



# Saudi surpasses Vision 2030 tourism targets



**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia has surpassed its ambitious Vision 2030 goal of attracting 100 million visitors annually achieving this target in 2023, seven years ahead of schedule, according to a recent report from International Monetary Fund (IMF).

IMF's 2024 Arti-

cle IV Consultation report sheds light on the significant strides made by Saudi Arabia's tourism sector, which has emerged as a central pillar of the country's strategy to reduce its reliance on oil. Last year alone, tourism-generated revenues hit \$36 billion, with the sec-

tor's direct and indirect contributions to the national GDP now standing at 11.5pc, a figure expected to climb to 16pc by 2034.

Driven by an uptick in non-religious tourism—fuelled by international events like Formula One, the Asian Cup slated for

(Cont. on page-2)

# AI Express launches Tvm-Riyadh flight

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** ram every Monday at A long-standing demand of expatriates Riyadh city at 10.40



from Kerala to have a flight service to Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh from here has been acceded to by Air India Express.

Air India Express launched its flight service to Riyadh from Thiruvananthapuram on Sept 9 as an Onam gift to expatriates from the southern state. The flight, IX 521 will depart Thiruvananthapu-

PM. The return flight IX 522 will depart from Riyadh the same night at 11.20 PM and reach the Kerala capital on Tuesday at 7.30 AM. "Expatriates from Kerala and Tamil Nadu working in Saudi Arabia will benefit from the new service. There is already a direct service from Thiruvananthapuram to Dammam in Saudi Arabia," The airline said.

# Panama deports 130 illegal Indian migrants

**PANAMA CITY:** Panama deported 130 Indian irregular migrants who had entered the country via the inhospitable Darien jungle, under a deal with the US. With this deportation, Panama has expelled 219 migrants in two weeks

Panama's director of migration Roger Mojica told reporters the Indians were deported on a charter flight to New Delhi for "irregular migration." This was the first such expulsion outside of the Americas under the deal, and the fourth in total.

Washington has pledged \$6 million for migrant repatriations from the Central American nation in the hopes of reducing irregular crossings at its own southern border." At the same press confer-

ence, US Security Attache for Central America Marlen Pineiro said Washington was "very grateful to the government of Panama for all this support," adding that: "Irregular migration cannot continue."

The Darien Gap between Colombia and Panama has become a key corridor for migrants traveling overland from South America through Central America and Mexico to the US.

Despite the dangers, including attacks by criminal gangs, more than half a million undocumented migrants -- mostly Venezuelans -- crossed the Darien last year. Transit countries such as Panama and Mexico have come under increased pressure from Washington

# MEASURE AGAINST GHOST LABOUR Saudi to impose fines for hiring foreigners without having jobs

**RIYADH:** Saudi government's Ministry of HR plans to impose fines ranging from SR 2 lakh to a maximum of SR 1 million for recruitment of one or more workers from abroad without having jobs for them.

If the offender is a foreigner, he/she will be deported from the kingdom. The ministry will be responsible for de-

to tackle the highly contentious migration issue in a US election year. The July deal makes provision for a first phase of deporting migrants with a criminal record, but could see the repatriation of any person entering Panama through the notoriously dangerous and rugged Darien Gap region.

tecting associated violations and refer them to public prosecution to weigh filing lawsuits before the competent court, Saudi news website Akhbar24 reported. The ministry said the proposed modifications to the labour system aim to incriminate brokerage in phantom (ghost) labour.

In recent years, Saudi Arabia, home to a large community of expat workers, has sought to regulate its job market and boost its attractiveness and competitiveness.

Last year, the Ministry of HR unveiled an authentication plan via its Qiwa platform obligating private sector institutions to document 20pc of their

employees' contracts in the first quarter of 2023, 50pc in the second half and 80pc in the third quarter.

The plan is designed to preserve rights of parties to the contractual relationship and provide a stable labour environment conducive for the employee's productivity increase and boosting the job market in the kingdom. In 2020, Saudi Arabia introduced major labour reforms, drastically improving its sponsorship system. The reforms, which went into effect in the ensuing year, allow job mobility and regulate the exit and re-entry visa issuance for expatriate workers without employers' approval.



## Digital diplomacy

Singapore and India are closely linked due to historical factors. About seven to nine per cent of the population of Singapore consists of Indian origins -- whose forefathers migrated from Tamil Nadu to the Malay (Malaysia) from which Singapore got separated in 1965. The Singapore visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi last week is significant in more ways than one. The short visit was highlighted by critical agreements on semiconductors, digital technologies, health and above all skill development. Collaborative initiatives have been identified in areas such as mobility, advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence, healthcare, sustainability and cyber security. At their talks, both leaders also reviewed existing co-operation in the fields of defence and security, maritime domain awareness, education, fintech, new technology domains, science and technology and knowledge partnership. Modi also announced the setting up of an Invest India office in Singapore, which will be a hand-holding office for investors in Singapore in various areas identified in the six pillars.



