



Skal Asian Area Congress concludes in Bahrain



Delegates from Skal-Asia Chapters belonging to travel and tourism and airline industries attended the three-day session of the 53rd Skal Asian Area Congress in Bahrain.

MANAMA: The 53rd Skal Asian Area Congress, held between May 23 and 26, was inaugurated by Sara Buheji, CEO of Bahrain Tourism and Exhibition Authority (BTEA) at the Gulf Hotel Manama, Bahrain. The Congress was attended by over 100 delegates from overseas Skal Clubs and from the local Bahrain Club. Delegates from Skal Mumbai South, Pune, Hyderabad, Goa, Bangalore, Cochin and

Chennai participated in the sessions and delivered their progressive strategies to improve the activities of Skal club in India. President of Skal International Bahrain SK Mohamed Buzizi welcomed the delegates to Bahrain and said that very elaborate arrangements had been made to ensure that the Congress was a success. President of Skal International Annette Cardenas spoke on her

theme for her Presidential Year --- "Building Bridges for a Stronger Skal" and urged clubs and members to come together to grow. "It is only through unity that we can be successful", she said. She said that she enjoyed the beauty and hospitality of the Bahrain people as was impressed in this her first visit to Bahrain.

President of Skal International Asia Keethi Jayaweera in his opening

speech welcoming the delegates to the conference and asked Skal colleagues to grasp this opportunity to forge new connections, deepen existing bonds and exchange valuable insights from their own experiences.

Skal International Bahrain's Founder member and the first President Jamil Wafa, who had travelled from Miami, US, to attend the Congress, gave an insight into the histo-

ry of the formation of the Bahrain Club and how it had progressed over the years. It was an inspiring presentation from the nagenarian who delivered his speech with aplomb and clear recall which impressed the audience.

In her response to the speakers, Buheji welcomed the delegates on behalf of the Minister of Tourism of Bahrain, who was unfortunately called away

(Cont. on page-2)

Saudi to reveal new tourism strategy

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia is set to unveil a new tourism strategy this year utilising artificial intelligence and seamless technology, according to a top official.

In an interview on the

opening the new strategy, and that new strategy is going to include several new things, such as the use of AI, for instance, seamless and many other technologies that are important for growth, Man-

Manzo also discussed the importance of sustainability so people are still "enjoying" the world today while ensuring resources are preserved for future use. This concept involves multiple facets, including economic, environmental, and social considerations.

"For 30 years, we have been measuring and that's why we know that 10pc of the global gross domestic product before the pandemic (came from travel and tourism), and we're going to reach that number this year again, Manzo said.

She added that before the COVID-19 outbreak there were 330 million jobs in the industry, adding: "This year, we're hoping to break a record with 348 million. One out of 10 jobs depends on this sector, so the economic aspect is very clear. The social aspect also is quite interesting — 54pc women, 30pc youth."

IndiGo makes special seating arrangement for women

MUMBAI: Following the footsteps of India's flagship carrier Air India, budget airline IndiGo has announced a new option for solo women travellers whereby they can choose seating next to a fellow woman passenger.

"IndiGo is proud to announce the introduction

of a new feature that aims to make the travel experience more comfortable for our female passengers, the airline said in a statement. "This has been introduced based on market research and is currently in pilot mode aligning with our ethos. The feature offers visibility of seats booked by fe-

male passengers, only during web check-in. It is specifically tailored to PNRs with women travellers solo as well as part of family bookings. We are committed to providing an unparalleled travel experience for all our passengers, and this new feature is just one of the many steps we are taking towards achieving that goal, the statement added.

Air India had announced a similar policy last October where solo female travellers and mothers, in particular, would be given the option to take an alternative seat — ideally aisle or window



sidelines of the Future Aviation Forum 2024, Gloria Guevara Manzo, chief special adviser at the ministry of tourism, noted that the plan seeks to maximize the Kingdom's assets including culture, history, heritage and hospitality.

"Right now, the ministry, under the leadership of his excellency, is devel-

zo said. She added: "(The) strategy, hopefully is going to be released this year and is going to be shared with the world. The strategy that we have right now was developed in 2019. We accomplished the milestone of the 100 million tourists, domestic and international, seven years ahead (of schedule)."



Well done, RBI

Reserve Bank of India has done it again! RBI board last week decided to transfer a record surplus of almost Rs 2.11-lakh-crore to the Union government for 2023-24 which will give the (new) government enough elbow room and free and liberal thinking in finalising the budget. Hope the new government will use this bountiful fund prudently. This is more than double the previous time's Rs 87,16 crore payout as well as the Rs 1.02-lakh-crore dividend-cum-surplus receipts from the banking and financial system.

