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PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



MUMBAI: FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2024 • VOL. NO. 1 • Issue • No. 23. DIV. OF FLYCREATIVE ONLINE PVT. LTD. (A unit of Creative Group) • 6 PAGES



Protector General of Emigrants Brahma Kumar (IFS) addressing the IOM-India Roundtable Discussion on the “Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration of Indian Women Workers to ECR Countries” in New Delhi on April 23. On the dais are Sanjay Awasti, IOM-India chief and Prof Ravi Srivasthav of Centre for Employment Studies & Institute of Human Development. In the audience seen are Director and Protector of Emigrants, Mumbai, Barhat Rahul Manhardan (IPS), Avaneesh Shukla, POE, Bangalore, Kouahik, US /OE MEA and other participants.

IOM-India meet on safe migration of women workers to ECR nations

NEW DELHI: International Organisation for Migration (IOM) – India, in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), GoI, organised the Roundtable Discussion on the “Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration of Indian Women Workers to ECR Countries” on April 23, 2024 in New Delhi.

The event brought together key government and non-government

stakeholders, academicians, subject matter experts and recruitment companies to discuss critical facets pertinent to ensuring the safe, orderly and regular migration of women workers below the age of 30 to ECR Countries. Given the implications of existing policies on the migration and mobility of women migrants, labour markets and migrant protection, the roundtable provided

a platform to cultivate informed discourse, solicit diverse perspectives and collectively review the policy’s operating environment along with existing challenges and potential solutions in its

implementation.

Indian Personnel Export Promotion Council (IPEPCIL) president VS Aabulkareem emphasised the need to review the existing policy and make it at par with the state gov-

ernment RA agencies so as to avoid the discrimination among the RAs and to have the level playing field to explore the potential in this vertical at the ECR/GCC sector.

Indo-Arab Society to launch its units in all GCC nations

MUMBAI: Expanding the wings of Indo-Arab Society across the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) nations is vital for fostering stronger ties between the historically rich and culturally diverse regions of GCC and India by promoting mutual understanding, co-operation and exchange.

Such initiative can unlock immense potential for mutual bonding among the citizens, economical growth, social development and cultural enrichment, so the relations will further strengthen in various fields between India and the respective GCC Countries.

The GCC being a hub of Indian expatriate population and the global economic activities,

so establishing the Indo-Arab Society’s units in all respective GCC countries, will further boost Indo-Arab friendship, and the reach will not only deepen the existing connections but also create new opportunities for collaborations and synergy among the two regions and the spirit will energise to further strong bonding and collaborations among the respective governments as well.

Such expansion of IAS embodies a vision of inter-connectedness, mutual networking and respect shared prosperity paving the way for a brighter and more harmonious future for both the regions said VS Aabulkareem, VP, Indo Arab Society.

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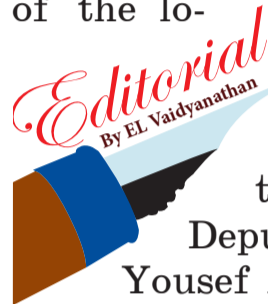
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Kuwait's right decision

There is some good news from Kuwait. After experimenting with reducing foreign labour for the last three years and realising the folly of such a move, Kuwait has finally removed the curbs on recruiting foreign workers. The Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) announced reopening of recruitment of expatriate manpower from outside the country from June 1, 2024 in a move aimed at reducing the cost of labour in the domestic market and fighting illegal labour trafficking. These restrictions had dramatically increased the cost of hiring expat labourers from the local market, which indirectly impacted prices of services in the market. Expatriate population in Kuwait is double the size of the local population. The new decision, no doubt, will be a great relief for the job aspirants from India.



The authority said the decision was taken during a meeting headed by Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, who also chairs the authority. The present government functioning in the capacity of a caretaker cabinet has opened visit visas for expats and also resumed issuing dependent visas for families of expats working in Kuwait, but after raising the minimum salary condition.

The lifestyle of Kuwaitis does not match with the work that some expatriates do, such as simple manual work. And the government failed in its move to involve citizens and encourage them to make the replacement plan succeed. This created a labour shortage and the labour became costly which adversely affected Kuwait's competitiveness in the Gulf region.