Modi and his newly elected Singaporean counterpart Lawrence Wong seemed to have a good chemistry between them. The global chip industry is monopolised by a few companies. Unfortunately, India is a late entrant into this high-tech and expensive club. Supply disruptions during the Covid-19 pandemic and the geopolitical tensions arising out of China's aggressive moves in the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea have brought great urgency to India's efforts to develop its own semiconductor ecosystem. Given the critical importance of semiconductor chips in virtually everything from missiles to mobile phones and from cars to computers to cameras, the agreement with Singapore has great strategic importance. By working together to promote greater cross-border data flows and interoperability of digital systems, Singapore and India can support businesses from Asean and India looking to leverage new growth opportunities in each other's expanding digital economies. The government's \$10 billion incentive package and the recent approval of three semiconductor plants signal India's determination to become a major player in the global semiconductor supply chain. Nevertheless, to achieve this goal, India needs strong international partnerships and Singapore offers just that.

By partnering with Singapore, India can tap into the city-state's advanced semiconductor ecosystem, benefiting from its technological expertise and supply chain management. Moreover, this partnership aligns with India's broader strategy of reducing dependence on foreign technology and fostering self-reliance. The "Make in India" initiative, coupled with strategic partnerships like this one, aims to create a robust domestic manufacturing base that can compete with established players like Taiwan and South Korea. By collaborating with Singapore, India can accelerate this process, bringing in best practices and advanced technologies that can boost its semiconductor manufacturing capabilities. Another critical aspect of this partnership is workforce development.

Modi held a roundtable meet with top business leaders and CEOs in Singapore, where he discussed about ways to deepen economic linkages. Highlighting the reforms underway in India, which will encourage investment and innovation, Modi invited Singaporean business leaders to look at investment opportunities in India in sectors like aviation, energy and skill development. At the roundtable with business leaders, Singapore companies committed an investment of around US\$ 60 billion (over Rs 5-lakh-crore) in the next few years. This is diplomacy at its best.

### LIPSYNCH

"It is better to be hated for what you are than to be loved for what you are not." – Andre Gide

## Saudi surpasses...

(Cont. from page-1)

2027 and the World Expo in 2030 — the Kingdom has seen a robust increase in both domestic and international visitors. This surge has shifted Saudi Arabia's service balance into surplus, meaning the country now earns more from foreign tourists than it spends on residents travelling abroad.

This transformation, as noted by IMF, is underpinned by significant infrastructural developments and luxury projects such as Red Sea Global and Diriyah Gate. These initiatives aim not only to enhance the Kingdom's appeal as a global tourism destination but also to preserve its cultural heritage and bolster infrastructure. The report also observes a decrease in outbound tourism spending by Saudi nationals, whereas expatriates have markedly increased their leisure spending within the Kingdom post-COVID.

## Keralite in Australia cabinet



Jinson Anto Charls

**KOTTAYAM:** Scripting history, a member of the Malayali community has been elected to the Australian cabinet for the first time.

Jinson Anto Charls, originally from Pathanamthitta and the nephew of Congress MP Anto Antony, has become a member of the new cabinet. Jinson has been tasked with overseeing sports, arts, culture, disability, multicultural affairs, veterans and youth welfare departments in the Northern Territory State Parliament. Jinson, the son of Charls Antony, Anto's brother, contested as the Labour Party can-

didate.

He moved to Australia in 2011 to work in the nursing field and has since held positions such as director of Top End Mental Health for the Northern Territory Government. Currently, he is an adjunct lecturer at Charles Darwin University. "Jinson's success has been a matter of great pride for the Malayali community in Australia. It is a proud victory for him considering he arrived there only 11 years ago. He successfully completed numerous management courses and currently holds the position of director at a prestigious hospital," Anto said. The MP emphasised that migrants from approximately 35 countries make up 30pc of Australia's population, underscoring the significance of Jinson's achievement for the country's Malayali community.

Anupriya is Jinson's wife. The couple has two daughters: Aimie Kaitlyn Jinson (11) and Anna Isabel Jinson (5).

## Singapore employers now more optimistic on hiring

**SINGAPORE :** Things are looking up for job seekers here with a poll of employers showing that nearly half plan to hire in the fourth quarter of 2024, the first uptick in sentiment for the year.

