



Emirates Skywards offers bonus Miles for holiday season

DUBAI: Emirates Skywards, the loyalty programme for Emirates and flydubai, has launched special bonus miles offers ahead of the holiday season.



Starting Nov 22 and running until Dec 5, members can earn 30pc bonus miles on all purchases with no minimum spend. Offers extend

2,000 bonus miles on their first online purchase with a Visa card (minimum spend of Dh185, valid until March 31, 2025) and 5,000 bonus miles on their first hotel booking with Emirates Skywards Hotels, paid with a Visa card (valid for stays until March 31, 2025). They can also earn up to 4x miles on their first Skywards Everyday transaction made with a Visa card and shoppers can rack up miles while shopping at top brands like Farfetch, AliExpress, Apple, Mothercare and Bath & Body Works. Miles can also be spent on

Members can also earn:

across Skywards Miles Mall, Skywards Everyday, The Bicester Collection and Emirates Skywards Hotels, allowing travellers to earn extra miles on shopping, dining and hotel stays.

(Cont. on page-2)

SriLankan Airlines plans Ramayana Trail package to attract tourists

NEW DELHI: Seeing India as a place that offers “enormous growth” opportunities, SriLankan

is looking at how to lift and rejuvenate tourism from India to Sri Lanka to the next level,” he said while



Airlines aims to increase flights to the country as well as attract more tourists, including with the Ramayana Trail package.

The Ramayana Trail will help people connect with 20 significant locations in Sri Lanka that are linked to the Ramayana story. SriLankan Airlines CEO Richard Nuttall said growth in the number of tourists from India has been stellar this year but still below the pre-Covid numbers. Till the end of Oct this year, around 20pc of the tourists who came to Sri Lanka were from India. “We have been look-

ing at how to lift and rejuvenate tourism from India to Sri Lanka to the next level,” he said while

mentioning the Ramayana Trail and added that it was time to do something different. Currently, the airline operates 88 flights a week to nine destinations in India --- Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kochi, Tvm, Chennai, Trichy and Madurai. Emphasising that the airline sees India as a place of “enormous growth and possibilities”, Nuttall said it wants to be part of that growth and is working with its Indian partners.

He said the airline aims to have more frequencies to the Indian cities

that it already operates and offer more flights at convenient times.

In due course, he said the carrier will look to add more destinations.

Ambassador Kshenuka Senewiratne said Ramayana is not merely a story, it is a tapestry encapsulating culture, spirituality and heritage. “For centuries it has been a source of inspiration and guidance fostering connections between India and Sri Lanka through mythology, traditions and values in which people to people’s ties have always been at the core,” she said.

As part of the trail, “visit Seetha Amman Temple, where Sita is said to have prayed during her captivity, and stand in awe of Rumassala Hill, where a piece of the Himalayas is believed to have landed, dropped by Hanuman. Every stop is a connection to your spiritual heritage, bringing the stories of the Ramayana alive,” she said.

Flight delayed? You will get free meal

NEW DELHI: Flight delayed? You are now entitled to free water, snacks or a free meal depending on the hours you’ve

two to four hours. Meals must be provided for delays exceeding four hours, MoCA said.



ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) announced a new set of rules for airlines that are designed to prioritise passenger convenience during unforeseen disruptions.

As per an advisory issued by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), airlines are to provide drinking water for delays of flight up to two hours and tea or coffee with snacks/refreshments for delays between

The airlines have been advised to provide facilities to passengers during flight delays, MoCA said in a statement. “These measures are designed to prioritise passenger convenience during unforeseen disruptions,” the ministry has said. Moreover, airlines will soon be able to deplane passengers if a flight is delayed by over two hours due to adverse weather conditions in Delhi and

(Cont. on page-2)



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Indian consulate issues new rules for repatriation of dead bodies

DUBAI: The Indian consulate in Dubai has put in place new restrictions for the repatriation of the remains of deceased expats. One of the new rules requires that only a blood relative or a person with power of attorney can cancel the necessary documents and sign papers.

Another rule now calls for signatures from five different authorities in India, including panchayat offices, to release funds from the Indian consulate for repatriation.

