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Kerala Travel Mart 2024 to be a mega event

The inaugural ceremony of the flagship event Kerala



PA Mohamed Riyas
(Minister for Tourism,
Government of Kerala)

Travel Mart of Kerala Travel Mart Society will be followed by three days of sessions at the Sagara and Samudrika convention centres on Willington Island (Kochi) on Sept 27, 28 and 29, 2024.

From pre-mart tours to intense networking ses-

sions, the lineup of activities at KTM 2024 will give the delegates an immersive experience of God's Own Country even as opportunities for business open up.

With the event fast approaching, KTM has entered into a partnership with IndiGo, offering exclusive discounts for KTM attendees flying to Kozhikode, Kannur, Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram. Participants can book their tickets and finalise travel plans right now.

KTM is the only Travel Mart that concentrates on a single state, making it a unique brand. Since then, KTM has been the spokesman for tourism industry in Kerala. The motive to promote tourism and its

related activities in Kerala, led to the formation of Kerala Travel Mart Soci-



K Biju (IAS)
(Tourism Secretary
Govt of Kerala)

ety. This society's major objective was to create a common ground for trav-

el agents from across the globe and the service providers in Kerala to con-



Jose Pradeep
(President of Kerala
Travel Mart)

nect. This not just led to promotion of tourism, but also gave rise to a profes-

sional approach to tourism activities in Kerala.

Right from hotels to service providers, the KTM Society has been incorporating the best in all tourism sectors and showcases them to the world. Its sole objective being promotion and progress of Kerala Tourism has been the leading force for the success of Kerala Travel Mart. The Society plays a vital role in filtering the best product service providers which enables customers to choose better.

KTM Event

The Kerala Travel Mart has become an integral part of events in the field of tourism. The biennial event has been successful in bringing national and global tour operators and travel/destination management companies to familiarise with the destinations and tourism activities in Kerala, under one programme. The Mart creates a great learning experience for the buyers, while sellers get an insight on the requirements which has been a major reason for progress and innovative moves in tourism.

As many as 592 foreign buyers from 71 countries have registered so far, notably buyers from 27 countries, including China, Japan and Saudi Arabia, will attend for the first time.



Visitors should carry minimum Dh 3000, return ticket Dubai airport tightens up arrival rules

DUBAI: Dubai airport authorities have toughened up on rules that require visitors to have a return ticket and a minimum amount of money for their stay, in what is said to be to prevent visit/tourist visa misuse. So far, 11 Indians have been deported from Dubai for non-compliance..

Immigration officials are, in some cases, asking for proof that passengers have at least Dh3,000 (Rs 60,000) in cash or credit and a return ticket home. The rules, which are not new, are to ensure people are not using the tourist visa system to stay beyond 30 or 60 days, for example, and to catch out jobseekers who have no intention of leaving.

The General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA) has not commented on the recent checks, but travel agents and passengers said authorities have asked travellers in some cases.

The rules are very clear, and if the travellers have all the documents then there should be no problem, Afi Ahammad, India-based travel agent said. UAE immigration rules state that visitors should also be able to provide a hotel booking or the address of a relative, though they are often only asked if immigration officials are suspicious.

Afi Ahammad, a trav-

el agent in India who services the UAE market, said the rules are clear. "They must carry Dh3,000 to Dh5,000 in cash or have a credit or debit card to show enough balance to fund their stay, a return flight ticket, and a proof of residence," he said.

"If they are staying with a relative, then they need to show proof of their residence and [their relative's] Emir-

ates ID. Airlines in Kerala have, in some cases, prevented passengers from boarding because they cannot show they have sufficient funds or lack of documents. A number of passengers who have arrived at Dubai airport told pressmen that they were unable to meet the requirements and had to stay in the terminal until they could fly home.

(Cont. on page-2)

HIGHEST RATE FOR KERALA ROUTE Airfares skyrocket in view of long Eid al Adha holidays

MUSCAT: Airfares have risen manifold in view of the likely nine-day-long Eid al Adha holidays beginning the third week of June, spoiling holiday plans. A one way fare to Kerala is nearly RO 120, three times higher than the off-peak period

"Air fares have shot up in view of the long holidays as people would start booking as soon as airlines

open it," says Mohammed al Mukhaini, a holiday planner in Muscat. Of all the sectors, fares to Kerala state are the highest ranging between RO 120 to RO 140. A ticket on Oman Air after June 10 is RO 150 and for Salam Air, it is RO 120.