A total of 46PC of companies surveyed plan to increase their headcount, while 36 pc plan to maintain their staffing levels and 17pc expect to have fewer staff, said recruitment firm ManpowerGroup.

The firm surveyed 525 Singapore employers in July about their hiring plans from Oct to Dec and calculated the net employment outlook, which is a measure of hiring optimism defined as the percentage of companies surveyed that intend to take on new staff, minus the percentage that intend to downsize.

The figure for the fourth quarter is 29pc after adjust-

ing for seasonal changes. It is up nine percentage points from the third quarter of 2024 and marks the first improvement after three consecutive quarters of decline.

However, the fourth-quarter figure is seven percentage points lower than that of the fourth quarter of 2023. ManpowerGroup Singapore country manager Linda Teo said: "We are at a tipping point where the economy and job market could either move towards recovery or face a further slowdown. Given Singapore's open economic landscape, it remains to be seen if hiring optimism will continue amid global uncertainties."

But for now, the optimism for the fourth quarter is broad-based, with employers in eight of nine categories expected to hire.

ManpowerGroup noted that the most competitive

sector is finance and real estate, which has a net employment outlook of 64pc, up 49 percentage points from the previous quarter and 18 percentage points since the fourth quarter of 2023.

Nearly nine in 10 employers polled in this sector said they found it difficult to get the skilled talent they need. The growing emphasis on quantum and artificial intelligence technologies within financial institutions is expected to fuel job creation in the sector, said Teo.

Communication services also saw a big jump in hiring expectations to 35pc in the fourth quarter, from minus 33pc in the third quarter. On the other hand, energy and utilities employers are planning to cut back, with the sector's net employment outlook dropping to minus 30pc from 20pc in the third quarter.

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Currency	Buying	Selling
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Australian Dollar	56.99	55.89
Japanese Yen	0.61	0.58
Canadian Dollar	62.68	61.68
Singapore Dollar	65.16	64.21
Swedish krona	9.08	7.29
UAE Dirham	23.27	22.72
Swiss Franc (CHF)	99.42	97.92
British Pound	110.38	109.38
New Zealand Dollar	52.47	51.17
Thai Baht	2.59	2.46
Hong Kong Dollar	11.73	10.42
Saudi Arabian Riyal	23.10	22.15
Bahraini Dinar	230.01	215.01
Chinese Yuan	12.70	10.30
Danish Krone	12.9	11.9
Kuwaiti Dinar	281.16	266.16
Malaysian Ringgit	20.20	19.05
Omani Rial	224.14	212.14
Qatari Riyal	23.82	22.07
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# Oil prices dip below \$70

Oil prices rebounded slightly on Wednesday after a four per cent drop the day before, but fell below the \$70-mark for the first time in more than two years as OPEC reduced its forecast for global oil demand growth.

Brent, the benchmark for two thirds of the world's oil, was trading 0.48 pc higher at \$69.52 a barrel while

West Texas Intermediate, the gauge that tracks US crude, was up 0.49pc at \$66.07 a barrel.

Brent settled 3.69pc lower at \$69.19 a barrel, its lowest level since December 2021. WTI closed down 4.31 per cent at \$65.75 a barrel. The producer alliance on Tuesday lowered its oil demand growth forecast for 2024 and 2025 for the second consecutive month amid signs of

slowing consumption in major economies.

Global oil demand growth forecast for this year is now projected to reach two million bpd, down 80,000 bpd from the group's previous estimate. For 2025, Opec cut its forecast to 1.74 million bpd, down from a previous estimate of 1.78 million bpd.

"The tone of the oil markets remains downbeat," said Norbert

Rucker, head economics and next generation research, Julius Baer. "The fundamental headwinds should persist. Demand is partially stagnant, production grows in the Americas, and the oil market likely heads into surplus supplies next year," Rucker said in a research note.

The US Energy Information Administration expects Brent crude to rise above \$80 per bar-

rel this month and average \$82 per barrel in the fourth quarter of this year. Global oil reserves will begin to decline as OPEC production cuts result in oil consumption exceeding supply. The Department of Energy's statistics division forecasts global oil production to reach 102.47 million bpd in the last quarter of the year, while consumption is expected to be 103.72 million bpd.



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# Oman unveils free 10-day visit visa to boost tourism

**MUSCAT:** Oman has introduced a free 10-day visit visa for cruise ship passengers and crew, aiming to enhance its tourism sector. The new policy also includes a one-month visa option and updates to the Executive Regulations of the Foreigners' Residence Law. This is to boost tourism.

