offers diploma/certificate technician courses in physiotherapy, speech therapy and audiology, operating theater, anesthesia, rehabilitation, ophthalmology, neuroscience, radiotherapy, radiodiagnosis, cardiovascular, and electrocardiography.

Clinical teaching for students is conducted at 10 associated hospitals, of which the largest is Kasturba Hospital in Manipal. Within the next three years, MAHE will build a Center for Humanities, offering six-week courses in languages and arts appreciation; a Manipal Science Center for research in biological sciences; and the MAHE Institute of Technology focusing on engineering technology.

University News 11/5/95 and 2/5/96

ITALY

Fake Degrees Are a Boom Industry

Bogus universities are worrying the Italian university ministry and agencies that advise home and foreign students. Advertising in the press, the universities promise, for a hefty fee, "a degree for everyone" or that "you, too, can have a degree without difficulty." Prices range from about \$6,000 to occasionally ten times as much.

The ministry issued a "black list" of bogus degree mills in 1993 and 1994, and is now updating it. There are almost 100 in Italy, but legally little can be done to stop the often ingenious and ludicrous scams.

Bogus universities operating in Italy generally claim parent universities in other countries. An Italian can, for example, obtain a degree from the Italian branch of "Kensington University," which is in California. Then there is the Italian branch of "Northwest London University," or the "Melchikov Institute" in Naples, which claims links with Odessa, or various self-styled institutions claiming legitimacy from universities in Ecuador, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Spain, the United States, and Latvia.

Italy's National Academic Recognition and Information Center tries to keep track and to warn prospective students who seek its advice. It also keeps the ministry informed and regularly meets other European agencies to exchange information.

Silvia Capucci, center spokeswoman, said, "We have several cardboard boxes full of data on these institutions. Some are amazingly ingenious. They will offer to count working years for credits, set up a couple of weekend seminars, then the student pays his or her money and receives a degree. The degrees are an orgy of fake parchment, Gothic script, booming declarations in Latin and/or "olde" English, sealing wax and ribbons.

"Often the clients of these bogus universities are people trying to upgrade themselves, such as a building contractor who wants to hang an engineering degree on his wall to impress clients."

The existence of bogus universities can indirectly damage legitimate and academically worthy universities which, by choice, remain outside the system, such as John Cabot University, the American University in Rome, the Johns Hopkins University in Bologna—all highly respectable institutions.

The Times Higher 4/12/96

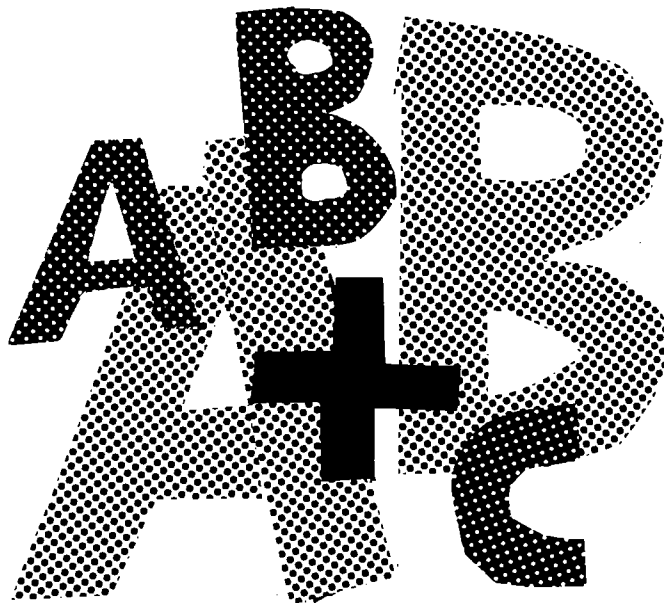
JORDAN

New Directive for Tawjihi Transcripts

The Jordanian Ministry of Education has implemented a new policy regarding Tawjihi score reports. These transcripts are available from the ministry itself in both Arabic and English. An applicant submitted a translation—rather than an official English version—to an AMIDEAST member institution. The institution questioned the document, and

upon investigation, AMIDEAST learned that the scores listed were indeed higher than those the student actually earned. The Ministry of Education has asked AMIDEAST to pass this information on with the request that only the official English version of the Tawjihi transcripts be accepted, and not commercial translations of the Arabic version. AMIDEAST/Jordan itself will no longer translate Arabic Tawjihi transcripts.

AMIDEAST Institutional Membership Update 4/96



Ministry of Higher Education to Be Abolished; "Comprehensive Schools" Established

As part of recent decisions regarding reform in Jordanian higher education, the Ministry of Higher Education will eventually be abolished and its duties distributed between the Ministry of Education and the Council for Higher Education. When this decision is implemented, admissions decisions will be made by the universities themselves and new admissions criteria will be introduced (we do not yet know what these are); currently, university admission is handled centrally by the Ministry of Higher Education, and decisions are made solely on the basis of grades.

Other aspects of the reform will include efforts to improve educational standards, redefine and strengthen the role of community colleges in society, and gear higher education towards development and labor-market needs. With regard to the latter, the Ministry of Education is establishing "comprehensive" schools throughout the country. These schools will offer academic coursework as well as vocational training. By the year 2000, the government hopes that at least 50 percent of boys and 35 percent of girls will be enrolled in comprehensive schools.

AMIDEAST Institutional Membership Update 4/96

