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Demand for skilled workers in Canada

STAFF REPORTER

Education fair offers peek into education, work and permanent resident status



Information is wealth: Aspirants at the counseling session at the Canada Education Fair in the city on Thursday. Photo: M. Moorthy

Think education or employment abroad and aspirants often think on the lines of America or Europe. The Canada Education Fair organized by U2CAN, the education abroad division of consultancy Trichy Plus, offered an alternative destination for education, work and permanent resident status.

By offering students a high possibility of finding employment and permanent residency within the country after higher education, Canada holds an edge over U.K. and U.S., according to **Sailesh Shankar, Canadian associate, Universal Immigration**, apprising aspirants on educational prospects, work permit and permanent resident status in Canada.

There is a high demand for skilled workers in Canada, particularly nurses, chefs, aircraft maintenance technicians, plumbers, fitters, welders and chemists. Citizenship and Immigration Canada has classified jobs requiring immigrants under the Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP). According to Mr. Shankar, the program fast-tracks skilled workers into the country. While white-collar job openings are relatively fewer, students who pass out of Canadian universities are absorbed by local companies. One can apply for permanent residency in the country after a year's education and another year's work experience.

In recent years, Canadian universities have been keen on encouraging foreign students and every university has an international coordinator in India to liaise with Indian students, Mr. Shankar noted. Masters programs like the U.S are run for two years, though the cost of education is relatively lower, said organizers.

Students can avail a work permit of 20 hours a week, after the sixth month of study.

Government funded colleges are recognized by nationalized banks in India. Around 200 aspirants visited the fair to seek counseling on job openings and higher education programs, said Savithri Sivakumar, director, U2CAN.

While most students enquired over postgraduate programmes, particularly engineering, a few were interested in diploma programs.