"I had to reschedule my holiday plans due to exorbitant rates and lack of sufficient services to

north Kerala," an expatriate employee in Muscat said. As per the lunar calendar, the first day of Eid al Adha, in all likelihood, falls on June 17 and June 16 would be the Day of Arafah, another holiday. In the event of Eid holidays ending on June 19, the only day left in the week is Thursday (June 20), which will most likely be another holiday. As

these holidays are preceded and succeeded by weekends, a long Eid holiday is awaiting the people of Oman and many have begun to plan holidays accordingly.

The soaring airfares may benefit domestic tourism although the majority preferred to travel abroad. Oman has a diverse range of tourist destinations. (Cont. on page-2)

UAE visit visa: overstaying, absconding visitors will cause fines, penalties for travel agencies

DUBAI: Visit visa holders who overstay their permitted duration and break the rules cause travel agencies to incur fines and face operational challenges, travel executives have said.

According to the agencies, cases of visitors overstaying and absconding have compelled authorities to implement stricter entry regulations at Dubai Airports. When a case of an absconder is filed against a visitor, it results in financial and operational challenges for them.

No grace period

One of the primary reasons for visitors overstaying is a misunderstanding on the visa grace period. "Many visitors believe they have a 10-day grace period to stay beyond their visa's expiry date. However, this grace period was removed last year, leading to unintentional overstays. They are in denial and we regularly inform them that there

is no grace period," said Firoz Maliyakkal, founder and CEO of Tahira Tours and Travels.

Sudden financial complications can also play a critical role. "Some

stay and explore without considering the legal repercussions," added Varghese.

Another common reason for absconding visitors is job hunting after be-

rived in Dubai in February to visit his relatives, recounted his experience. He said: "During my visit, I learned of a job opening in a friend's company. I decided to apply and

exited the country. Fortunately, I obtained residency status on March 28 and returned to the UAE."

Penalties on agents

According to travel agencies, such actions have severe consequences. "When a visitor doesn't report to us after visa expiry, the travel agency that facilitated their visa faces substantial fines and penalties," said Firoz. Travel agencies must pay a fine of Dh2,500 to authorities for each absconding case. "Additionally, the agency's visa quota is reduced, affecting our ability to operate efficiently and invite more people to the UAE," said Varghese.

"Absconding visitors can get the status removed by paying a minimum Dh2,000 fine, along with penalties for the overstay and additional administration and exit fees," said Firoz. He added that these expenses can become overwhelming for both parties - visitors and travel agencies.

Carry these documents

UAE VISIT VISA: If you are planning to visit UAE on a tourist or visit visa, the following documents you need to carry before disembarkation:

- You should have your confirmed return flight ticket in hand. This not only in the UAE, but if you are travelling to any country in the world on a visit or a tourist visa, you must show a return ticket at the airport. It is enough to have a return ticket to travel to any country with a valid visa at the moment.
- Must have cash or credit card balance. Carry AED3000 to AED5000 or equivalent cash. A credit card balance of equivalent amount also is sufficient. (These conditions may change in future).
- Hotel booking confirmation (optional, but conditional now) If a person arriving in the UAE on a visit visa does not have relatives or friends in the UAE, it is important to have a hotel booking. If you have a relative or friend in the UAE, just carry their passport copy and visa page as supporting documents.

If an officer asks you where you are going to stay, give the address or area where your friend or relative residing. It is also important to communicate clearly in this context.

visitors face unexpected financial difficulties during their stay, making it very difficult for them to return home on time," said Libin Varghese from Rooh Travel and Tourism. "Additionally, the charm of Dubai and the UAE's diverse attractions entices visitors to extend their

ing captivated by Dubai's lifestyle. "Visitors, captivated by Dubai's opportunities, apply for jobs and wait for interview calls, neglecting their visa status. They often overstay hoping for employment, which places them in a legal situation," said Firoz. Bilal Abbas, who had ar-

surprisingly got called in for an interview. I was thrilled but completely forgot about my visa expiry date, just three days before the second interview." Despite overstaying for nearly eight days, Abbas managed to secure a job. "I had to pay around Dh1,000 in fines when I

Airfares skyrocket.....