Cruise ship passengers and crew members arriving in Oman are now eligible for a complimentary 10-day visit visa.

Lt. Gen Hassan bin Mohsen Al Shuraiqi, Inspector General of Police and Customs, issued this change through Decision No. 132/2024. This decision amends certain provisions in the Executive

Regulations of the Foreigners' Residence Law.

**10-DAY FREE VISA:**



Passengers and crew members of cruise ships can now receive a free 10-day visa. This visa is granted upon the request of the tourist ship agent. It must be used within 30 days of issuance.

**ONE-MONTH VISA OPTION:** For those requiring a longer stay, a

one-month visa is also available under similar conditions. The entry

must occur within 30 days of the visa's issuance.

This new policy marks a significant step toward attracting more international visitors to Oman.

The decision brings the following changes to the Executive Regulations of the Foreigners' Resi-

dence Law:

**Article (1): Updated Visa Clauses:**

**One Month Visit Visa:** For those needing a longer visit, a one-month visa is also available. Like the 10-day visa, it requires entry within 30 days of issuance and is intended for extended tourism.

**Article (2): Updated Visa Table Sequence:**

**Article (3): Removal of Previous Visa Sequence: Cancellation of Previous Sequence:** The previous sequence (12) in the entry visa table has been removed. This change reflects the new focus on the updated visa options for tourists and cruise ship visitors.

**OTHER VISA OPTIONS FOR TRAVELERS:**

Apart from the new 10-day free visit visa, Oman offers several other visa types **FOR TOURISTS:**

**TOURIST VISA:** Allows for stays of up to 30 days and can be **EXTENDED FOR AN ADDITIONAL 30 DAYS.**

**BUSINESS VISA:** Valid for up to 90 days, designed for business **MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES.**

**FAMILY VISIT VISA:** Enables family members of residents to stay for up to 30 days, with the possibility of an extension.

# Indian embassy sponsors India, Kuwait trade promotions



**India's Ambassador to Kuwait Dr Adarsh Swaika guided the trade promotion events in Kuwait.**

**KUWAIT CITY:** Embassy of India, Kuwait, hosted a series of trade promotion event from Sept 8 to 10, 2024 reflecting the increasing co-operation in the field of food security between India and Kuwait.

A Buyer-Seller Meet (BSM) in the Food and Beverages (F&B) sector, in collaboration with the Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI), was successfully held on Sept 8 at the Grand Majestic Hotel in Kuwait. The event saw the participation of a delegation of 10 prominent Indian F&B companies, each showcasing a diverse range of products.

In another collaborative effort, the embassy, working with the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) and the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI), organised a buyer-seller meet focusing on food and agricultural products on Sept 9-10 at the KCCI Exhibition Hall. The event saw delegation of 30 leading In-

dian companies showcasing an extensive array of food and agricultural products. The expo includes not only traditional offerings but also value-added products derived from millets, latest innovations in food processing and sustainable packaging, organic farming, Indian spices, and frozen food items, demonstrating the cutting edge technologies of the Indian food and agro processing industries and India's growing influence in the global food industry.

Dr Adarsh Swaika, Ambassador of India to Kuwait, formally inaugurated both the events signifying the importance of these events for bilateral collaboration. The inaugural event was graced by the Emad Al Zaid, Asst Director General of KCCI, Dr Reem Alfulaij, Director General of Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN), representatives from Public Authority Of Agriculture Affairs And Fish Resources (PAAFR), commercial

banks and press and electronic media.

The visiting delegations engaged in productive B2B meetings with leading Kuwaiti importers, hypermarkets and manufacturing industries from the F&B sector based in Kuwait. Indian Business Professionals Council (IBPC) in collaboration with embassy of India also organised a business networking session which provided the Indian companies an opportunity to have B2B meetings.

India is a global leader in the production of spices, milk and pulses and the second largest producer of tea, sugarcane, wheat, fruits & vegetables. India's top exports globally include rice, sugar, fresh vegetables, marine products and sea foods, fresh fruits, spices, buffalo meat and more. India's total exports to Kuwait crossed US\$ 2 billion in FY 2023-24, while food and agriculture exports amounted to approximate-

ly \$ 350 million with top food exports being basmati rice, coffee (unroasted), frozen shrimps and prawns, sugar, boneless meat, cashew nuts, onions etc.

