How little we in the United States know about the world's most populous democracy—India.

With its population of 1.2 billion people and an average annual GDP growth rate of 5.8 percent, India is among the world's most dynamic and rapidly growing economies. Bangalore has become one of the world's leading hubs of information technology and is on a par with Silicon Valley or Austin, Texas. Mumbai is rapidly evolving into one of the world's leading financial centers. India's current GDP of $1.2 trillion makes it the twelfth largest economy in the world, and the figure is expected to quadruple by 2020 according to a 2007 Goldman Sachs report.

After a trip to Bangalore to study the information technology and outsourcing sectors, Thomas Friedman decided to write *The World is Flat*, which details the effects of globalization. Friedman asserts that globalization is being spearheaded by the information technology revolution and the lowering of global political and economic barriers, which is leading to a world that is not only more competitive but also more collaborative.

India is showcased in *The World is Flat* as a hotspot of dynamic economic development and one of the 21st century's leading centers of opportunity and human advancement. The nation's rapid development is enabling tens of millions of people to move up the socioeconomic ladder into a growing middle class. The explosive growth of an Indian middle class presents a unique opportunity for those of us concerned with international education.

As India experiences an economic surge, the number of students who will choose to study in the U.S. will naturally increase. India is now the leading country of origin for students studying in the U.S., and the number of students from India has increased by 9 percent over the previous year to 103,260 students, according to *Open Doors*. Indian students are fast learning the value of education in the U.S., especially in the fields of science and technology.

There is also an increasing number of middle school and high school students coming to the U.S.; our own Summer Institute for the Gifted (SIG) program, held on eight U.S. campuses, has recently experienced a marked increase in Indian students.

In the coming decade, we will also see substantial growth in the number of U.S. undergraduates who will study in India. According to *Open Doors*, study abroad in India was up 20 percent in the past year. While we believe this number may fall slightly in 2009, India is clearly on the map as an emerging study abroad destination.

We are pleased to once again partner with the Institute of International Education on our continuing Global Education Research Reports. We hope you will enjoy reading this latest edition and we thank the authors for their fresh viewpoints, innovative ideas, and unique insights.

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