

MoH to bring four legislations soon

HEALTH INSURANCE TO BE MADE MANDATORY FOR EXPATS

By Nada S. Mussallam

ABU DHABI — The Ministry of Health (MoH) plans to implement four important laws soon.

The proposed legislations include a much-awaited law on mandatory health insurance scheme for expatriates in Dubai and Northern Emirates, and a draft law on tobacco control, the Minister of Health, Humaid Mohammed Obaid Al Qutami, has said.

The MoH will also enact laws on pharmacy and medical liability, which are likely to be endorsed by the higher authorities before the end of the summer season, said the minister.

The MoH has finalised drafting of the laws and submitted them to the

LAW ON PHARMACY

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concerned authorities for ratification. Qattami expressed his ministry's keenness to enact these laws at the earliest.

The draft bill on health insurance is designed to replace the existing health card system and will serve

both the public and private sectors, with the main aim of alleviating the suffering of expatriates who often reel under the exorbitant medical expenses.

The law on tobacco control focuses on imposing restrictions on the consumption and promotion of tobacco products, with a special emphasis on banning tobacco advertising and promotion.

The medical liability draft bill, which mainly covers medical malpractices and medical insurance, focuses on regulating medical practices and providing patients with quality health services.

The proposed federal pharmacy law aims to cope with the international drug policies and create a balanced drug control policy.

WTA to make debut in Abu Dhabi tonight

By Silvia Radan

ABU DHABI — The World Travel Awards (WTA), also dubbed as the Oscars of the travel industry, will begin its 2007 world tour in Abu Dhabi. The red carpet will be rolled out today at the Emirates Palace, marking the WTA's debut in the Middle East.

The winners of tonight's Middle East and African categories will later compete at the global level. The final winners will be announced on December 12.

In its 14th year, WTA acknowledges contributions made by organisations, businesses and individuals to the travel industry. The endorsement comes from travel agencies and professionals from over 200 countries.

There are 12 major categories for the awards, each with dozens of sub-categories, including regional/country awards, the Green awards and Personality of the Year award.

For the last category, two eminent personalities from UAE are in direct competition for the "Destination and Convention Bureau Travel Personality of the Year".

They are His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai, and Shaikh Sultan bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan, chairman of the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority and Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre.

From UAE, major nominations include Emirates

Palace, Burj Al Arab, Dhanat Resort and Rotana hotels, Etihad Airways and Emirates Airline and Abu Dhabi and Dubai as leading destinations. In the Green (environmentally-friendly) category, there is only one entry from the Middle East, Basata Eco-Lodge from Egypt.

Tonight's event will also witness an entertainment programme featuring Lebanese pop singer Haifa Wehbe and actors and actresses like Jamie-Lynn Sigler (The Sopranos), Chris Noth (Sex and the City), Lauren Holly (Dumb and Dumber and What Women Want), as well as pop singer Deborah Gibson, entertainer Ben Vereen and the Czech Tatiana Kucharova, Miss World 2006.

Abras carried 9m commuters so far this year

By a staff reporter

DUBAI — Nine million passengers were transported by abras in 441,020 trips between the two banks of Dubai Creek during the first four months of this year, according to statistics released by Marine Transport Agency of Roads and Transport Authority (RTA).

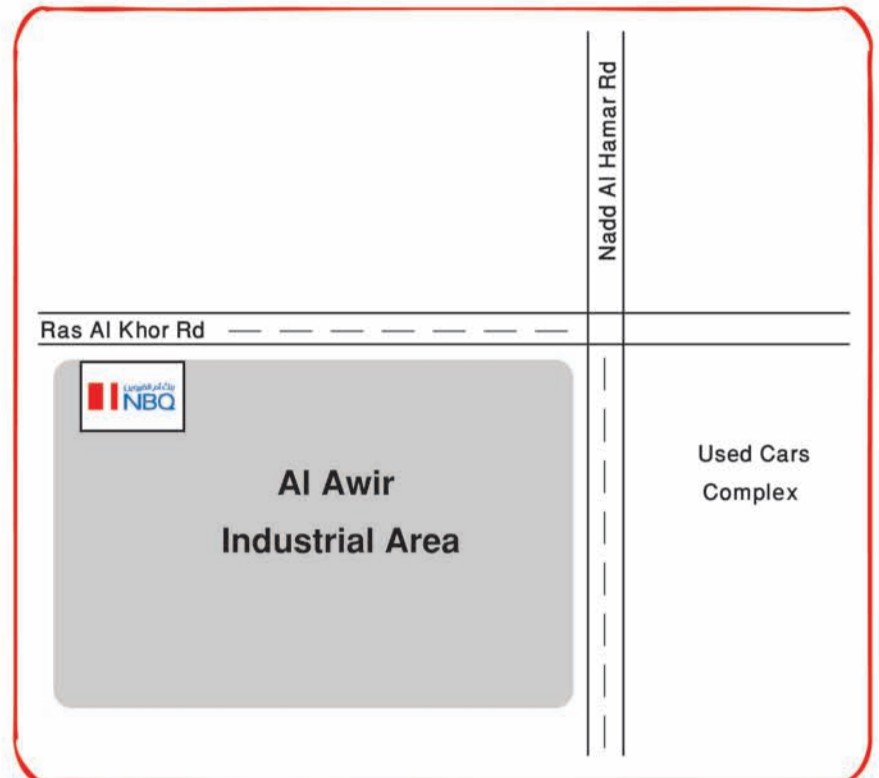
"The number of commuters transported by motorised abras in 435,100 trips stood at 87,02,014 passengers from January up to the end of April this year, compared to 84,09,892 passengers transported in 420,494 trips during the same period last year.

A total of 4,617 passengers were transported by rowing abras in 5,920 trips from the beginning of January up to the end of April this year.

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