7. India's food processing industry is also one of the largest in the world, estimated to reach US\$ 1,274 billion in 2027 from US\$ 866 billion in 2022. The industry is primarily export oriented with commodities such

as processed fruits and vegetables, Ready-to-Eat (RTE) and Ready-to-Cook (RTC), mozzarella cheese, processed marine products, edible oils, beverages, and dairy products. There are more than 20 operational mega food parks, 371 cold chain projects, and 68 agro-processing clusters. India's FDI in this sector in 2023-24 is estimated to be \$608 million.

## Adani Airports launches app to enhance passenger info

**MUMBAI:** Adani Airports Holdings Ltd (AAHL) has launched the "aviio" app — a first-ever comprehensive, digital transformation platform for the airport ecosystem — to bring the aviation community together and collaborate to serve passengers better.

AAHL — a subsidiary of Adani Enterprises, the flagship company of the globally diversified Adani Group

— manages seven airports, and one more is expected to go live in mid-2025.

By enabling airport stakeholders with access to real-time data through "aviio", passengers can expect easier access to airport information in the form of updates related to security checks, wait times, gate change, and bags on belt, among other aspects.



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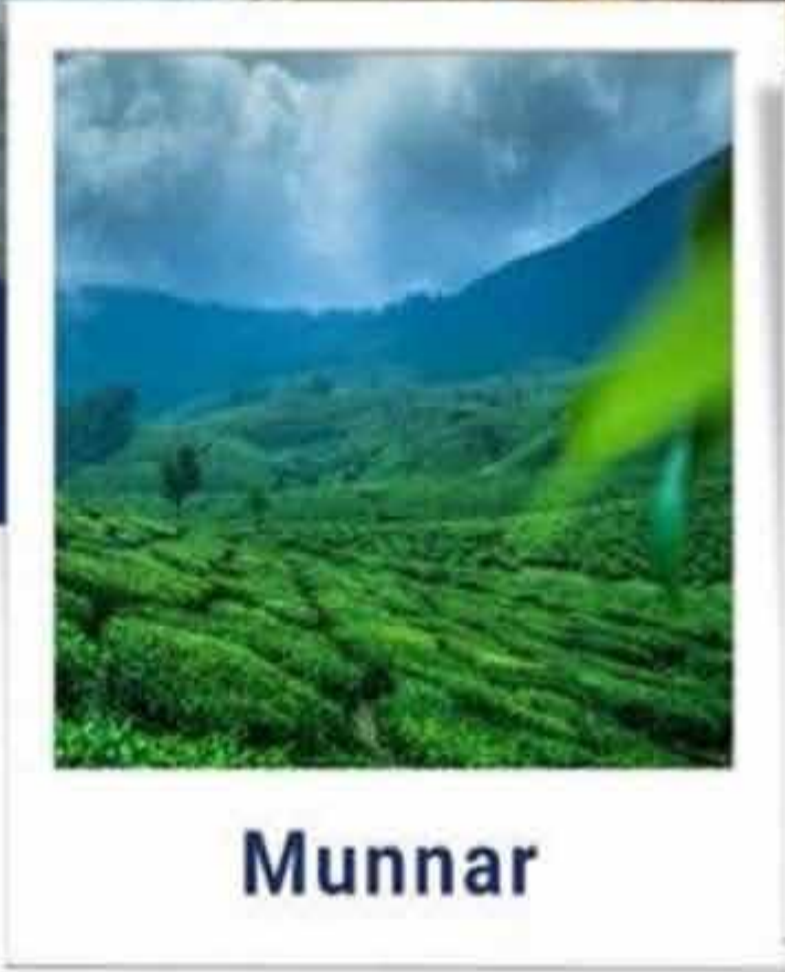
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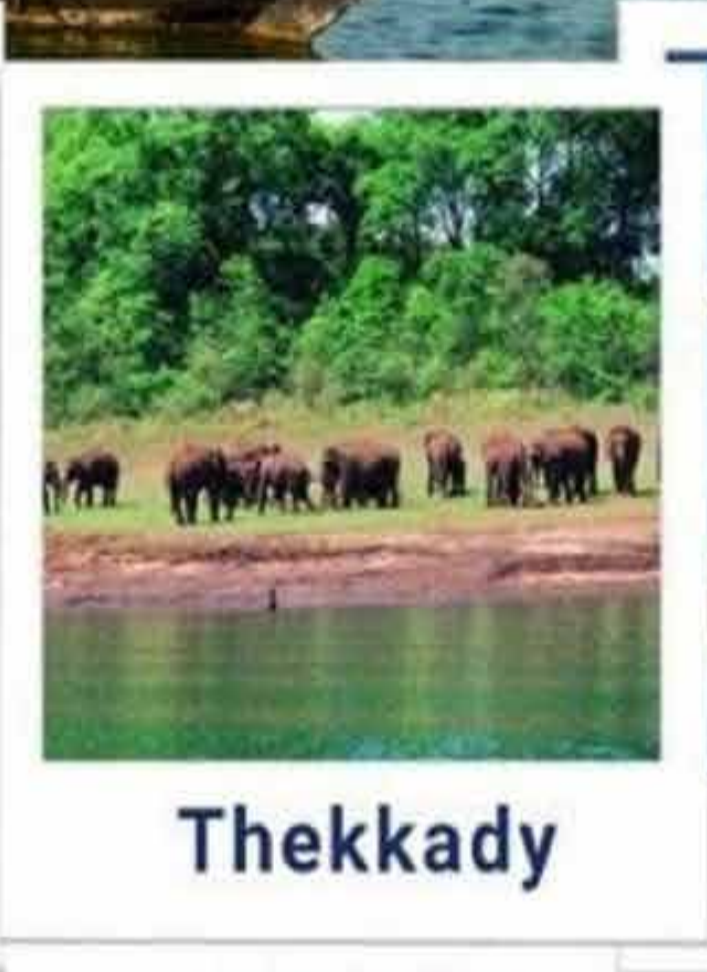


