

## Lifestyle

## Training feels like sweating through an engineering degree

## Philippine maids sharpen their skills to go abroad

MANILA, Nov. 26, (AFP): All Filipina maid Cherry Pie Antaban wants is a simple job as a domestic helper in Singapore, but training for her new role sometimes feels like sweating through an engineering degree.

Like all women in the Philippines wanting to work overseas as maids, Antaban has to go through a government-mandated crash course in domestic duties that can be bewildering, daunting and occasionally humiliating.

"I didn't know there would be so many different techniques just for cleaning. It isn't just sweeping and mopping," Antaban, 30, said during a break recently from Domestic Duties 101.

## Course

"We have to know the different types of vacuum cleaners, the different kinds of air-conditioners and how to clean them: the window type, the box-type, the split-type."

Nearly 100,000 women in the

impovertised Philippines head overseas each year to toil as maids, many of whom come from homes where washing clothes is done by hand and dishes are cleaned in a bucket.

For Antaban, passing the month-long training course in Manila is the final step in landing a job in Singapore for US\$400 a month, nearly six times more than she had been earning as a maid in her hometown in the northern Philippines.

"I want to help my mother and younger sister. They need me to support them," said Antaban, who is unmarried. She said her mother had no work and her sister earned the equivalent of US\$2.70 a day as a waitress.

There is no guarantee Antaban will graduate, with six percent of all students across the country failing the domestic training courses each year, according to the national government's vocational training department.

"Some of the candidates fail the assessment because they cannot operate the vacuum cleaners, the washing machines, the driers," said Lenny

Carreon, who is in charge of the department's training courses in two districts of Manila.

"These are women from poor rural areas. They are not familiar with these state-of-the-art household appliances."

A spike in the number of Filipinas going abroad to work as maids in 2005 prompted the government to order that prospective maids undergo training before being certified to work abroad.

This was to address concerns that many poorly educated, unprepared women were not able to cope in foreign environments, and Carreon said that the programme had largely been a success.

## Confidence

"The people who undergo training, there is an improvement in their skills and level of confidence. They are more competitive," Carreon said, adding students were taught about foreign cultures as well as domestic duties.

At the training centre attended by

Antaban, an instructor devoted half a day to teaching the 50 students how to use a washing machine.

"Separate the whites and the colours. Be very careful. Don't be in a hurry and don't let them mix," the instructor, Charibel Barrios, called out, inspecting each woman's basin to make sure they got it right.

In other parts of the course, the women were taught to cook Chinese meals, clean the house and set tables in a style suitable to the culture of Hong Kong and Singapore, their planned future destinations.

Windows were also wiped clean with squeegees, while beds were made like in a hotel with blankets and even the edges of pillow cases carefully folded.

On another day, the women were taught to polish the floors on their hands and knees, rather than simply by mopping as Filipinos typically do.

"When we make you kneel down and wipe the floor, we are not punishing you. We are doing this so your employer will not be angry at you,"

explained Barrios.

Some of the students said the lessons were humiliating, although this too offered an important lesson about their future careers.

"It is painful to have a college degree and then apply as a domestic helper. But I think about my family. I am the one sending my brother and sister to school," said Janet Quiron, 25, a former school teacher.

Quiron said she earned just 5,200 pesos (US\$120) a month as a school teacher, but would make four times that in Hong Kong as a domestic helper.

## Workforce

Quiron's plight is depressingly common in the Philippines, where many give up careers in better-skilled jobs locally to earn more overseas. Over nine million Filipinos, about 10 percent of the population, work abroad.

With more than 96,000 women leaving the Philippines last year to work abroad as maids, domestic

helpers are the second largest overseas Filipino workforce behind merchant seamen, according to government statistics.

The top 10 destinations for Filipina maids are Hong Kong, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Singapore, Bahrain, Oman, Cyprus, and Italy.

Annaliza Ambrocio, a former secretary who was attending the Manila training course, said she was planning to join thousands of other Filipinas working in Hong Kong for a second stint overseas after spending two years in Libya.

Ambrocio, 38, said she had to go abroad again because her husband's salary as a gunsmith could not support their family, but she was heartbroken at the prospect of leaving her nine-year-old son.