Last time, there was criticism when RBI declared dividend to the government. Instead of showing budget surplus, the government should use this money for the welfare of the people and for future infrastructural projects. One thing is clear – RBI and our banking system -- are hale and hearty. The surge in transferable surplus reflects the clever asset management approach followed by the Indian central bank, at the time of lurking global uncertainty and widespread policy tightening by central banks worldwide seeking to restore price stability. Mind you, this is at a time when the US Fed Reserve has to print more paper money to fund its operations till it recoups losses of a whopping \$114 billion and Bank of England's losses (86 billion pounds) are being funded by the UK government. Many central banks still face significant bond market losses and declining net worth. What's more, RBI's profits are not one-time affair. Across economic cycles, when inflation has been high and low, interest rates have moved up and down, it has managed to keep its profit and loss in the surplus and transferred dividends consistently. If RBI were a listed entity like Bank of Japan and investors were ready to buy it at least a five per cent dividend yield today, RBI would be worth a staggering \$500 billion. RBI Governor Dr Shaktikanta Das and his top team have done a wonderful job.

While the balance sheet of the central bank was released only on Thursday, one can safely assume that gains from RBI's timely intervention in the foreign exchange market to balance the volatility of the greenback and handsome profit from higher interest earned on its holding of overseas securities contributed to this record surplus. As already known, total foreign exchange reserves had increased by \$67.1 billion over the course of 12 months to \$645.58 billion as on March-end.

Not that RBI is not visualising any contingencies. RBI's prudence is also seen in the critical provisioning done under the Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB), where it has raised the level of funds set aside to cover for any unforeseen contingencies and risks to the economy. By raising the level of provisioning by 50 basis points to 6.5pc of its balance sheet size for 2023-24, the central bank has clearly signalled its increased confidence in the health of our economy even as it strengthens the buffer against any sudden threats to stability from unexpected developments in the global financial system. For the new government that will assume office next month, it will be a God-sent bonanza.

LIPSYNCH

“Every man is rich or poor according to the degree in which he can afford to enjoy the necessities, convenience and amusements of human life.”

— Wealth of Nations.

Skal Asian Area Congress....

(Cont. from page-1)

on Government business at the last moment. She outlined the role that the BTEA plays in promoting Bahrain and the facilities provided to Exhibition.

Organisers to assist them in successfully attracting visitors to the Exhibitions held in Bahrain. Speeches by two keynote speakers, Jeffrey Goh, CEP of Gulf Air, the official Airline Sponsor of the Congress, and Dr Jassim Haji President International Group on Artificial Intelligence who spoke on the effects AI will have on the tourism industry followed. The main event of the Congress was the Annual General Assembly of Skal Clubs which was graced by the presence

of the Skal International President and four International Directors, NSN Mohan, Kevin Rautenback, Jose Luis Quintero and Andres Hayes. The reports from the Board of Officers of the Clubs were presented for approval of the members along with the financial report from the Treasurer. A question-answer session followed with members given the opportunity to discuss matter of relevance and importance with the members of the Executive Committee present on the occasion.

Included in the four day programme were tours to places of interest in Bahrain, eg. National Museum of Bahrain, the Bahrain Fort, a camel farm, the Bahrain International F1

Race Track and the souks of Muharraq and Manama and the Gate of Bahrain (Bab Al Bahrain). The tours gave the delegates a glimpse of what Bahrain has to offer.

The Congress ended with the President's gala dinner, which was a black-tie affair, and included the Asian Area Awards ceremony which felicitated club and individual members who had performed creditably in the areas of Membership Development, Young Skal and the Personality of the year. The Asian Area Sustainability Award, which is open to any organisation, in the field of sustainability, was awarded to Jetwing Kaduruketha Hotel in Sri Lanka.

Over 50 expats held for for violating residency laws

MUSCAT: In a recent crackdown on violations of foreign labour and residency laws, the Royal Oman Police announced the arrest of 55 foreign nationals on their social media accounts. As part of a co-ordinated effort, police forces in Al Dhahirah and Al Dakhiliyah governorates conducted separate operations with the support of their respective Special Tasks Units.

In Dhank (Al Dhahirah), 12 individuals of African and Asian nationalities were apprehended on farms for labour and residency violations. Similarly, in Al Dakhiliyah, authorities arrested 25 people of Asian nationalities for related offenses. In a separate operation, Coast Guard police boats, coordinated by the North Al Batinah Governorate Police, intercepted a vessel carrying 18 individuals of Asian nationalities attempting to leave the country illegally.