The Press Wing of the consulate said these decisions were taken after certain incidents. "The consulate has come across several cases where agents have exploited families for repatriation of mortal remains of deceased expats," it read. "We request diaspora to be aware of fraudulent agents who charge exorbitant amounts instead of consulate approved rates."

The statement also add-

ed that the consulate is fully committed to providing access and facilitation to grieving families and "duly authorised" persons. It also said that the "consulate has a panel of community associations" across all emirates who render these services to families "at no service charge". Families can contact these numbers for immediate guidance and facilitation.

Some social workers said the new rules placed an unfair burden on families. "Right now, social workers are not being allowed to assist any families in document cancellations or other issues related to death," said Ashraf Thamarassery, who has been repatriating dead bodies for almost two decades. "A death is always a heartbreaking experience and families or friends are often in an emotionally charged state of mind. Social workers are a huge support during the darkest

days of the lives of many. Barring them from helping places an unfair burden on families."

Ashraf, who was honoured with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman for his services in 2015 by the Indian government, called on the consulate to take alternative steps. "If there are fraudulent social workers, then cancel their services. It is not fair to bar everyone from helping out."

However, another social worker who works with the Kerala Muslim Cultural Centre (KMCC), praised the move. "We have had cases where some workers would take money from the consulate claiming the family did not have the means to repatriate the body," he said. "Then they would approach the families asking for money to send the body home. This cannot be tolerated. People cannot be making a business out of other people's death."

UAE visit visa Dh3,000, return tickets, proof of stay required

DUBAI: Travel agents in the UAE are urging visitors to ensure all documents are in order before applying for visit visas. According to them, proof of stay, which includes hotel booking or relatives' residence address and evidence of sufficient funds are now prerequisites to apply and obtaining a visa.

"Earlier, travellers needed to show proof of stay, return tickets and an equivalent currency of Dh3,000 at the airport when boarding. However, now they should submit the documents before applying for a visa" said Mir Wasim Raja, manager at Galadari International Travel Services.

Travel agents mentioned that these stricter requirements aim to prevent potential misuse of visit visas and ensure that applicants can sustain themselves during

their stay in the UAE. The change has also prompted agents to closely scrutinise applications to reduce rejection rates and streamline the process.

Agents informed that proof of stay, return tickets and bank statements must be uploaded to their systems to ensure visa approval. "We process thousands of visas daily, but recently, some of our travel partners informed us that visas were rejected due to incomplete documents," said Masiuddin Mohammed, founder of SuperJet Tours and Travels LLC. "Only a few visas were approved because their documents were in order," he added.

Firoz Maliyakkal, founder and CEO of Tahira Tours and Travels, explained that travellers must ensure their passport has a validity of at

(Cont. on page-3)

AI Express expands north-east operations

GUWAHATI: Tata-owned low-cost airline Air India Express has announced an increase in flight operations from three major destinations in the north-east – Guwahati, Agartala and Imphal.

Air India Express has increased its operations to 106 weekly flights from 63 last winter, from Guwahati. It provides direct connectivity to eight domestic destinations of Agartala, Bengaluru, Chen-

nai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Imphal, Jaipur and Kolkata. The airline also provides one-stop connectivity to 18 domestic destinations and six international destinations from Guwahati.

In Imphal, the airline hiked its weekly flights to 34 this season, an addition of 20 over last winter. Since adding Agartala as a station in Sept 2024, the airline has increased its flights from 14 to 21 weekly and connects two des-

tinations – Guwahati and Kolkata – directly.

It also offers one-stop connectivity from Agartala to 11 domestic destinations. "The expansion not only facilitates easier travel for those wishing to explore north-east, but also strengthens Guwahati's role as a vital link with the rest of the country," CCO

Ankur Garg said.

"With our fleet now

we are well-positioned to support the evolving



exceeding 90 aircraft and rapidly growing,

needs of emerging Indian cities," he added.

Flight delayed? You...