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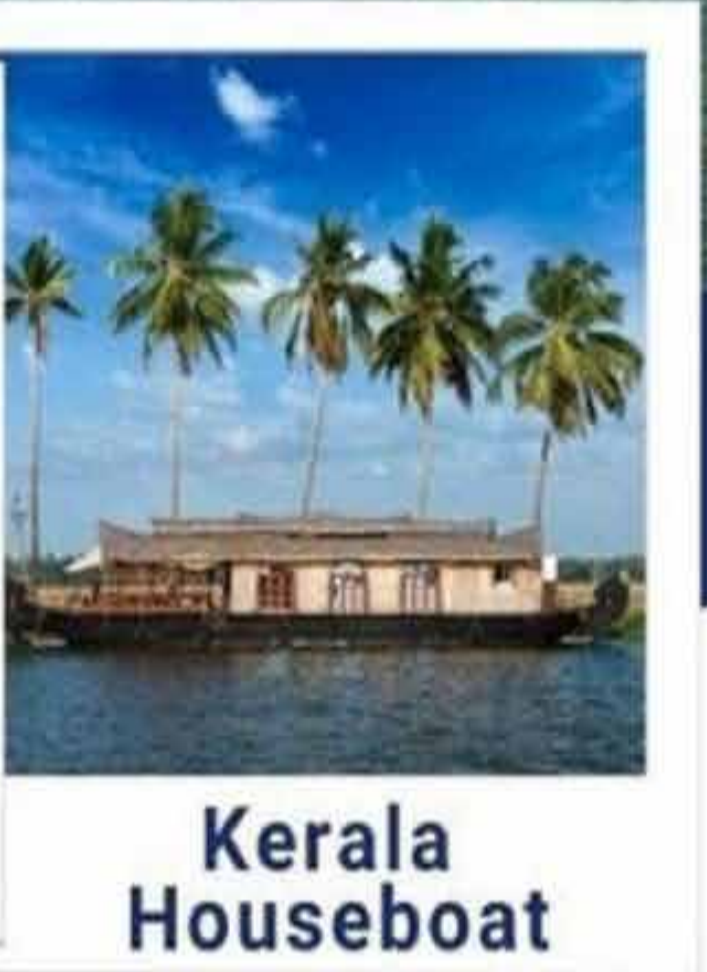
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# UAE bank to acquire large stake in Indian bank

During an exclusive TV interview, UAE Ambassador to India HE Abdulnasser Alshaali revealed that an Abu Dhabi-based bank is in advanced negotiations to acquire a significant stake in an Indian bank.

While the ambassador did not disclose the name of the banks involved, citing market sensitivities, he confirmed that the investment could be valued at billions of dollars, reflecting the growing economic collaboration between the two nations. While the banking investment represents a major

opportunity, the ambassador noted that certain unresolved issues must be addressed before the deal can proceed.

“There are some matters that need to be sorted out for this to go ahead,” Alshaali stated. He expressed optimism, however, that these issues would soon be resolved, enabling the significant investment to move forward.

This potential banking deal comes on the heels of UAE Crown Prince HE Sheikh Khaled Bin Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan’s recent visit to India. During the visit, he held key discussions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, focusing on

deepening bilateral ties across various sectors, including finance, trade, and infrastructure.