Qatar Airways named Airline of the Year-2024

DOHA: Qatar Airways has been named “Airline of the Year” for 2024 by AirlineRatings.com, de-

In a statement, Editor-in-Chief of AirlineRatings.com Geoffrey Thomas attributed Qatar

close scoring for the top 10, he stated. “The passenger reviews however scored Qatar Airways ahead of all airlines and its consistency and high standard of service delivery came through in the feedback.”

The Airline Excellence Awards is presented by AirlineRatings.com, the world's only safety and product rating website. The awards are judged by five editors with over 100 years of industry experience and combine major safety and government audits, with 12 key criteria that include: fleet age, passenger reviews, profitability, safety rating, product rating, innovation and forward fleet orders.



throne prominent airlines such as Air New Zealand, Korean Air, Cathay Pacific Airways and Emirates. For the fifth consecutive year, Qatar Airways also bagged the titles for Best Business Class and Best Catering.

Airways' success to its consistency and standard of service delivery based on the feedback of passengers. “In our objective analysis Qatar Airways came out number one in many key areas although it was a very

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UAE visit visa:How to pay overstay fines online

DUBAI: Overstaying your visit in the UAE and absconding could cause the visitor to incur a fine of Dh50 per day – regardless of whether you have a residence or visit visa.

If you have stayed in the Emirates beyond your permitted time fine that you have incurred to clear all charges. Here is how you can do so in six steps:

1. Go to the website of the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security and on the home page, click “Fines and Leave Permits”.

2. You will then be directed to another page, where you must click on “Start, you must pay the Service” in the “Fines - Pay Fines - Violations of Entry Permissions or Residences - Pay New Fine” box



3. If you were on a residence visa then you should fill out the empty fields that appear on the page. If not, click on “citizens of certain countries” and then fill the emp-

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5. You will then be asked to Review your application and confirm all relevant details.
6. Finally, you will be taken to a page where you will be required to

FOREX RATES
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Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	84.11	83.21
Euro	90.79	89.87
Australian Dollar	55.88	54.95
Japanese Yen	0.57	0.52
Canadian Dollar	61.49	60.58
Singapore Dollar	62.39	61.46
Swedish krona	8.80	7.01
UAE Dirham	23.11	22.56
Swiss Franc	92.43	90.63
British Pound	106.64	105.69
New Zealand Dollar	51.88	50.43
Thai Baht	2.36	2.16
Hong Kong Dollar	11.63	10.32
Saudi Arabian Riyal	22.94	21.99
Bahraini Dinar	227.23	213.23
Chinese Yuan	12.41	10.61
Danish Krone	12.57	11.57
Kuwaiti Dinar	277.85	261.85
Malaysian Ringgit	18.83	17.38
Omani Rial	223.20	211.20
Qatari Riyal	23.66	21.41
South African Rand	4.96	4.12

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GULF FAQs

Can I join our rival firm without any hindrance?

I work in a mainland IT company in Dubai. I am switching the job because of a better package and joining the current employer's competitor. My existing employer came to know that I would be joining his competitor. Now he is playing delaying tactics by not accepting the resignation letter. I fear he will delay my dues also. If I file a case against him, can he put a ban and I won't be able to switch the job and have to leave the country?

As you are employed with an employer in mainland Dubai, the provisions of the UAE Employment Law and its subsequent ministerial resolutions are applicable. In the UAE, an employee may end the employment relationship with an employer by serving the stipulated notice period mentioned in the employment contract. This is in accordance with Article 43(1) of Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulation of Employment Relations.

Furthermore, non-acceptance of the resignation by an employee may be termed as harassment. In such an event, an employee may file a complaint with the Ministry of HR and Emritisation (MoHRE). Upon filing a complaint with the ministry and upon its consent, the employee may terminate his or her employment without serving any notice period.

This is in accordance with Article 45 (2) of the UAE Employment Law, which states:

The employee may quit work without notice and reserve all his entitlements at the end of service if the employee is subject to assault, violence or harassment at the workplace by the employer or his legal representative, provided that the employee reports such act to the concerned authorities and the ministry within five working days from the date on which he is able to report."

Moreover, an employer may not force an employee to leave the country upon termination of employment. This is in accordance with Article 13(2) of the UAE Employment Law, which states: "The Employer shall not seize the official documents of the employee or force him to leave the UAE after the end of work relationships."