(Cont. from page-1)

and reduce passenger reboard them without the time-consuming process of fresh security checks. This will be facilitated by Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, which is planning to construct a separate, temporary enclosure for passengers stranded due to take-off delays. The proposed changes to the security-checking rules aim to optimise flight slots

and reduce passenger inconvenience.

All these provisions aim to enhance passenger experience while addressing their basic needs during extended waiting times. Over 600 flights, including arrivals and departures, were delayed and 21 flights were cancelled at Delhi International Airport earlier this week due to dense fog in the nation's capital.

Emirates Skywards offers...

(Cont. from page-1)

gift cards starting from just 2,000 miles.

At Gate Avenue, DIFC, members can earn one Mile for every Dh3 spent at over 70 outlets. For every Dh50 spent, visitors can enter a draw to win up to 100,000 miles (valid until Dec 5). Travellers heading to Europe or the UK can earn miles while shopping at The Bicester Collection, with nine popular villages of-

fering a variety of fashion and lifestyle brands.

For hotel stays, members can earn 25pc bonus miles per night when paying with an Emirates Skywards credit card. Skywards Everyday, the programme's app, allows members to earn miles at over 300 partners. Users can link up to five Visa or Mastercard debit/credit cards to automatically earn miles with every purchase.

With over 33 million members worldwide, Emirates Skywards offers a range of rewards, including flights, upgrades, hotel stays and exclusive experiences. Members can choose from four tiers: Blue, Silver, Gold, and Platinum, each with unique perks. Skywards Miles can be redeemed for flights, upgrades, hotel stays, shopping, and tickets to events.

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UAE visit visa...
(Cont. from page-2)

month and Dh5,000 for two months," said Maliyakkal.

Travel agents have observed that some applicants are unaware of these updated requirements, leading to delays and confusion. To address this, agencies are emphasising the importance of educating travellers and providing checklists to ensure compliance before submission.

Meanwhile, Taha Siddique of Siddique Travels reported similar issues, citing cases of visa rejections among his clients. "Two of my clients' visas were rejected because their documents were incomplete, and they were left waiting," said Siddique.

TAFI convention to be held in Vietnam from Jan 17 to 20, 2025

NEW DELHI: The Travel Agents Federation (TAFI)

FOREX RATES
As on 25th November, 2024 (In rupees)

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	84.78	83.94
British Pound	106.89	105.74
Euro	89.30	87.68
Japanese Yen	55.30	54.61
Swiss Franc (CHF)	95.71	93.92
Canadian Dollar	61.11	59.91
Australian Dollar	55.63	54.58
Norwegian Krone	7.73	7.59
Swedish Krona	7.76	7.61
New Zealand Dollar	49.84	48.98
Hong Kong Dollar	10.94	10.73
Singapore Dollar	63.46	62.19
Saudi Arabian Riyal	22.70	22.27
United Arab Emirates	23.19	22.74

has selected Vietnam as the host destination for its 2025 convention. The NinhBinh Province will see congregation of Indian travel trade for this showcase.

TAFI President Ajay Prakash is happy to offer the association members an opportunity to explore a newer Asian destination from Jan 17 to 20. Prakash stated that the convention will be a three-night event (Jan 17-19) with the theme "Tourism for Tomorrow: Protecting the Planet." He mentioned that Vietnam is one of the countries that appear to be serious about sustainable tourism. "The NinhBinh Province is just a 2.5-hour drive from Hanoi Airport," Prakash said.

Speaking about the NinhBinh Province, he noted that it is a lesser-known destination for Indians but has significant potential in terms of tourism. "TAFI always prefers to organise its conventions in lesser-known destinations with considerable growth potential. This time, we have followed the same principle," Prakash

pointed out. Prakash emphasised that TAFI is offering its delegates only a three-night convention. "We are not booking flights for them or arranging pre- or post-familiarisation tours," he said. He added that all their delegates are from the travel industry and are well-versed in booking tickets and handling visa processes.

"TAFI will focus on the three-night convention and its content, ensuring that the event is flawlessly organised. We will pick up delegates from Hanoi airport and drop them back after the convention," Prakash revealed. He further mentioned that TAFI would stop registrations once 400 people have signed up. "We can accommodate a maximum of 450 people, but no more than that," he said.

