

NZ and Australia react to crime fear

Currency

		1xUS\$ =currency*
Argentinean	Pesos	2.894
Australian	Dollar	1.555
Brazilian	Real	2.941
British	Pound	0.631
Bulgarian	Leva	1.753
Canadian	Dollar	1.371
Chilean	Pesos	685.41
Chinese (PR)	Yuan	8.277
Czech	Koruny	29.86
Danish	Kroner	6.798
Egyptian	Pound	6.135
EU	Euro	0.900
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.799
Hungarian	Forint	233.63
Icelandic	Kronur	80.920
Indonesian	Rupiah	8,503.0
Israeli	New Shekels	4.442
Japanese	Yen	116.82
Maltese	Lira	0.408
Mexican	Peso	10.862
New Zealand	Dollar	1.753
Norwegian	Kroner	7.540
Polish	Zloty	4.028
Russian	Rubles	30.680
Singaporean	Dollar	1.760
Slovakian	Koruny	37.552
South African	Rand	7.410
South Korean	Won	1,173.4
Swedish	Krona	8.340
Swiss	Franc	1.408
Taiwanese	NT Dollar	33.960
Thai	Baht	40.820
Turkish	Lira	1,377,500.0
Venezuelan	Bolivar	1,598.0

*Rates are subject to change and should be used as indications only. 07/09/03

New schools/acquisitions abound

A NUMBER of new schools/branches have been opening up this year. Wollongong University College Network in Australia opened its new Auckland campus in New Zealand earlier this year, and plans for a fourth college location, as well as Wollongong and Sydney, are already underway.

Also in Australia, the South Australian College of English has opened the Whitsundays College of English at Airlie Beach. In New Zealand, Language Schools New Zealand, operating in Queenstown and Christchurch, has opened a branch in Wellington. Finally, in the UK, Regent Language Training has acquired the Cambridge School of Languages, now to be known as Regent Cambridge. □

Reports of crime among Asian student communities in Australia and New Zealand are worrying parents and, in Australia, events have prompted police to talk to students in language learning institutions to alert them to the threat of extortion and kidnapping and warn them of the penalties for becoming involved in crime.

In New Zealand, there is concern among schools that press reports will dissuade parents from sending their children to the country, and the government is to send a taskforce to China to allay fears about safety in the country.

The *People's Daily* newspaper in China reported in an article earlier this year that students are getting involved in kidnapping, blackmailing, stealing and drug trafficking while studying overseas. It warned, "In the last two years, there has been an upward tendency in immoral behaviour and vicious cases incurred by international students in Australia and New Zealand.... So, some people are reduced to criminals while others their victims."

Incidents have been reported in recent months in both countries, and one judge in New Zealand warned that cases were likely to rise as the Chinese population increases. The *Waikato Times* reported that Judge Neil MacLean made the comments as he sentenced three Asian men – including two students – for kidnapping, aggravated robbery and assault of other Asian students in Waikato. The trio kidnapped three students and held them captive in a hotel, while extorting NZ\$6,000 (US\$3,423) from them.

In Australia, four Chinese students were charged earlier this year with the violent kidnapping of a Sydney restaurateur. He was held for two days and only released after his family paid the students the AUS\$600,000 (US\$385,852) ransom, which was later recovered by police.

Robert Ho, the business partner of the restaurateur involved, urged students to inform police about crimes that happened to them, but he told *The Australian*



NZ is banning under-10s from studying without parental supervision

newspaper that fear of reprisals and the language barrier prevented this from happening. "Student crime can only be controlled if victims help police track down the perpetrators," he said.

Sue Blundell at English Australia (EA) said that the association had been working with police in New South Wales, where most of the incidents have occurred. "EA has been cooperating with the police to incorporate [advice] into colleges' standard orientation packages," she said, adding, "Police have been careful

not to exaggerate the problem, saying it is only a very small minority of students, across all education sectors."

In New Zealand, the government is taking the problem seriously – not least because Chinese students make up the bulk of international students. Tony Browne, Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry Spokesperson, said, "It is not simply a perception of the media, but a concern at the highest level of government."

The Beijing mission, which was being planned at the time of

School chain in NZ goes under

MODERN Age Institute of Learning, a language school chain in New Zealand that had five campuses, closed earlier this year, although an investor was found for the Christchurch branch. The news prompted the New Zealand government to call for the education export levy to be increased to ensure students are not left without accommodation.

While other language schools stepped in to offer students alternative tuition arrangements, the government was forced to bail out students whose monies paid for accommodation had "gone elsewhere". Education Minister, Trevor Mallard, said, "It is not a matter of taxpayer generosity, it is my intention to shift the levy which these language schools pay... so it will cover these costs."