In the event of an alleged breach of non-competition by an employee by joining a competitor on termination of employment with an employer, it is up to the employer to prove it. The non-competition, financial or any damage caused to the employer by its previous employee need to be proven before the court which has jurisdic-

tion to hear the matter. This is in accordance with Article 12 (1) & (2) of the Cabinet Resolution No.1 of 2022 on the Implementation of Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 Regarding the Regulation of Employment Relations, which states:

1. Subject to the provisions of Article (10) of the Decree-Law, the following shall be observed in the application of the non-competition clause stipulated therein:
 - a. The geographical scope of application of the clause.
 - b. The term of the clause, provided that it does not exceed two years from the contract expiry date.
 - c. The nature of the work, such that it causes significant harm to the legitimate interests of the employer.
2. If a dispute arises over the non-competition clause and it is not settled amicably, the matter shall be referred to the judiciary and the burden of proving the alleged damage shall lie with the employer."

It is the responsibility of an employer to pay the end of service benefits to its employee within 14 days from termination of employment. This is in accordance with Article 53 of the UAE Employment Law, which states, "The employer shall pay the employee within 14 days after the expiry of the contract, all his salary and other entitlements provided for in this Decree-Law and its implementing resolutions, the contract or the Establishment bylaws."

Based on the aforementioned provisions of law, your employer may not deny to accept your resignation and currently, it may not be able to file a non-competition complaint or case against you as you have not joined the competitor.

Furthermore, the onus of proving breach of non-competition is on your employer against you in any court which has jurisdiction in the UAE.

Additionally, your employer should pay your end of service benefits within 14 days from the date of termination of the employment contract and your employer cannot force you to leave the UAE or may not have any valid grounds to impose an employment ban on you. In the event your employer violates your rights as mentioned above, you may consider filing an employment complaint with the MoHRE.

SKILLS GURU

By Sajan MS

HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY

INC APPROVED NURSING PROGRAMS available IN INDIA

A glimpse into the history of Nursing in India

(Cont. from the last issue)

The low status of women, the caste system, illiteracy and political unrest hindered the progress of nursing in ancient India. The development of nursing in India was greatly influenced by Christian missionaries, World War I, British rule and international agencies like WHO, UNICEF, Red Cross, UN- SAID etc.

The earliest form of nursing was military

Nurses Association of India was formed to uphold the dignity and respect of the nursing profession. In 1918, training schools for health visitors and dairies were started in Delhi and Karachi. In 1926, Madras State formed the first Nursing Registration Council to provide basic standards in Nursing education and training. In 1946, a four-year basic bachelor's degree program was first started at the College of Nursing, Delhi



nursing. In 1664, the East India Company started a hospital for soldiers in a house at Fort St. George in Madras and sisters were first sent to this military hospital from St Thomas' Hospital in London. In 1797, Dr. John Underwood built a maternity hospital for the poor in Madras. In 1854, the Government sanctioned the first training school for midwives in Madras. In 1865, graduates from the Nightingale School of Nursing were sent to the School of Nursing in India. In 1867, St. Stephen's Hospital in Delhi began training Indian girls as nurses. In 1871, the first school of nursing was started in Government General Hospital, Madras with a six-month diploma midwives program with four students. Between 1890 and 1900, many schools under missions or government were started in different parts of India. Nursing associations began in the 20th century. In 1908, the Trained

and Vellore. Seven health centers were established between 1931 and 1939 in the cities of Delhi, Madras, Bangalore, Lucknow, Thiruvananthapuram, Pune and Calcutta. In 1947, after independence, the massive expansion of the community development program and hospital service increased the demand for nurses, auxiliary nurse and midwives, health visitors, midwives, nursing tutors and nursing administrators tenfold. The Indian Nursing Council Act was passed on 31 December 1947 through an Ordinance and the Indian Nursing Council was formed in 1947. The first postgraduate course (Master of Science in Nursing), a two-year postgraduate course, was started in 1960 at the College of Nursing, Delhi. In 1963, the School of Nursing in Thiruvananthapuram started the first two-year post-certificate bachelor's degree (Post Bachelor of Science in Nursing) program.

Allied Health Science Courses (AHS) & Paramedical Courses

Till early nineties, nursing too was considered as a Paramedical Course. Nursing and nursing education in India have been out of the paramedical category since the Indian Nursing Council meeting on Aug 5, 1993 decided that nursing is not a paramedical course and issued an order establishing nursing as an independent profession. (Indian Nursing Council in its meeting held on Aug 5, 1993 resolved that nursing is not a paramedical course. Further nursing education should not be linked with Para-Medical Education and neither be clubbed with Para-Medical, as nursing profession itself is an independent profession which is approved by the WHO and International Council of Nurses. Nursing Profession as such does not belong to a Para-Medical Group.)