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Andhra Pradesh : Andhra Pradesh is famous for its rich cultural heritage, stunning temples, and picturesque landscapes

Karnataka : Karnataka is famous for temples, majestic architecture, and princely vibe.



GULF FAQs

Woman seeks clarity on divorce, child custody, compensation

A woman asks that she is a non-Muslim and married to a non-Muslim man. Currently, she is in conflict with her husband and wants divorce and she has a three-year-old son. Her question: What are the procedures for obtaining divorce and custody and does she have the legal right to demand compensation in addition to alimony? How is compensation calculated? Does she have the legal right to claim a portion of her husband's real estate in his country?

According to Articles 7 & 8 of the Federal Decree-Law No. (41) of 2022 on the Civil Personal Status ("Either of the married couple may request divorce with no need to prove the harm, in accordance with the form prepared for this purpose and the divorce shall take place by virtue of a court decision

after the other party is duly served. In order for the court to pronounce a judgment of divorce, it shall be sufficient for either of the married couple to express his/her wish to get separated and not to continue the conjugal relationship, without having to justify that desire, to specify the aspects of harm, or to lay the blame on the other party.")

Regarding custody, it is, according to Article 10 of the same law, a joint and equal right of both the father and mother after the occurrence of the divorce unless the two parties submit a request to the court to establish custody for the parent who is worthy of fulfilling the interests of the child subject to custody, one of them submits a written waiver to the court of his/her right to custody, a parent submits a request to the court to remove the

other parent from joint custody and drop his right to custody for any reason acceptable to the court, such as symptoms of eligibility, the danger of the person's participation in custody or the failure of the joint custodian to perform his duties.

Regarding alimony, compensation and husband's real estate, Article-9 of the same law gave the divorced woman the right to submit a request to the court, after the judgment granting divorce is rendered, seeking a judgment of alimony from her ex-husband, and any claims subsequent to divorce before the court shall be added in accordance with the form prepared for this purpose.

The granting of the application and its duration shall be subject to the discretion of the judge after evaluating several factors.

I want to revoke my 'will' after divorce, what should I do?

I am a non-Muslim man. Two years ago, I made a will for my wife with all my money, and I authenticated the will before the competent authorities. Recently, I have divorced my wife and want to cancel the will. My question: Do I have the legal right to cancel the will and make a new will for my children, and also attest it before the competent authorities, and what are the legal procedures necessary for that? Does my ex-wife have the legal right to object the cancellation of the will, knowing that she has an original copy of the will?

You have the right to revoke your will and to attest it even if your ex-wife doesn't accept this. The cancellation is better to be done in front of the authority you had made it, weather in front of the Notary Public of Dubai Courts or the DIFC through an application of cancellation. After revoking a will, the testator can make another will in its place, or not write a will at all.

Article (29) of the Cabinet Resolution No. (122) of 2023 Concerning the Executive Regulation of Federal Decree-Law No. (41) Of 2022 on the Civil Personal Status, regarding the Lapse of the Will, states the cases by which the will shall lapse and in:

- * Where the will is revoked by the testator, provided that this revocation shall be registered on the Register.
- * Where a new will that contradicts the original will is registered.
- * Where the testate property is disposed of in a manner that involves transfer of ownership.
- * In the event of death of the beneficiary of the will during the lifetime of the testator.
- * In the event of destruction of the testate property.
- * Where the testator becomes bankrupt during his lifetime.
- * In the event of renunciation of the will by its beneficiary or his guardian.
- * Where the testator is killed by the beneficiary of the will.

Employee with company debt resigns, goes to court with gratuity claims

I am an employer. Two months ago, I filed a civil lawsuit against my employee to return a loan with other amounts he took from the company. The lawsuit has not ended yet, but now this employee has submitted his resignation from work and filed a labour lawsuit to claim his rights at the end-of-service. What is the appropriate procedure to take to stop his claims until I obtain my rights from him?

According to Article 103 of the Federal Decree-Law No. (42) Of 2022 Promulgating the Civil Procedure Code, the legal proceedings may be suspended if the parties agree not to proceed with the same for not more than six months from the date of the court's endorsement of their agreement.

