

EDUCATION

Updates

28 August 2018

ASIA & PACIFIC

Indonesia, Aug 21. Vanderes Foundation backs Indonesian DANAdidik to continue providing access to education for marginalised students [Sg News]. Today in Jakarta, the Vanderes Foundation (Vanderes) announced a partnership with DANAdidik, Indonesia's crowdfunding platform for student loans in Indonesia with focus on vocational studies. This move would strengthen the Dutch certified Public Benefit Organisation's (or ANBI in the Netherlands) commitment to improve access to quality education around the globe. With Vanderes financing DANAdidik, the company can continue its mission to serve students from low-income families, orphans, students raised by a single parent, or women in need. [LINK](#)

India, Aug 22. Ban sale of junk food on campuses, UGC directs varsities, colleges [Times of India]. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has directed all varsities and higher education institutions to ban sale of junk food on their campuses in order to set new standards for healthy food, making the students live better, learn better as well as to reduce obesity levels of students thus preventing lifestyle diseases which have a direct link to excessive weight. A similar move was made earlier by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) which had directed all affiliated schools to take junk food off their canteen menu. [LINK](#)

India, Aug 26. Government schemes encouraging students to pursue research [Times of India]. Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar on Saturday ruled that the country was lagging behind in innovation and said the government has launched several schemes to change the orientation of students towards research such as "Smart India Hackathon" and "Prime Minister Research Fellowship" to highlight the government's initiatives in this regard. [LINK](#)

Bahrain, Aug 23. Medical degrees from China 'will not be recognized in Bahrain' [GDN]. MEDICAL degrees obtained by students in China will not be recognized by Bahrain's education authorities, it has been confirmed. It is the latest twist in a dodgy degree scandal, in which some people holding senior positions in Bahrain are said to have paid for fake or questionable qualifications. Generally, the education committee in Bahrain recognizes all scientific qualifications granted by all countries of the world, provided that it complies with the standards, rules and regulations. Additionally, Bahrain would not accredit any overseas university's programme that was tailored to foreign students, or offered them special privileges or preferential treatment compared to other students on the same course. [LINK](#)

Malaysia, Aug 24. Education ministry to help establish Universiti Johor [Free Malaysia]. The Education Minister Maszlee Malik expected it to be one of the country's leading higher learning institutions. He said he had the opportunity to attend a discussion on the university recently. "The education ministry was directly involved in lending its experts for the establishment of Universiti Johor," he told Bernama. On Aug 16, Johor Islamic Affairs and Education Committee chairman Aminohuda Hassan informed the state legislative assembly that the Sultan of Johor, Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar, had consented to the establishment of Universiti Johor in June this year. [LINK](#)

Malaysia, Aug 27. Nine out of 10 Malaysian students work while studying: HSBC survey [Nation Multimedia]. University student working rates are high globally at 83% and in Malaysia, nine in 10 students work whilst studying, most commonly because they need additional money (66%), according to a HSBC survey. Malaysian students spend a large proportion of their time in paid employment - an average of 3.4 hours a day, more than they spend in the library (2.1 hours) or studying at home (2.3 hours). However, the academic performance of students who work 10-19 hours per week was superior to their peers. With student finance presenting an increasingly complicated picture, many students are finding alternative sources to keep up with costs, including paid employment and borrowing from friends, family or personal loans. [LINK](#)

Singapore, Aug 27. New green building to help SMU students with hands-on learning, connect better with industry [Strait Times]. Singapore Management University (SMU) students will soon have more opportunities to network with start-up founders and mentors, and work on real-world projects from organisations and companies. Construction of a new environmentally friendly building along Stamford Road that facilitates such meetings and hands-on learning began on Monday morning (Aug 27), with works expected to be completed by the end of 2019. [LINK](#)

Australia, Aug 27. New PM urged to act on higher education funding [University World News]. Universities have called on Scott Morrison, the nation's latest Prime Minister, to overturn a 'effective cap' on student numbers imposed by his predecessor Malcolm Turnbull last December and reverse the Government's 'AU\$2.1 billion university funding cuts'. The universities were responding to the latest political upheaval in the ruling Liberal party. An attempt by a conservative faction inside the party to oust Turnbull in favour of former immigration minister Peter Dutton, led instead to the installation of the more middle-ground Morrison. This resulted in the nation having appointed its 13th prime minister and its 26th education minister in the past 50 years. The new Education Minister is Dan Tehan, a former social services minister, who has an arts degree from Melbourne University and a master's degree in international relations and foreign affairs from the University of Kent and Monash University in Melbourne. [LINK](#)

AFRICA

Africa, Aug 27. Africa Now Has An Online Database With Research On Education Within The Continent [Techzim]. The Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre at the University of Cambridge has partnered with ESSA (Education Sub Saharan Africa) to develop the online African Education Research Database (AERD). AERD is a collection of research undertaken in the past decade by scholars based in sub-Saharan Africa. It includes social science research, peer-reviewed articles, chapters, PhD theses and working papers identified through structured searches of academic and grey literature databases, expert consultation, and pearl-growing techniques (the act of using one relevant source, or citation, to find more relevant sources on a topic). The database is searchable by country, research methods and keywords such as education, early childhood education, higher education and school feeding. [LINK](#)