What is Allied Health?
Allied Health Professions (AHP) / Allied Health Sciences (AHS) are a distinct group of health professions / professionals who apply their expertise to prevent disease transmission, diagnose, treat and rehabilitate people of all ages and all specialties. It is distinct from the fields of dentistry, optometry, medicine, nursing and pharmacy. They provide a range of diagnostic, technical, therapeutic, and support services in connection with healthcare. There is a large demand for AHPs in their respective fields and these professions require specialised training, higher level education and certification/licensure. AHP roles are usually subject to statutory regulation and registration due to their ability to perform some, specific, restricted medical actions.

Allied Health Sciences (AHS) offer graduate, postgraduate and research level programmes which are conducted by Universities & Deemed-To-Be Universities. The programmes are conducted through different "modes" such as Regular and Active Enrollment, Off Campus Study, Distance Education, Part-time and Correspondence.

AHS courses are conducted in various specialisations covering several subjects and tailored to provide students with specific knowledge and skills in their chosen allied health profession. Bachelor degree programs are usually designed as three- to five-year courses and Master Programs are available

in two year stream. Research Programmes also open to interested and talented students. The AHS curricula are exclu-



HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY

sively designed to produce outstanding AHS professionals capable of making meaningful contributions in the field of healthcare.



Allied health care is a rewarding career field with a variety of job opportunities worldwide and an integral part of the health care system. They are increasingly required to support the medical staff. The allied professionals provide health care by assisting the mainstream health care professionals in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of various medical conditions and diseases across specialties. Allied health-care professionals may work directly or indirectly with patients in labs, clinics or administrative offices.

Allied healthcare professionals who work with or assist physicians in a hospital or health care centre often practise as

individual specialists in their own firm or private practice or home settings. For example, Nutritionists, Psychologists, Phys-

iotherapists, Dieticians are Allied Health Professionals and they care the patients privately or in their own centres in the areas of exercise and sports, musculoskeletal health, rehabilitation care, nutrition, chronic disease, mental health, disability, and geriatric care.

Allied health professionals can be classified in to

- Primary Care Provider
 - Health Promotion
 - Administrative Professionals
 - Rehabilitative Professionals
 - Diagnostic Professionals
- REWARDING, JOB-PACKED ALLIED HEALTHCARE DEGREE PROGRAMS IN INDIA:**
- Anesthesia Technician
 - Audiologist
 - Cardiovascular Technologist
 - Dental Assistant
 - Dental Hygienist
 - Dietitian / Nutritionist
 - Medical Laboratory Technician
 - Medical Laboratory Technologist
 - Occupational Therapist
 - Cardiac Perfusionist
 - Phlebotomist

- Physiotherapist/Physical Therapist
- Radiographer
- Radiology Technologist
- Angiography
- Mammography
- Radiotherapy
- Renal Dialysis
- Respiratory Therapy
- Sonography
- Speech Therapy
- Community Health
- Healthcare Technician
- Certified Nursing Assistant (CAN)
- Environmental Health Specialist
- Health educator



- Health coordinators:
- Medical Secretary

Front Desk Receptionist:

- Medical Transcriptionist
- Medical Biller
- Professional Coder
- Occupational Therapists
- Psychologists
- Prosthetists
- Speech Pathologists
- Ultrasound Technician
- Nuclear Medicine Technologist

(Refer: Avoid 'pitfalls' in joining Paramedical courses or Allied Health Science courses / There are some differences in the names or titles of the courses, from university to university)

Paramedical Courses and Careers

Paramedical courses are career-oriented and short-term medical training courses that are part of the healthcare industry and are professional-ori-

ented. These Paramedical Courses are offered by various Medical Colleges and State DMEs across the country as Diploma and Certificate Courses. The duration of these courses can range from six months to two or three years depends on the state that offers the programmes. Paramedics are an integral part of the healthcare industry and their duties are to assist doctors, strive to maintain the health of patients, perform technical work and deal with emergency situations. Paramedical courses are conducted with a lot of emphasis on placement as they are vocational courses. Ever since the covid-19 invaded people's lives, the importance and demand of paramedical courses and paramedics in the world has increased tremendously compared with the past. The paramedic experts are the backbone of our medical industry, without them, the medical industry will be partially complete.

Paramedical Courses - Important Facts?

Paramedical courses differ significantly in terms of the roles, responsibilities, and duration of study from other mainstream healthcare courses. Here are the key differences:

DURATION AND LEVEL OF STUDY:

Paramedical courses are typically diploma or certificate programmes that can vary in duration from a few months to a few years, depending on the specific course. These courses focus on training individuals to support doctors and other healthcare professionals in various medical procedures and tasks.

(To be continued)