## EXPANDING RELATIONS

Ambassador Alshaali emphasised the broadening scope of UAE-India relations, particularly in trade and investment. “We are the second largest export destination for India, the third largest trade partner and the fourth largest investor,” he said, noting the remarkable progress in bilateral trade flows and investment projects.

The ambassador highlighted that discussions during the Crown Prince’s visit covered numerous sectors, including ports, renewable energy,

and advanced technologies. He also pointed out the UAE’s commitment to supporting India’s energy security and the UAE’s food security.

Moreover, ongoing talks focused on pharmaceuticals, logistics, and supercomputing, underscoring the multidimensional nature of the relationship.

## STRATEGIC TIES

Reflecting on the deeper significance of the Crown Prince’s visit, Alshaali underscored the “third-generation connection” between the UAE and India, noting the strong people-to-people ties that underpin the relationship.

He further mentioned

ongoing talks on enhancing trade settlement mechanisms, including using local currencies and digital public infrastructure for payments, such as India’s UPI (Unified Payments Interface).

The ambassador’s remarks signal a continued strengthening of UAE-India relations, with strategic investments in key sectors like banking and ports set to play a pivotal role in deepening this partnership. As both nations navigate the final details of these deals, the future looks promising for enhanced cooperation across various economic spheres.

# GULF FAQs

## Is VPN banned in UAE? What are the rules?

Can you explain the rules around using VPNs (virtual private networks) in the UAE? Are they legal? If yes, is there a list of VPNs that are to be used?

In the UAE, the use of VPNs may not be considered illegal if it is used as per the guide-

lines of the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA). The TDRA stated on July, assuring businesses and the public that it is fully committed to the safety and the smooth flow of economic activities for UAE-based com-

panies and institutions, highlighting that there are no regulations which prevent the use of VPN technology by companies, institutions and banks to access their internal networks through internet. However, the users may be held accountable, if it has been misused.

the law, and those found guilty can face imprisonment and/or significant financial penalties. This is in accordance with Article 10 of Law No. 34 of 2021 Concerning Combatting Rumours and Cybercrimes, which states: “Shall be punished by imprisonment and a fine not

less than Dh5 lakh and not exceeding Dh2 lakh or either of these two penalties, whoever frauded a computer network protocol address by using an address belonging to a third party or by any other means for the purpose of committing a crime or preventing its discovery.”

In addition, Clause 1.9 of the TDRA Regulatory Policy on Internet Access Management of 2017 defines the term “Prohibited Content Categories” and the same has been detailed in Annex 1 of the TDRA Internet Access Regulations from time to time. The said Annex 1 of the TDRA Internet Access Regulations men-

tions various lists of Internet contents which are prohibited in the UAE.

### Clause 1: Bypassing and accessing blocked content:

This category includes Internet content that allows or helps users to access prohibited content including the proxy servers and Virtual Private Networks services (VPNs) that mainly allow access to the prohibited content on the Internet.”

### Clause 14: Illegal Communication Services:

This category includes Internet content that promotes or allows access to illegal communication services according to a regulation or decision by the competent authority.”

Based on the aforementioned, it clarifies that while VPNs are not outright banned, they should not be used to access or bypass blocked or prohibited content. VPN services that facilitate such access fall under the category of prohibited content and are regulated accordingly. However, there is no exclusive list of the VPNs that are approved. For further clarifications related to this matter, you may consult a legal practitioner in the UAE or TDRA.



lines of the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA). The TDRA stated on July, assuring businesses and the public that it is fully committed to the safety and the smooth flow of economic activities for UAE-based com-

panies and institutions, highlighting that there are no regulations which prevent the use of VPN technology by companies, institutions and banks to access their internal networks through internet. However, the users may be held accountable, if it has been misused.

# HIGH-PAYING MEDICAL COURSES without NEET SCORES!

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obstacles you face.)

**PART-V (Continuing from Part IV of previous issue)**

\* **Radiology Technology (DMRT /B.Sc MRIT /M.Sc MIT & PhD Programs) - What is radiology?** It is the science that creates images of the body’s organs in order to identify any illness. The minimal radiation dose that passes through the body’s organs is used to complete the procedure. Diagnostic radiology and interventional radiology are the two subspecialties of radiology. Because radiology uses so many different imaging techniques, including Ultrasound, Mammography, CT, MRI, and Radiographs, it has grown to be a significant area

of medicine. These days, radiology is needed in almost every area of medicine. It aids in the accurate and precise diagnosis of the illness by doctors. Better care is given to the patients, and early detection may even save lives.

