

Indian students lucrative for Canada

RENU MEHTA

With input from News East West

Toronto

While there is huge potential for Indian students to study in Canada, Brand Canada is not that lucrative for them. According to the Canada India Education Council (CIEC) in Toronto, the government needs to take immediate steps to tap this productive market for its educational institutions.

There is a need to improve 'Brand Canada' in India," says Kam Rathee, vice president of CIEC. "Among the top four or five countries that attract most of Indian students, Canada has al-



Kam Rathee (L) with Canada-India Education Council chairman Pierre Pettigrew (C) and CEO Husain Neemuchwala (R)

ways been the weakest brand after the US, the UK and Australia," he says. "While the number of Indian students coming to Canada has increased over the last two to three years, it still has a long way to go."

According to Rathee, fees for foreign students are very high in the country.

"In fact, Canada charges three times more fees from foreign students than local students for imparting the same education and handing out the same diplomas and degrees."

In 2010, foreign students pumped more than \$ 8 billion into the Canadian economy, supporting 86,000 jobs. There were 218,000 foreign students in Canada of which 17,530 came from India – 4,640 as

university students and 10,560 as post-secondary students. Most of the students from India come from middle class families and find it difficult to meet their expenses.

"A reduction in fees to two times that charged from local students will induce more Indian students to come to Canada. In fact, educational institutions can make more money if they increase their intake," says Rathee.

The federal government should treat education as a business, with relevant support given to this sector from tax and other perspectives in mind, says Rathee.

"Education, being a trade, should be subject to free trade agreements, particularly the one that is being negotiated with India," he says.

Initiative to Reduce Wait Times at Canadian Airports

STAFF REPORTER

Toronto

Canada has announced new initiatives aimed at making air travel more convenient for Canadians travelling from medium sized airports throughout Canada.

These screening procedures will enable the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) to reduce wait times for travellers by using practices already established in Canada's larger airports.

NEXUS members flying from Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport, St. John's, Moncton, Québec City and Kelowna are now able to use their NEXUS cards to access a dedicated entrance allowing them to proceed directly to the front of the

screening line resulting in shorter wait times.

"Canadians will now be able to use their NEXUS card at more airport security checkpoints in Canada, including the Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport, making security screening faster and more convenient," said Steven Fletcher, Canada's Minister of State (Transport).

NEXUS, a joint Canada Border Services Agency/U.S. Customs and Border Protection program that expedites the border clearance process for pre-approved, low-risk travellers, was initially available at select domestic and international security checkpoints at Canada's eight largest airports. The program was expanded in February 2012 to include flights to the United States. Now five new airports will begin accepting NEXUS cards to expedite security screening.

"While providing effective security screening services remains CATSA's priority, we are committed to working with our partners to improve the air travel experience," said Angus Watt, President and CEO of CATSA.

Canadian Sikhs rally support for Wisconsin Gurdwara tragedy

STAFF REPORTER

Toronto

Canadian Sikhs lent prayers and support to their US brethren in the Wisconsin Gurdwara tragedy on August 5 that left six people dead and several injured.

"We are shocked and saddened by the senseless violence against the congregation of a Sikh Gurdwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, and we commend the US law keepers and Sikh civilians for their heroic actions in protecting the public. Our hearts and prayers go out to the victims of this tragedy, and to Officer Murphy who lies seriously injured," said a press release issued by the Sikh Foundation of Canada based in Toronto.

Around 400 members of Toronto's Sikh community also got together at Nathan Phillips Square over the weekend to stand against violence. The incident, that has shaken the community, was instrumental in gathering the vigil attendees who marched in circles carrying placards that read Canada Weeps and offering messages of hope and forgiveness.



"The whole world is weeping right now. We are all shocked because of this tragic event," said organizer Sewak Singh to CP24 adding that the community has to be more vigilant in the future.

Singh also said that people would never be turned away from Sikh places of worship, but added the incident has shaken the community.

Saturday's vigil followed a similar event Friday in Brampton. Organizers said that there is no place for violence and hatred in the world.

"This is a part of nationwide

remembrance for the victims and their families. This will send a clear and unified message that we will not be divided. We will find hope in a moment of great tragedy; and we will move forward with the belief that freedom of religion remains a fundamental tenet of our great democracy," said a release sent by Harpreet Singh Hansra on behalf of Sikh Youth of Toronto.

U.S. police believe the suspected shooter, Wade Michael Page, who died of a self inflicted gunshot wound at the temple, had ties to white supremacist groups.