"He is sad I am leaving him again. But I told him not to cry. I told him when I get back, I can buy all the things he wants," she said, holding back her tears.

click

## Latest

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great door prizes! Relax after shopping with refreshments in the diwaniya. Supporting five charities. For more info contact: fayre-trade@yahoo.com



**IEI Winter Examination 2011:** The Institution of Engineers (India), Kuwait Chapter is pleased to announce that Winter 2011 AMIE Examination will be conducted from Dec 3-10, 2011 at Jabriya Indian School, Street No. 1 Block No. 10 near Japan Embassy, Jabriya, Kuwait (Examination Centre 005) Telephone No. 25340836/25340837.

The Examination sessions based on Kuwait local time shall be as follows:  
Forenoon: 7:30 am to 10:30 am  
Afternoon: 12:00 pm to 03:00 pm  
All those student members who are already for Winter 2011 examination may contact IE(I) Kuwait Chapter Office for further clarification by e-mail ieikwt@hotmail.com, ieikwt@yahoo.com or Telephone No. 22445588/22448975 ext 314 between 05:30 pm to 08:30 pm Sunday through Thursday.

Dec 5

**PrettyGreenBullet expo:** Dar Al Funoon will hold an exhibition of works from Ghadah Alkandari, PrettyGreenBullet, The Second Exhibition. Opening at 7 pm - 9 pm on Monday, Dec 5, 2011, one night only.

An exhibition celebrating the second year of Ghadah Alkandari's blog PrettyGreenBullet, this one-night show will showcase paintings and drawings, as well as everyday notes, doodles and sketches done by the artist over the last year.

Because of the vagaries of Alkandari's mind, even she can't be sure what the final outcome of the show will be. The nature of her daily evolution and devolution of ideas form the basis of the PrettyGreenBullet experience, and this exhibition, the nutshell. Don't be left out; visit PrettyGreenBullet.com.

Gallery hours: Sunday to Thursday: 10 am - 1 pm & 4 - 8 pm; Friday and Saturday: by appointment.

Getting to the gallery: Al-Watiah, Behbehani Compound, House No. 28. For further information call +965 2243 3138, www.daralfunoon-kw.com

Dec 6

**Indian Embassy closure:** The Embassy of India will remain closed on the following dates during the month of Dec 2011.

1. Dec 6, 2011 (Tuesday) — 'Muharram'
2. Dec 25, 2011 (Sunday) — 'Christmas Day'

Dec 29

**AIP Awards Nite 2011:** Association of Indian Professionals (AIP) is pleased to announce that the AIP would organize a mega event to award meritorious Indian students on Dec 29, 2010 (Thursday) at 5.00 pm at the auditorium of the Indian Community Sr. School, Salmiya. Awardees have been selected based on CBSE examinations results of class X and XII declared for the academic year 2010 - 2011 from all Indian Schools in Kuwait which are affiliated to CBSE system of education of India. This may be noted that AIP awards have become synonym of excellence and parents of meritorious students eagerly look forward to this event.

All Indian are cordially invited to attend. Prior confirmation of attendance will help us to make suitable arrangements accordingly. An opportunity to become AIP member awaits you at the venue on this occasion.

For further details contact General Secretary Mr. Umesh Sharma on 97286800 / 25644301 or through yousees27@hotmail.com.

## Art

**JAMM holds expo in Kuwait:** JAMM, an independent art advisory, hosts its inaugural exhibition in Kuwait at the Contemporary Art Platform (CAP) located on the 2nd floor of the Life Center in industrial Shuwaikh (Block 2, Street 28). Curated by Ali Bakhtiar, the exhibition, entitled 'How I Learned to Stop Fearing and Love Exotic Art', will open on Nov 20, 2011. The show will end on Dec 10, 2011.



Sing Galing 2011 competition participants pose with officials.

## Five Pinoy singers qualify for Sing Galing semis

By Michelle Fe Santiago  
Special to the Arab Times

Five more talented Filipino singers were able to make it to the last elimination round of the Sing Galing 2011 singing competition held on Friday at the Sky Zone Restaurant in Fahaheel. The five will advance to the semifinal round on Dec 2 at the Swiss-bel Hotel Plaza in Kuwait City. Among the qualifiers this week were Tom Anthony Antonio who earned the nod of the judges with his rendition of an OPM "Kahit Isang Saglit" popularised by the Philippine

Concert King Martin Nievera; Jonah Magallanes who crooned "To love you mor" while Sheila Jane Surbito sang "Without You" and Joe Barry Santiago with his winning piece "Gaya ng Dati" also made it with another qualifier Paolo Latapon who did "My Way."