Five hundred students were enrolled at the schools when they

closed. It was one of the country's largest language school chains.

Robert Stevens of Education New Zealand praised the way the industry rallied around to look after Modern Age students. Language schools in New Zealand have to have a student fee protection policy in place.

"The collapse is a lesson to us all," he said. "All institutions owe it to their industry to ensure that they are [adopting] best possible financial practice." Stevens added that the levy should not be used for fee protection as its sole purpose. It was set up to foster better quality practice and enhance country-wide marketing.

Many other schools, including Carich Training Centre in Christchurch and Hawthorn English Language Centre in Auckland, are laying off staff, as Chinese student numbers drop. □

going to press, will see Education Minister, Trevor Mallard, and industry representatives, including Robert Stevens from Education New Zealand, meeting with the Chinese Education Minister.

The industry is underlining its new improved Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care for International Students, updated in July, with providers given until January to adopt the new standards. Stevens said, "The revised code... puts New Zealand at the forefront of best practice in the care and well-being of international students from around the world."

Mallard has also introduced a new law banning under-10 year olds from studying in the country without a parent or legal guardian, and under-13 year olds will need special approval. Boarding schools are exempt from the rule. The move is part of a tightening up of regulations aimed at restoring confidence overseas in the reputation of New Zealand's fourth-biggest export economy.

There have been concerns about the care provided for unaccompanied young students, many of whom come from Korea. □

Ialc continues to expand

THE INTERNATIONAL Association of Language Centres (Ialc) continues to grow, having admitted a further 10 language teaching centres to its network. It has also welcomed new school branches of existing member schools into the fold. Despite having strict criteria for entry and a rule limiting the number of school members from each destination, demand to join Ialc remains high among language schools around the world.

The 10 latest schools to have joined are Solexico and Becari Language School in Mexico; Academia Tica in Costa Rica; Latin Immersion in Chile and Argentina; European School of English and Bels in Malta; the London School of English, Language Specialists International and Canterbury Language Training in the UK; and Institut Linguistique Adenet and Alpha B from France.

Jan Capper at Ialc explained that all schools underwent a thorough inspection process prior to joining the association. □

Spain, Saudi Arabia start young

SPAIN'S Education Minister, Pilar del Castillo, has announced that Spanish children will start learning a foreign language from the age of six, rather than eight.

She also revealed that students entering university in Spain will be required to pass an oral exam in a foreign language from 2005. Del Castillo said that the move was essential for Spain to keep up with the rest of Europe in terms of linguistic ability.

The *revalida* exam – a part of university entrance requirements – will be modified to encompass the oral test. Del Castillo said the move would "increase the motivation of students to learn the power of expression in a foreign language". But the Student Union in Spain has protested against the move, saying such competency is unachievable without native language teachers and investment in

language labs, according to the *TES* newspaper.

Meanwhile, the Saudi Arabian government announced in August that it will introduce English language classes for the last year of primary school from the 2004 academic year. Currently, English language learning begins one year later, in the first year of "intermediate schooling". Acting Culture and Information Minister, Ali Al-Namlah, announced that the cabinet agreed to a proposal to introduce the teaching of English as a main subject in sixth grade.

Standards in English language teaching for older students are also to be improved. The Saudi Press Agency reported that improvements would be made, according to Al-Namlah, by "updating curricula, enhancing the competence of teachers and using modern technologies". □

Calendar

Nexus World of Study Asian Postgraduate MBA Fair

Date: 31 October - 1 November
Venue: Hanoi, Vietnam
Date: 2-3 November
Venue: Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Date: 8-9 November
Venue: Singapore
Date: 15-16 November
Venue: Hong Kong
Contact: Jason Newman, Nexus Media
Nexus House, Azalea Drive
Swanley, Kent, BR8 8HU, UK
Tel: +44 1322 660070
Fax: +44 1322 616305
Email: jason.newman@nexusmedia.com

Asian Student Fair

Date: 1-6 November
Venue: Karachi & Lahore, Pakistan
Contact: M S Mirza
International Educational Services, PO Box 10503
Karachi, 74400, Pakistan
Tel: +92 303 732 6602
Fax: +92 21 567 1540
Email: infoedu@cyber.net.pk

Int. Education Fair

Date: 1-2 November
Venue: Bangkok, Thailand
Contact: Saijai Sriyayanta, Tieca
503/30 KSL Tower 18th Floor
Sri-Ayudhaya Road
Phayathai, Rajthavee
Bangkok, 10400, Thailand
Tel: +662 642 6114
Fax: +662 642 6115
Email: admin@tieca.com