(Cont. from page-1)

tinations, starting with world heritage and ancient archaeological sites, to dozens of forts and castles, to mosques, souqs and dhows, which provide a unique holiday experience and taste of the rich history and culture of Oman.

Dubai airport tightens up arrival rules.....

(Cont. from page-1)

"Often they are first-time travellers and are unable to speak the language and convince officials even though they have all the documents," Ahammad said.

"The rules are very clear, and if the travellers have all the documents then there should be no problem. So many

travellers enter the UAE on the same visa without any trouble everyday, he claimed.

First time visitor Aju, who did not give a surname, flew with carrier SpiceJet to Dubai. He was held up at Dubai airport when he was unable to show he had Dh3,000 in his bank account.

"I was allowed to board the flight at Kochi airport after the airline staff checked if I had the contact number of my relative in Dubai and a copy of their Emirates ID," said Aju, a resident of Kannur. "But, they didn't ask me about the funds."

He said he had to stay at Dubai airport for

six days before flying back. Another traveller, who would not give their name, was held up by officials when he arrived and was unable to show he had Dh3,000 with him.

"I've been to the UAE before and was carrying my return ticket and a copy of the visit visa with me," he said.

China allows visa-free entry for groups on cruise ships

BEIJING: China has allowed visa-free entry for foreign tour groups that come to the country via cruise ships in a further bid to attract international visitors and boost its sluggish inbound travel market. This policy came into effect from May 15.

Overseas tour groups on cruise boats will be able to enter and stay in China without a visa for up to 15 days, according to the National Immigration Administration.

Tour groups can enter

China from 13 ports including Shanghai, Qingdao, Dalian and Haikou, Mao Xu, a senior official with the immigration administration, said.

Qualifying tour groups need to be received and handled by domestic travel agencies and will be allowed to travel to coastal provinces as well as the capital, Beijing, while they are in China, Mao said. "The visa-free entry policy for foreign tour groups on cruise ships will provide policy support for the de-

velopment of the cruise industry," Mao said. "It will also help attract more foreign tourists to China and provide more convenient channels for people-to-people exchanges between China and other countries."

China has some 21 international cruise ships that ply the country's ports en route to other destinations like Japan, South Korea and Vietnam, Zhu Zhenyu, a senior official with ministry of transport, said at the same briefing.

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53rd SKAL ASIAN AREA CONGRESS HELD IN BAHRAIN



Under the patronage of HE Fatima Al-Sairafi, Bahrain's Minister of Tourism, 53rd Skal Asian Area Congress was held in Bahrain from May 23 to 26, 2024. Tourism and airline personalities participated in the four-day function.

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GULF FAQs

Am I eligible for maternity leave and for how many days?

I have been working in a private company for two years on a commission basis without salary. I have currently applied for maternity leave. Do I have the legal right to ask for this leave? How maternity leave allowance is calculated and how long is this leave? For two years, I have been taking my annual leave without pay. Do I have the right, according to the labour law, to claim annual leave allowance for a period of two years?

You have the right to request for maternity leave since you are working for the company with an official employment relationship. The female worker, according to Article (30) of the Federal Law no. 33 of 2021, shall be entitled to a maternity leave of 60 days, according to the following:

- The first 45 days with full wage; and
- The following 15 days with half wage.

You shall be also entitled to the annual leave because the employer, ac-

ording to Article (29) of the above mentioned law, may not prevent the worker from benefiting from his annual leave accrued for more than two years, unless the worker wishes to carry it forward or receive a cash allowance for it, in accordance with the regulations in force at the establishment and the Implementing Regulation hereof.

Moreover, being on a maternity leave or absent from work as mentioned in Article (30) shall not prejudice the female worker's right to obtain the annual leave.