A total of 27 semifinalists will be pitting against one another on Dec 2 and only 10 of them will be chosen to advance to the Grand Finals on Dec. 9 at the Shaab Leisure Park during the "Juan 2 Sawa" featuring the concert of two of the Philippines world-class singers - Richard Poon and

Bossa Nova Queen Sitti.

The judges composed of Eman and Riene of the HnS Band evaluated the performance of the contestants based on their voice quality (50%), Interpretation (20%), Pronunciation & Diction (20%), costume and interview (10%).

A wide array of valuable prizes are up for grabs for the grand prize winners plus a chance to share the lime-light on stage with Sitti and Richard Poon.

Q8pinoy.com would like to thank MoneyGram Money Transfer, Zain, Technosat, Swiss-belHotel Plaza,

Electrozan, Fantasy World, Echo Extreme Karaoke, Ajwaa Tourism and Travel Co, Doors Production, Oscar Group Co, The Filipino Channel and Skyzone Pinoy Restaurant for supporting the event.

The Sing Galing 2011 Competition organized by the Q8pinoy.com in cooperation with the Philippine Embassy is open to all Filipinos who have the flare for singing. For those who want to watch the semifinals and the 'Juan 2 Sawa' event, they can inquire about the entry pass from Nel 66627898, Beth 66076856, Bong 99812019 and Keesha 65987348.



A photo from the event

## ASSE organises technical meet

American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), Kuwait Chapter as a part of continuous efforts in its professional journey, organized a technical meet on Nov 17, 2011 at Kohinoor Hotel, Fahaheel titled "Fall Protection".

N. Vasudevan, Acting President, ASSE - Kuwait Chapter welcomed the participants. He briefed about the significance of the technical meet and the importance of conducting these meets monthly for the benefit of all. Loganathan, Member, Technical Events Committee introduced the topic and speaker Romain Crouzit, Sales Area Manager Middle East Region, Capital Safety - EMEA.

During the key note presentation, Romain Crouzit briefly explained Hierarchy of Controls, ABCD's of Fall Protection, Clearance Distance & Swing Effect, Primary vs Secondary Protection, Rescue Plan, Training. He also demonstrated the handlings the harness.

The technical session was very much interactive and it was followed

by Question& Answer session. Former President of the chapter Mohammad K.S Mohiuddeen made announcements on the forthcoming HSSE Professional Development Conference scheduled in the month of November - December, 2011. More than 50 ASSE Kuwait chapter members participated from various sectors (Government Sectors, Oil & Gas Companies, Contractors and, HSE Consultancies). As a token of appreciation EC Members presented a memento to speaker of the day Romain Crouzit. Amarnath Burugapally, Secretary, ASSE Kuwait Chapter anchored the program and concluded with vote of thanks. High tea was served at the end of the meet.

Rohit Mirchandani, Managing Director of Raja Company who is the local agent for Capital Safety thanked ASSE for the support rendered and assured his support back to ASSE Kuwait Chapter's future activities.

Pizza Inn sponsored pizzas for all the participants at the end of the meet.

For more information on JAMM, please contact Sheikhha Lulu Al Sabah: lasabah@jamm-art.com; Gazala Shaikh: gazalashaikh@jamm-art.com

## Theater &amp; Music

Nov 30

**KLT announces pantomime:** Kuwait Little Theatre (KLT) would like to

announce that tickets are now on sale for this year's pantomime Dick Whittington & His Cat.

Directed by Kimberly Lewis and featuring an all star KLT cast performances run from Wednesday, Nov 30 to Saturday, Dec 3 and then again from Wednesday, Dec 7 to Friday, Dec 9 at 7.30 pm. We strongly encourage all our audience members to come with their family where possible.