International Education Fairs of Turkey

Date: 4-8 November
Venue: Ankara, Izmir, Istanbul -Turkey
Contact: Global Visions Education
Mesrutiyet Cad., Asli Han No.
18/76, Kat 7, Istanbul
34440, Turkey
Tel: +90 212 251 1384
Fax: +90 212 251 0959
Email: info@ieft.net

CIEE Annual Conference

Date: 5-8 November
Venue: Budapest, Hungary
Contact: Karen Bailey, CIEE
633 Third Avenue, 20th Floor
New York, NY, 10017, USA
Tel: +1 212 822 2782
Fax: +1 212 822 2779
Email: conference@ciee.org

The Berlin Workshop

Date: 10-11 November
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Contact: Karl Badde, ICEF
Am Hofgarten 9, Bonn
53113, Germany
Tel: +49 228 201 190
Fax: +49 228 201 1944
Email: icefbonn@icef.com

Oriente European Ed. & Employment Fair

Date: 13-15 November
Venue: Brussels, Belgium
Contact: Astrid Callens, Orienta
Avenue de l'Armee 24
Brussels, 1040, Belgium
Tel: +32 274 16161
Fax: +32 273 20509
Email: acallens@cpexpo.com

London Language and Culture Show

Date: 14-15 November
Venue: London, UK
Contact: Kerri Underdown, Brintex
32 Vauxhall Bridge Road
London, SW1V 2SS, UK
Tel: +44 207 973 4603
Fax: +44 207 233 5054
Email: k.underdown@hgluk.com

ICC/ISS Workshop

Date: 14-16 November

Venue: Nagoya, Osaka, Tokyo- Japan
Contact: Tetsuo Otsuka, ICC
International Comm. Centre
Sankei Bldg 3F, 1-28-10
Takadanobaba, Shinjuku-ku
Tokyo, 169-0075, Japan
Tel: +81 3 5272 2330
Fax: +81 3 5272 2447
Email: otsuka@iss-ryugaku.co.jp

16th International Fair "Education and Career"

Date: 14-16 November
Venue: Moscow, Russia
Contact: Irina Shipilova, RTV Media
Shukhova str. 14 of. 301
Moscow, 113162, Russia
Tel: +7 095 2377226
Fax: +7 095 2370355
Email: rtv-media@mtu-net.ru

Swiss and Italian Education Fair

Date: 14-16 November
Venue: Lugano, Switzerland
Contact: Jimmy Smeraldi
Swiss Education Fair
Via Stazione 5, Muralto
6600, Switzerland
Tel: +41 917301734
Fax: +41 917511505
Email: admin@slondellostudente.ch

Kosa International Education Fair

Date: 16-17 November
Venue: Seoul, Korea
Contact: Jhun-Hyun Park
Kosa President c/o Myong
Dong Overseas Study Centre
Rm 302 Chungung Bldg
825-27 Yoksam-Dong
Seoul, 135-080, Korea
Tel: +82 275 47777
Fax: +82 255 61109
Email: mdostudy@chollian.net

Le Salon de L'Education

Date: 19-23 November
Venue: Paris, France
Contact: Caroline Lepetit,
L'Etudiant
27 Rue du Chemin Vert
Paris, 75011, France
Tel: +33 148 07 42 86
Fax: +33 148 07 02 92
Email: caroline.lepetit@letudiant.fr

SACO Student Fair

Date: 20-22 November
Venue: Stockholm, Sweden
Date: 26-27 November
Venue: Malmö, Sweden
Contact: Sandra Wahlgren, SACO
Box 174, Sollentuna
191 23, Sweden
Tel: +46 8 613 48 36
Fax: +46 70 733 71 88
Email: sandra.wahlgren@saco.se

Expolingua Berlin

Date: 21-23 November
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Contact: Rebecca Stromeyer, ICWE
Leibnizstr. 32, Berlin
10625, Germany
Tel: +49 303 276 140
Fax: +49 303 249 833
Email: infos@expolingua.com

Vieca International Education Fair

Date: 24-25 November
Venue: Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Date: 26-27 November
Venue: Hanoi, Vietnam
Contact: Vieca c/o Vietnam Education
Promotion Association
Vieca, 30 Ta Quang Buu
Hanoi, Vietnam
Tel: +84 482 23675
Fax: +84 482 23699
Email: vieca@fpt.vn

The Americas Workshop

Date: 15-16 December
Venue: Miami, USA
Contact: ICEF (as above)