

US betters IT salaries for 'imported' Indian nurses

DH NEWS SERVICE,

BANGALORE: No cheap labour this. As nursing becomes a 'luxury' service in the US, which suffers from an acute shortage of nurses, US firms are rushing into India to lap up Indian talent, promising excellent placement, high salaries, world-class working conditions, two-week paid vacation and perks that can put even an IT professional's package to shame.

"We are not outsourcing

and our activity of attracting nurses for US hospitals has nothing to do with the cost of labour. Our shortage for nurses, to the extent of 200,000, is for real and it is expected to get only worse.

Indian nurses

We want Indian nurses to fill in positions in hospital-based nursing facilities," said Stephen S Nuell, founder-president of NICE (Nurses for International Co-operative Exchange), that claims to have

successfully placed 180 nurses in the US, on Saturday.

Nuell will be participating in a seminar on 'Retgression and delay in visa issuance' in the City on Sunday. The topic, according to Nuell, is timely, for "following the shift in US policy in December, when priority was given to the pending domestic cases over foreign ones, those aspiring to come to US felt insecure. But recently, an amendment has been passed in the Congress to recapture the nurses in these

countries, owing to the shortage, and this will open up the industry again for Indian nurses."

Nuell's colleague Dr Mark G McKenney, however added that the biggest obstacle for Indians are clearing the CGFNS/NCLEX exams mandatory for nurses seeking jobs in the US.

"The average pass percentage is 20 per cent in CGFNS, but our institute boasts of a 60 per cent pass rate," Dr McKenney said.

DECCAN HERALD

MAY 1, 2005

JOB & CAREER / NICE