

Nurse Maria Victoria Juan from Philippines wins the Prestigious Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award 2024 worth INR 2 Crore

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Nurse Maria Victoria Juan from Philippines, a Consultant at Philippines Army Health Services and Colonel, Reserve Force of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, has been announced as the winner of Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award 2024 and awarded with INR 2 Crore at a prestigious award ceremony held in Bengaluru, India. The winner was announced by Dr. Azad Moopen, Founder Chairman of Aster DM Healthcare, and presented by Shri Dinesh Gundu Rao, Hon'ble Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka alongside Bollywood actress Sonali Bendre, Shri U. T. Khader, Hon'ble Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly, Alisha Moopen, Deputy Managing Director – Aster DM Healthcare India and T J Wilson,

Executive Director and Group Head – Governance & Corporate Affairs, Aster DM Healthcare.



Maria Victoria Juan from Philippines – Winner of Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award 2024

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The Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award was launched by Aster DM Healthcare in 2021, with an aim to recognize and celebrate the extraordinary contributions of nurses to patients across the world. The 2024 edition of the awards saw an overwhelming participation from 78,000 nurses from 202 countries, marking 50% growth in applications received in 2023.

The event also featured a special message from Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization, who congratulated the finalists and acknowledged Aster DM Healthcare’s ongoing efforts to spotlight the critical role of nurses in healthcare.

Commenting on the win, **Nurse Maria Victoria Juan** said, “As a *military nurse from the Philippines, my journey has been defined by a steadfast commitment to service-whether caring in*

combat zones, disaster-stricken areas, or underserved communities, and championing advocacies on every platform to create positive change. This recognition reflects not just my efforts, but also the courage and honor of the soldiers I proudly serve alongside and the resilience of the Filipino people that inspire me daily.

It is also a tribute to the nurses I represent-tireless, selfless, extremely courageous individuals in the military and civilian sectors who put themselves in harms way to save lives and protect others. This honor acknowledges the sacrifices of those who serve under the most challenging conditions and highlights the boundless potential and dedication of our noble profession."

Maria Victoria Juan, currently a consultant at Philippine Army Health Services, served as the Chief Nurse of the Philippines Army, she was responsible for initiating the first aeromedical evacuation system in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). This system has greatly improved survival rates by enabling rapid evacuation and early treatment of casualties, especially in conflict areas. At the age of 54 years, she joined an intensive 9-month long aeromedical evacuation training program while working full-time as a chief nurse. As a leader who believes in leading from the front, she completed 200-hours of emergency ambulance conduction, 100 hours of clinical duty, 1-mile ocean swim, 3-day jungle survival, helicopter underwater escape and flight medical runs, while having a fear of flying and deepwater swimming. Maria also pioneered environmental health initiatives, integrating vetiver grass technology to combat soil erosion and water pollution. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Maria organized the Endurun Mega Swabbing Center, training troops as medical swabbers and coordinating healthcare professionals. The center conducted nearly 500,000 tests, significantly contributing to the country's pandemic response.

Dr. Azad Moopen, Founder Chairman, Aster DM Healthcare said,

“Maria Victoria Juan represents the highest standards of nursing excellence and serves as an inspiration to the entire global healthcare community. At Aster, we believe that nurses are the backbone of healthcare, who not only provide care with compassion but play an exemplary role in the whole healthcare system. The Aster Guardians Global Nursing Awards were established to honour the often-overlooked contributions of nurses worldwide who go above and beyond to impact lives. Each of the top 10 finalists, and the 78,000 applications we received this year have showcased outstanding contributions to their patients and the nursing community in their countries. We are proud to recognize and celebrate the incredible work of these healthcare heroes.”

Ms. Alisha Moopen, Deputy Managing Director, Aster DM Healthcare India said, *“Nurses are the quiet forces of healing, often working tirelessly and without fanfare to make a real difference in people’s lives. With the Aster Guardians Global Nursing Awards, our goal is to bring their remarkable stories to the forefront and give them the recognition they truly deserve. Maria Victoria Juan is a shining example of courage, skill, and compassion – qualities that elevate healthcare and inspire us all. Celebrating their achievements is a reminder of the immense impact nurses have on individuals, families, and communities everywhere.”*

The rest of the 9 finalists, Archimedes Motari from Kenya, Johnsy Inni from Papua New Guinea, Laarni Conlu Florencio from USA, Lilian Nuwabaine from Uganda, Nelson Bautista from UAE, Nilima Pradeepkumar Rane from India, Martin Schiavenato from USA, Hoi Shu Yin from Singapore and Sylvia May Hampton from England were also awarded with a monetary prize for their contributions in nursing.

These nurses were selected through a stringent review process run by Ernst & Young LLP, a panel of Screening-Jury and the Grand Jury.

About Aster DM Healthcare Limited, India

Aster DM Healthcare Limited is one of the largest healthcare service providers operating in India with a strong presence across primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary healthcare through 19 hospitals, 13 clinics, 217 pharmacies (Operated by Alfaone Retail Pharmacies Private Limited under brand license from Aster), and 243 labs and patient experience centers across 5 states in India, delivering a simple yet strong promise to different stakeholders: “We’ll treat you well.” Aster has been recognized as one of the most sustainable companies globally, with 9 hospitals featured in Newsweek magazine’s World’s Best Hospitals list for 2024.

About Aster DM Healthcare FZC in GCC

Founded in 1987 by Dr. Azad Moopen, Aster DM Healthcare is a leading integrated healthcare provider, with a strong presence across all six countries in the GCC. Aster is committed to the vision of providing accessible and high-quality healthcare, from primary to quaternary services, with its promise of “We will treat you well”. The organisation’s robust integrated healthcare model includes 16 hospitals, 121 clinics, and 306 pharmacies in GCC serving all segments of the society through three differentiated brands: Aster, Medicare and Access. Aster consistently adapts to meet the evolving needs of patients, ensuring access to quality healthcare through both physical and digital channels which is exemplified with the launch of the regions first healthcare super app, myAster.