MIDDLE-EAST

Saudi Arabia, Aug 27. Saudi Arabia's education minister inaugurates International Forum for Teachers [ArabNews]. The forum will last for three days, and will be attended by 800 teachers from throughout Saudi Arabia, in addition to 100 teachers from 30 other countries. "The Education Ministry organized this forum with the support of the Saudi leadership and in collaboration with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), aiming to foster cooperation between education departments internationally," said Al-Issa. "The forum plans to achieve that by raising issues that concern all educational systems in order to benefit from international experiences. Its outcomes will be studied and the experience evaluated," he added. [LINK](#)

Egypt, Aug 28. Egypt's new government focuses on education development, the EJS will apply Egypt's new national curriculum with additional Tokkatsu activities: JICA's new Chief Representative [Daily News Egypt]. Japan's International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is supporting the Egyptian government in developing the education system through the Egypt Japan Education Partnership Initiative which covers all stages of education including early childhood, basic education, and technical education, as well as higher education and scientific research, said Yoshifumi Omura JICA's new Chief Representative. "Egypt's new government is focusing on developing the education field, especially after President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi announced that 2019 will be Egypt's year of education," added Omura, and that Japan will focus on sharing knowledge about the Japanese its "Tokkatsu System" to apply its additional activities in Egyptian Japanese Schools. [LINK](#)

EUROPE

Hungary Aug 22. Hungary's plan to ban gender studies sparks international backlash [Science Business]. Universities and academies in Europe and the US are urging the Hungarian government to withdraw proposed legislation that would effectively ban courses in gender studies in both private and public institutions. The government says that it no longer wishes to accredit and finance such programmes because of the low number of graduates and a poor track record of employability. Universities and academic associations across Europe and in the US have hit back, saying the Hungarian government should keep universities independent from political, religious and ideological interests, and allow researchers to decide. [LINK](#)

United Kingdom, Aug 23. GCSE results rise despite tougher exams [BBC]. GCSE pass rates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland have risen this year - despite an overhaul to make the exams more demanding. The proportion of students reaching the pass levels - England's new grade 4 and grade C in Wales and Northern Ireland - is up by 0.5% to 66.9%. For the first time most of the GCSEs in England are being graded from 9 to 1. About 4% of entries received the top grade 9 - and 732 pupils scored a clean sweep of grade 9s in all subjects. Girls continued to do better than boys - in terms of both the highest grades and in the pass rate. [LINK](#)

New Zealand, Aug 27. Tighter regulations signaled for in-home child care. [Stuff NZ]. Home-based early childhood educators have reacted cautiously to a government review of its industry, including a controversial look to whether contractors should be directly employed instead. Education Minister Chris Hipkins released some findings last week from a review of the fast-growing home-based early childhood education sector. Key issues included pay and the transparency of fees

for parents. Many educators work as contractors, claiming back electricity and other costs, while the company they work for sometimes keeps a government subsidy paid per child. [LINK](#)

AMERICA

Cuba, Aug 22. Cuba set to kick off the new school year with a shortage of 10,000 teachers [Miami Herald]. Despite a series of initiatives implemented by the Cuban government to prevent the continuing exodus of school teachers, classes are scheduled to begin next month with a shortage of about 10,000 instructors, according to the island's Minister of Education. Low salaries and deteriorating working conditions, including outdated equipment and dilapidated school buildings, have prompted thousands of educators to abandon the field in favor of better-paying jobs, such as in the tourism industry. In an effort to stem the exodus, authorities have begun to pay teachers by the hour, allowing retirees to return to the classrooms and use university students as teachers for younger students. [LINK](#)

United States of America, Aug 22. Kids connect with robot reading partners [Science Daily]. Kids learn better with a friend. They're more enthusiastic and understand more if they dig into a subject with a companion. But what if that companion is artificial? Researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison have built a robot, named Minnie, to serve as a reading buddy to middle school kids, and Minnie's new friends grew more excited about books and more attached to the robot over two weeks of reading together. [LINK](#)

UNITED NATIONS

United Nations, Aug 27: Lack of access to clean water, toilets put children's education at risk, says UN. Millions of children are going to school without basic hygiene facilities: over 30 % of schools worldwide do not provide safe drinking water; a third of schools do not provide the most basic of toilet facilities (such as septic tank, pit latrines or composting toilets); and nearly 900 million children go to schools with no handwashing facilities with soap and water. It looks at the progress made towards reaching the targets of two of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation), and Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all). [LINK](#)

SEAMEO

SEAMEO, Aug 22. NCCA participates in the Meeting of the Philippine Representatives to the SEAMEO Centers' Governing Board. National Artist for Literature and NCCA Chairman Virgilio S. Almario and NCCA Commissioner and National Museum Director Jeremy M. Barns joined the other Philippine Representatives to the SEAMEO Centers' Governing Board for a meeting last August 17, 2018 at the SEAMEO INNOTECH, Diliman, Quezon City. The meeting was presided by Department of Education (DepEd) Secretary Leonor M. Briones who is a member of the SEAMEO Council. Chairman Almario is a Governing Board member of SEAMEO Center for History and Tradition (CHAT) in Yangon, Myanmar while Director Barns is a Governing Board member of SEAMEO Regional Center for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SPAFA) in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting served as a venue to introduce the Philippine Governing Board Members to each other and to the DepEd Executive Committee, orient them on the mandate of the different SEAMEO Centers and the 7 SEAMEO Priority Areas, briefly report on the accomplishments of each center, and to propose plans on how each Center can help the Department and vice versa. [LINK](#)