The wage of both leaves will be calculated on the same method of Calculating the Wages of Workers on Piece-work Basis stated in Article 23 of the law ("The daily wage of workers who receive their wages on piecework basis shall be calculated according to the average amount the worker received for the actual working days during the six months preceding the request or claim regarding any issue related to the wage.")

Can landlord evict me?

I rented a villa two years ago from a real estate office in Dubai. Two months ago, the real estate office requested a rental increase by 30pc of the rent value, but I rejected the increase. However, a month ago, he sent me a notice to vacate the villa. My question is, does the landlord have the right, according to the rental law in Dubai, to request eviction for this reason? If the eviction is illegal, does the landlord have the right to increase the rent?

The landlord has the right to request an increase for the rental amount three months prior to the date on which the Tenancy Contract expires, not two months, which means he has no right to increase your rental for this year. According to Article 14 of the law no. 33 of 2008 Amending Law No. (26) of 2007 Regulating the Relationship between Landlords and Tenants in the Emirate of Dubai, ("Unless otherwise agreed by the parties, if either party to the Tenancy Contract wishes to amend any of its terms in accordance with Article (13) of this Law, that party must notify the other party of same

no less than 90 days prior to the date on which the Tenancy Contract expires").

If the parties fail to agree on the new rental amount, the landlord cannot evict the tenant by his own wish, but instead he has to file a case in the rental centre for the increase or the eviction. According to Article (13) of the same law ("For the purposes of renewing the Tenancy Contract, the Landlord and Tenant may, prior to the expiry of the Tenancy Contract, amend any of the terms of the Tenancy Contract or review the Rent, whether increasing or decreasing it. Should the Landlord and Tenant fail to reach an agreement, then the tribunal may determine the fair rent, taking into account the criteria stipulated in Article (9) of this Law") determining the percentage of rent increase set by RERA, the overall economic situation in the Emirate, the condition of the real property, and the average rent of similar real property in similar real property markets within the same area and in accordance with any applicable legislation in the Emirate concerning real property rent, or any other factors which the tribunal deems appropriate.

Suspended from work; what to do?

I have been working in a private company for two years. Two months ago, my employer suspended me from work for no reason and without any investigation – just false allegations – and my salary has been suspended for three months. My question is: Do I have the legal right to resign and work for a new employer? When does an employer have the right to suspend a worker from work and how long is the suspension period?

It is better if you file a complaint with the Labour Office instead of re-

Forex reserves hit record high of \$648b

MUMBAI: India's forex reserves spiked by \$4.549 billion to touch a new all-time high of \$648.7 billion for the week ended May 17. This is the third consecutive week of increase in the overall kitty, which had increased by \$2.561 billion to \$644.151 billion in the previous re-

ther, the gold reserves increased \$1.244 billion to \$57.195 billion during the week. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up \$113 million to \$18.168 billion. India's reserve position with IMF was down \$168 million to \$4.327 billion in the reporting week



porting week ended May 17. As per the RBI data, In the week ended May 10, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased \$3.361 billion to \$569.009 billion.

For the week ended April 5, the reserves had hit an all time high of \$648.562 billion following multiple weeks of increases. Fur-

Many analysts have said the record profit that the central bank booked this year was mainly driven by its huge dollar sales though the exact number is not available as RBI annual report has not been made public yet. The more it intervenes in the forex market, the higher its turnover and thus trading income.

signing, because the employer violated the Labour Law by suspending you from work without investigation and without giving you any salary for several months. The Labour Law prescribes three types of suspension from work the employer may impose to an employee.

The first one is stated in Article 39 of the Labour Law, which covers a period not exceeding 14 days and non-payment of wage for the suspension days, which is a kind of penalty to the employee when he violates the provisions of this Decree-Law, its Implementing Regulation and resolutions issued for its implementation.

The other two temporarily suspensions are mentioned in Article 40 of the same law, where the employer may suspend the worker temporarily from work for a period not exceeding 30 days, in order to conduct a disciplinary investigation with him, if the investigation interest so requires, along with suspending half the wage during the suspension period.