Such suspension shall have no legal effect on any mandatory date which the law has prescribed for a certain action to occur and neither litigant may request resumption of the legal proceedings within the suspension period without the consent of the other party.

In the event that neither

party requests resumption of the legal proceedings within eight days following the expiry of the suspension period, the plaintiff shall be deemed to have abandoned the case, and the appellant shall be deemed to have abandoned the appeal.

Moreover, the court, according to Article 104 of the above law, shall order suspension of a legal proceedings if it is convinced that the decision on its merits would be contingent upon the determination of any other issue, and that once such reason for suspension ceases to exist, either litigant may apply for resumption of the case. So as a principle, there is no way to stop his labour case since each subject is different from the other and there is no reason stipulated by law. But you may request the suspension on the bases mentioned in Article 104 since the decision on one case would be contingent upon the determination of any other issue and leave the matter to the court to decide.



India's Ambassador to Kuwait Dr Adarsh Swaika called on H.E. Abdulrahman Baddah Al-Mutairi, Minister of Information & Culture and MoS Youth Affairs of Kuwait. The ambassador discussed proposals and sought the minister's guidance to further strengthen co-operation between India and Kuwait.

Diaspora and the development of India

(Continue from Issue No. 79: NOV 15, 2024)

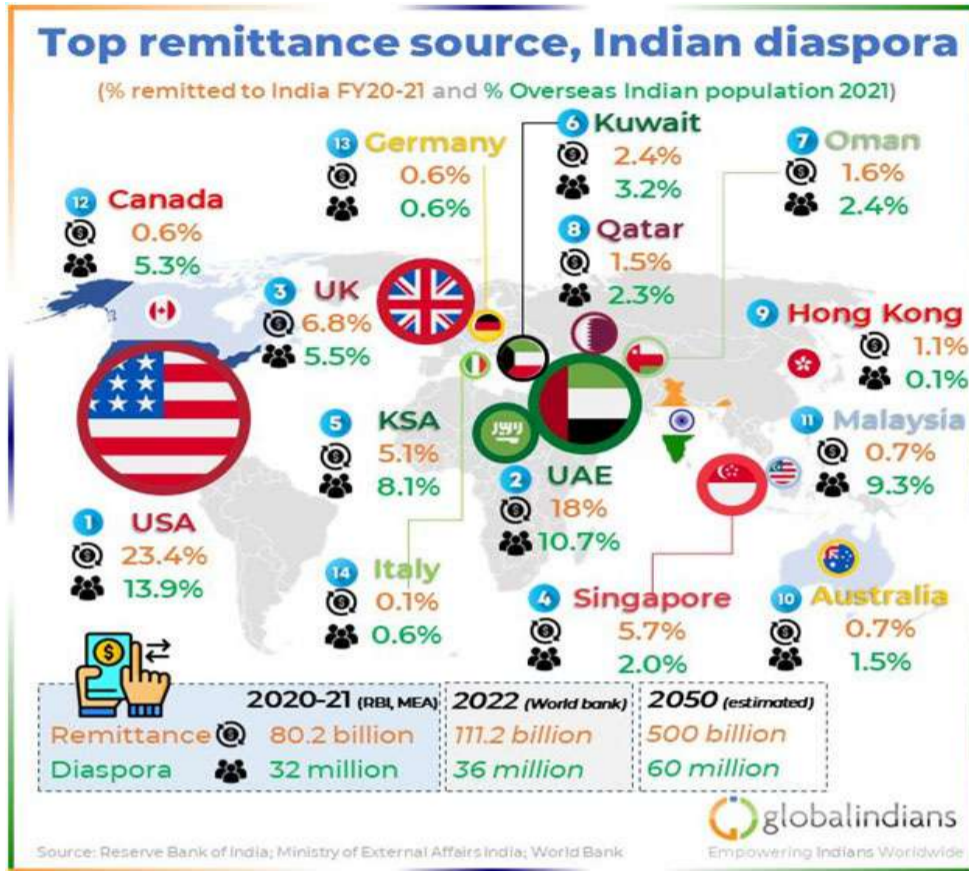
Diasporas

People from the same homeland who have moved or been dispersed to different places are known as Diasporas. A Diaspora happens when a group of people spreads out from their home region and settles in a different continent. They have either chosen to settle in other places or have been compelled to leave their homeland. Diaspora members usually celebrate and preserve their native culture and customs. Either voluntary emigration or forced migration—such as during wars, slavery, or natural disasters—can result in Diaspora. The term “Diaspora” originally described the voluntary migration of citizens of dominant nations to colonise conquered nations. Forced and voluntary Diaspora is now recognised. Forced Diaspora frequently results from natural disasters like famine or protracted drought, as well as from traumatic events like wars, imperialistic conquest or slavery.

A voluntary Diaspora, on the other hand, is a group of people who have been relocating from their home countries in pursuit of economic opportunities. Despite having strong cultural and spiritual ties to their home countries, these immigrant groups are less likely to want to settle back there in the long run.

The largest Diasporas that have been formed by migrations around the world today are distinguished by extremely strong transnational networks connecting the various communities. These Diasporas are found on multiple continents and are sustained by financial transfers and economic networks that encourage their members’ permanent

SKILLS GURU By Sajan MS



mobility. The major Diaspora homelands include the Indian Diaspora, the Chinese