The secret to a great panto is a good mix

of adults and children at every performance so kick your festive season off early with a visit to Kuwait's only traditional pantomime. Book now by logging on the our website www.theklt.com or by calling the Box Office on 99373678

Dec 7

**Men's Voice music concert:** Men's Voice and Choral Society — Kuwait, the

renowned Christian musicale group in Kuwait since 2001, are going to be back on stage this season of winter with their 11th annual Christmas Music Concert 'Celtic Christmas' for all the music lovers of the region on Wednesday, Dec 7, 2011 at 7 pm at Hall of Faith, National Evangelical Church, (NECK), Kuwait. They are at their final stages of practice rounding up and polishing the best carols from English and Malayalam favorites. Every music lover is

cordially invited to this spiritual musical concert. For more details contact 94064465/94063481 or visit www.mensvoicekuwait.org

Dec 8

**Christmas Carol & Arts Nite:** YMCA Kuwait is organizing the 2nd Christmas Carol and Arts Nite on Dec 8, 2011 at Indian Community Senior Girls School, Salmiya from 6:00 pm onwards. We wholeheartedly invite all of you to the "Christmas Celebrations" to proclaim the joy of the season, Mellifluous carols by different Christian choirs and variety entertainment program will be a feast to your heart and a charm of joy to your life. For further details you can contact the following telephone numbers: 66767475, 97542985, 99498369, 99607230, 99046751, 55120208.

Dec 9

**ICS Sisila Ye Chahat Ka:** Indian Cultural Society proudly presents 'Sisila Ye Chahat Ka' with Shreya Ghosal on Dec 9, 2011 Friday, at 7.00 pm sharp. The Chief Guest for the event will be H.E. Ambassador of India, Kuwait and the guest of honor will be prominent personalities from Kuwait.

ICS is back with a show with a difference "Sisila Ye Chahat Ka" will be witness of new fashion & ever green songs by leading female playback singer from Indian cinema Shreya Ghosal.

So join us for quality entertainment "Sisila Ye Chahat Ka" on Friday, Dec 9, at 7.00 pm. At Auditorium Al Jeel Al Jadeed School, Opp- Al Bahar Centre Turnis street Hawally Kuwait. Our contact numbers for your assistance & information: 66486430, 97690035, 66127231, 97270386 & 99757214

www.nazarkesamne.webs.com & www.ics-kuwait.com / ics.kuwait@gmail.com

Jan 14, 2012

**BAIA Workshops:** The British Academy of International Arts (BAIA) is holding 'So U Think U Can Sing', Jan 14. 'So U Think U Can Sing' is not a choir nor is it classical music lessons. This workshop is for those who love to sing along to their favourite music and would like to learn to do it better. Students will be taught how to use their voice, microphone technique and given lots of opportunity to explore different styles of pop music. The workshop will be led by a professional vocal coach and experienced teacher. Bring a group of your friends for a fun way to spend a Saturday. Timing for these workshops is 10 to 15:30 on Saturdays and will be held in Salwa.

For more information contact us at: info@thebaia.com; Salwa Block 1, Street 1, Villa 32, Telephone: 25623604 ext 154; 25650706 ext 154, Mobile 60052087.

April 13,

**KGTS plans mega event:** Kuwait-Goa Tiatranchi Sonstha (KGTS) having successfully staged 5 (five) blockbuster Konkani musical shows in Kuwait - 'Tiatr ani Tiatr' in 2004, 'Konkni Machiek Noman' in 2005, 'Ostad Tiatr' in 2006, 'Konkni Machiechi Ithias' in 2007, 'Tiatrionn Devachem Dennen' in 2009 the entire proceeds of which were generously distributed amongst 23 (twenty-three) senior-most Konkani stage artistes in Goa and Mumbai (Bombay).

KGTS has strived to do this honour in recognition for their long dedicated services in the promotion of this unique art 'Tiatr' which is part of the Goan heritage and culture. Kuwait-Goa Tiatranchi Sonstha (KGTS) now celebrates its 10th anniversary with a Konkani drama (Tiatr) and announces yet another Konkani presentation 'Tiatranchi Moladikh Kala' on April 13, 2012. Watch out for further details and if you wish to contribute in any way towards the KGTS celebrations, feel free to email francisji@yahoo.com or keep a watch at your favourite blog on tiatr and tiatrists http://tiatracademy.blogspot.com/ and your favourite English newspapers of Kuwait.

## Sports

**BAS Air Rifle Target Shooting:** The British Academy of Sport under the patronage of H.E. The British Ambassador is pleased to offer yet another new activity in the 2011 community sports programme. Air Rifle target shooting takes place in a safe, supervised environment at the Hunting and Equestrian Centre target shooting range with specialist tuition from Coach Howard Banks. This course is offered to anyone

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