If the investigation concluded keeping the case, non-violation or punishment of the worker by warning, the worker shall be paid the wage that was suspended during the suspension period. The employer may also temporarily suspend the worker from work when he is accused of committing a crime of assault on oneself, money, or crimes related to breach of honour or trust, until a final judgement is issued by the competent judicial authority. His wage shall be suspended for the suspension period. If a judgement is issued for not putting the worker into trial, he was acquitted for absence of felony or the investigation concluded keeping the case due to lack of evidence, he shall be returned to work, along with paying his full suspended wage.

SKILLS GURU

By Sajan MS

HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY

INC APPROVED NURSING PROGRAMS available IN INDIA

(Cont. from last issue)

INC oversees several nursing programs from ANM to Doctorate level and plays a key role in maintaining high standards of nursing education nationwide. They are:

- ANM-Auxiliary Nurse & Midwife (2 years)
- GNM-General Nursing & Midwifery (3 and 1/2 years)
- B. Sc (Basic/4 years University R.N& R.M)
- Post B.Sc (Post Basic/ Regular: 2 years & Distance: 3 yrs University Additional Qualification)
- M. Sc. (2 years University Additional Qualification)
- M. Phil(1 year (Full time) /2 years (part time) University Additional Qualification)
- Ph D(3-5 years University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Operation Room Nursing (1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Cardio Thoracic Nursing(1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Neurology Nursing.(1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Midwifery Nursing.(1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Psychiatric Nursing (1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma

in Critical Care Nursing(1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)

- Post Basic Diploma in Emergency & Disaster Nursing(1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Oncology Nursing (1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Ortho and Rehabilitation Nursing(1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Geriatric Nursing(1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Neonatal Nursing(1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Forensic Nursing(1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Hematology Nursing-Residency Program (1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Post Basic Diploma in Burn & Reconstructive Surgery Nursing – Residency Program (1 year State Nursing Council/ University Additional Qualification)
- Nurse Practitioner in Critical Care(2 years University Additional Qualification)

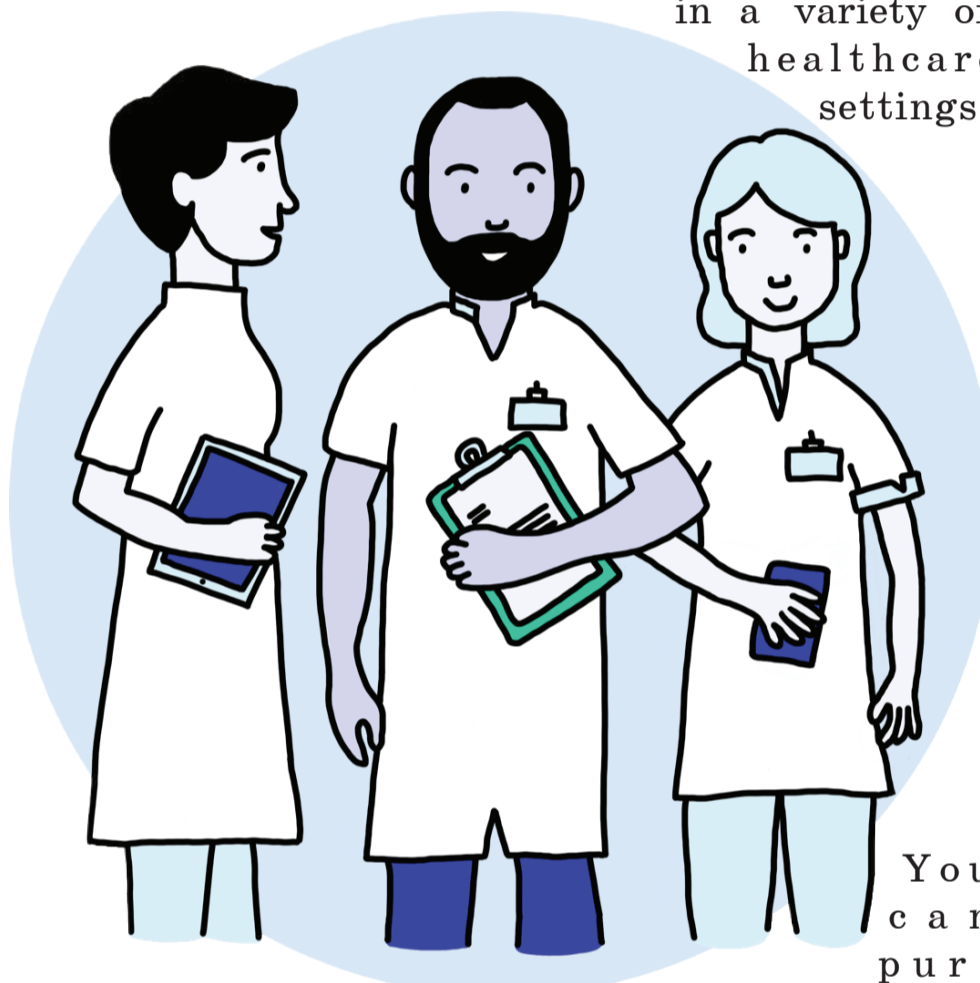
(SOURCE : INC Website)