and professionals who have relocated overseas are viewed by the Indian government as a huge resource for expressing the country’s interests and concerns around the world. The Indian government has been doing everything it can to leverage the resources of PIOs, NRIs, and other professionals of Indian descent around the world in order to build a stronger India brand. In general, the Diaspora is defined by the Indian government as a group of individuals who are either Indian citizen residing overseas, either permanently or tempo-

and PIO card holders were combined into a single category. The Indian migration began in large numbers to colonial countries as indentured labourers during British rule and continued in the post-independence period to countries like the United Kingdom, the US and Gulf countries. Since the Diaspora is so large and diverse today, their demands of the Indian government are also diverse. While the Diaspora from wealthier countries like the US looks to India for investment opportunities, the Gulf Diaspora, for instance, looks to India for support on welfare issues. On the other hand, the Indian communities in many other nations want to reestablish cultural ties with their homeland.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs report updated on May 21 2024, there are 35.4 million non-resident Indians (NRIs) and People of Indian Origins (PIOs) (including OCIs) residing outside India. The Indian Diaspora comprises the world’s largest overseas Dias-

Which contemporary Diaspora is the largest?

The Indian Diaspora is the largest Diaspora in modern times. There are more than 35.4 million Indians living abroad who call India their home. The importance of Diaspora communities as development agents and their ability to strengthen social, economic, and cultural ties between their home and host nations are becoming increasingly acknowledged and as a result India has currently become largest remittance-remitting nation in the world.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs report updated on 21 May 2024, there are 35.4 million non-resident Indians (NRIs) and People of Indian Origins (PIOs) (including OCIs) residing outside India. The Indian Diaspora comprises the world’s largest overseas Diaspora. Every year, 2.5 million (25 lakh) Indians immigrate overseas, making India the nation with the highest annual number of emigrants in the world (Source: WIKIPEDIA).

Diaspora, the Jewish Diaspora, the African Diaspora, the Mexican Diaspora, the Russian Diaspora, the Bangladesh Diaspora, the Pakistan Diaspora, the Ukraine Diaspora, the Turkish Diaspora, the Moroccan Diaspora, the Algerian Diaspora etc.

Which contemporary Diaspora is the largest?

The Indian Diaspora is the largest Diaspora in modern times. There are more than 35.4 million Indians living abroad who call India their home. The importance of Diaspora communities as development agents and their ability to strengthen social, economic and cultural ties between their home and host nations are becoming increas-



rarily or who can trace their ancestry back to India. Non-resident Indians (NRIs), Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) are now collectively referred to as the “Diaspora.” OCI

poras. Every year, 2.5 million (25 lakh) Indians immigrate overseas, making India the nation with the highest annual number of emigrants in the world (Source: WIKIPEDIA).

(To be continued)