**ELIGIBILITY/PROGRAMS available-** The Radiological Technology programs are offered at different levels: Diploma in Medical Radiological Technology (DMRT), Bachelors of Science in Medical Radio Imaging Technology (B.Sc MRIT), Master of Science in Medical Radio Imaging Technology (M.Sc MRIT), and PhD or Research Program in Radiology. \* **Diploma in Radiological Technology / Diplo-**

**ma in Radio-diagnosis:** A person has to pass the 10+2 exam with a minimum of 50% (In some State DMEs it is 45%) in Physics, Chemistry, Biology, or Mathematics. This course is known as DRT/ DMRT and is of 2 Years duration. \* **Bachelor of Science in Medical Radio Imaging Technology (B.Sc MRIT) / Bachelor of Science in Radiology and Imaging Technology:** A person has to pass the 10+2 exam with a minimum of 50% in Physics, Chemistry, Biology or Mathematics. This course is known as B.Sc MRIT and its duration is 3 to 4 years (varies from Universities to Universities). \* **Master of Science in Radio Imaging**

**Technology / Master of Science in Medical Radio Imaging Technology (M.Sc MRIT):** A person needs to have the qualification of Bachelor’s program and has to qualify the Bachelor of Science in MRIT successfully with a minimum of 50% and the duration of the program is 2 years. \* **Research Programs / Doctoral Degrees / M Phil programs:** The program duration depends of which 1 year of internship is mandatory. A person has to pass the Master Degree with highest marks and must satisfy the additional requisites set forth by the Universities. These are doctorate-level programs in the medical science field. A candidate could pursue this course after completing the Master programs in Radiology. (To Be Continued)

# CHINESE WORKERS REPLACE INDIANS Wrong selection results in Indian workers returning from Israel (Part-1)

**NEW DELHI:** A showpiece bilateral jobs scheme, under which Indians would be taken to Israel to work in the construction sector, after over one lakh Palestinian workers were banned in the wake of the Hamas attack of Oct 7 last year, is threatening to unravel.

The key reason is a glaring skill mismatch after an assessment process that over-promised and under-delivered when it came to workers’ abilities, an investigation by a newspaper has found.

Israel has since taken the unprecedented step of allowing these workers — drawn to move by an average monthly salary, after deductions, of over Rs 1.9 lakh — to be re-deployed in unskilled or industrial jobs in non-construction sectors to avoid “damage” to “important

relations” between both countries. When contacted, an Israeli embassy official said that they are aware of the complaints from Israeli contractors and changes in policy on re-deployment and added that that the embassy was not involved in the recruitment of workers.

The paper reviewed official data and interviewed officials in Israel and labour-providing states in India, construction executives and workers who have returned. It found gaps between planning and practice, with the “crisis-like” situation potentially affecting the reputation of Indian labour abroad and putting a question mark on the nature of the scheme.

Now, almost four months after the first flight with workers landed in Tel Aviv, Israeli ex-

ecutives point to a need for “course correction” while officials in India admit there is “room for improvement.” Manpower agencies estimate that between 500 and 600 workers, mostly recruited through government channels, may have already returned home.

According to data from the Israeli embassy, around 5,000 workers each have been recruited through two “pathways”: Government-to-Government (G2G) handled by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Business-to-Business (B2B) through private agencies overseen by the Ministry of External Affairs.

NSDC listed 3,000 slots each for framework construction and iron bending, and 2,000 positions each for plastering and ceramic tiling in the first

round of recruitment. For these, three rounds of “professional tests” were carried out in Haryana, UP and Telangana. Bind, Gupta and Madheshiya were among 4,825 candidates who travelled to Israel through G2G with another 1,276 ready for travel.

Israeli construction executives say the lack of experience was acute, particularly from the G2G pathway. “Through the G2G bilateral route came very young Indians, many 20-year-olds who had never worked in construction... They came from jobs like farming and hair-cutting, some did not even know how to hold a hammer,” said Eldad Nitzen, chairman of Union Association of Foreign Employment Agencies in the Construction Industry in Israel.

Nitzen said the results were positive when the

first batch of B2B workers arrived. But by May, he said, the “unsuitability” of workers had created a “terrible” situation. “Israeli builders refused to let them work on construction sites... the (Israeli) government finally gave us permission to put the G2G workers in unskilled jobs — factories, cleaning, loading-unloading, etc. The reputation of Indian workers became bad because Israeli builders don’t know who was B2B and who was G2G. After this experience, the builders got scared of getting unskilled Indian workers and asked us to bring Chinese, Moldovan and Uzbek workers and those from other countries. I have heard more than 500 G2G workers have gone back to India,” Nitzen said.

(To be continued in next issue)