The Systematic Route to a Nursing Career (In Indian Context)

- Complete 10+2 education(You must complete your 10+2 education in the science stream, with subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, and Biology / Any 10+2 stream is acceptable for Diploma Nursing in some states)
- Meet the eligibility criteria(To pursue a nursing program, you need to meet the eligibility criteria set by the institution or university)
- Clear the entrance exam(Some of the popular nursing entrance exams in India include AIIMS Nursing Entrance Exam, JIPMER Nursing Entrance Exam, and NEET)
- Pursue a nursing diploma or degree program(Working class of Nurses usually continues nursing education up to Diploma / Degree level only. So, no reference to Master and above level)
- Complete the nursing program (You need to complete the coursework, practical training,

ing, and clinical rotations. The duration of the nursing program can vary based on the type of program you choose)

- Register with the Nursing Council (After completing the nursing program, you need to register with the respective State Nursing Council or the Indian Nursing Council to practice as a nurse in India)
- Gain work experience and further education (Achieving a successful nursing career requires gaining experience by working in a variety of healthcare settings.



You can pursue further

education and training to improve your skills and knowledge. It is important to note that the requirements and steps for studying nursing courses may vary in some states and some institutions).

NURSING SPECIALTIES (In Indian Context)

The nursing field is a never-ending fountain of career opportunities. Most of these opportunities are confined to traditional workplaces such as bedside care, hospitals, and private practice. But non-traditional positions, including toxicology nurses, prison nurses, and nutrition and fitness nurses, have also caught the attention of nurses in recent times. Nurses should always work in some specialty. Therefore, they can start work experience in nursing spe-

cialties of their choice. Each specialty requires different training, skills, and duties. Some nursing career paths offer higher salaries and better career prospects than others. If you're new to the nursing profession, it's good to know which specialties offer the best. Here are some of the major Departments / Specialties : Director of Nursing, Nurse Administrator, Chief Nursing Officer, Nurse Manager, Charge Nurse, Nurse Care Coordinator, Public Health Nurse, Military Nurse, Forensic Nurse, Home Health Nurse, Camp Nurse, School Nurse, Transplant Nurse, Plastic Surgery Nurse, Obstetrics (OB) Nurse, NICU Nurse, Infection Control Nurse, Cardiovascular Operating Room (CVOR) Nurse, Cardiac Care Nurse, Burn Care Nurse, Operating Room Nurse, Psychiatric Nurse, Wound Care Nurse, Palliative Care Nurse, Medical-Surgical Nurse, Labor and Delivery Nurse, ICU Nurse, Emergency Room Nurse, Respiratory Nurse, Rheumatology Nurse, Rehabilitation Nurse, ENT Nurse, Ophthalmic Nurse, Occupational Health Nurse, Nephrology Nurse, Gastroenterology Nurse, Dermatology Nurse, Geriatric Nurse, Orthopedic Nurse, Oncology Nurse and a few more.

A glimpse into the history of Nursing in India It does not seem appropriate to conclude without mentioning the relation of Nursing to the ancient history of India and the stages of evolution through which it has passed. Studies indicate that the principles and practices of nursing are inscribed in ancient texts. Not only are they very clear, intelligent and scientific, they are also included in modern nursing textbooks. In modern times, 90% of the nursing profession is occupied by women, while in the past, nurses were mostly young men.

(To be continued)