It may be recalled that in 2021, Kuwait had imposed a decision banning the renewal of work and residency permits for expatriates. The decision was a part of the Kuwaiti government's efforts to redress the expatriate population. According to official statistics of PAM, the decision includes expatriates who work in professional sectors such as construction, car repair and restaurants. They were asked to leave the country after the expiry of their residency by the end of 2021. Last year, Kuwait had suspended all types of work and entry visas for Filipinos after the South-East Asian country allegedly "violated a bilateral agreements".

Kuwait is not the only Arab country to impose restrictions on foreign labour. Saudi Arabia and Oman restricted the employment of migrant workers in certain sectors, such as transportation and retail, to reserve openings for citizens and the UAE restricted employer's ability to change citizen workers' hours and salaries, leaving out similar provisions for foreigners. Actually, all these measures did not succeed.

Then there was the Kafala system. The kafala or sponsorship system defines the relationship between foreign workers and their local sponsor or Kafael, which is usually their employer. It has been used in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE—as well as Jordan and Lebanon. Both Bahrain and Qatar claim to have abolished the system, though critics say reforms are poorly enforced and don't amount to abolition.

India has excellent emigrant protection system in place. Protector General of Emigrants and Protectors of Emigrants are very vigilant in making sure that Indian labour is not exploited abroad. The government has always supported the legal recruitment of Indian human resource personnel to work abroad.

LIPSYNCH

"The price of greatness is responsibility."

— Winston Churchill

RATAN TATA HONOURED



Chairman Emeritus of the Tata Group Ratan Tata was honoured with the prestigious KISS Humanitarian Award. The award was presented by the founder of KIIT and KISS Achyuta Samanta. The award ceremony was held at Tata's residence in Mumbai, marking a significant recognition of his commitment to social development and exemplary corporate leadership. The ceremony was attended by Tata Group chairman N Chandrasekaran and three-time Grammy Award winner Ricky Kej, among others.

Saudi implements measures to combat human trafficking

RIYADH: Dr. Hala Al-Tuwaijri, president of Saudi Arabia's Human Rights Commission and the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, praised the Kingdom's commitment to eliminating human trafficking.

Speaking ahead of the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, Al-Tuwaijri commended Saudi Arabia's "significant progress" in this area and its implementation of necessary measures to combat human traffickers and to provide care for — and ensure the protection of — their

victims. As a result, the Kingdom has improved its global ranking in relevant international reports, she said.

Al-Tuwaijri praised the government's efforts to combat human trafficking under the leadership of King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Since its establishment, Saudi Arabia has focused on the preservation of human dignity and rights. She said that the theme for this year's World Day Against Trafficking in Persons — "Leave no one behind" — aligns with one of the strategic goals

of the HRC's National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking 2021-2023, which she explained focuses primarily on prevention by raising community awareness of trafficking in persons and "building national capacity" to combat it.

The plan aims to protect and assist victims through "the implementation of an integrated national system that adheres to international standards," she added, and is intended to "strengthen the prosecution of criminals involved in human trafficking."

IndiGo to provide in-flight entertainment from May 1

MUMBAI: IndiGo will introduce in-flight entertainment content through its app on a three-month trial basis on the Delhi-Goa route from May 1.

It will be the first time that the country's largest airline will offer in-flight entertainment content for passengers on a trial basis.

"Available to its customers in-flight, using the IndiGo app, the trial will be conducted for customers travelling between the Delhi-Goa sector from May 1,

2024, for a period of three months," it said.

To avoid interferences with aircraft electronics, this service will be enabled after the aircraft reaches cruising altitude, the airline said and added that passengers will have to carry their personal headphones to use the service. The service will be fully rolled out post the successful trial phase. IndiGo has a fleet of more than 350 planes and operates around 2,000 daily flights.

FOREX RATES

As on 26th Apr, 2024 (In rupees)

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	84.09	83.19
Euro	90.03	89.11
Australian Dollar	54.98	54.08
Japanese Yen	0.58	0.53
Canadian Dollar	61.67	60.72
Singapore Dollar	61.99	61.07
Swedish krona	8.66	6.87
UAE Dirham	23.21	22.56
Swiss Franc	92.33	90.53
British Pound	104.69	103.79
New Zealand Dollar	50.30	49.06
Thai Baht	2.35	2.15
Hong Kong Dollar	11.61	10.30
Saudi Arabian Riyal	22.95	22.00
Bahraini Dinar	228.21	214.21
Chinese Yuan	12.41	10.61
Danish Krone	12.48	11.48
Kuwaiti Dinar	277.02	261.02
Malaysian Ringgit	18.64	17.09
Omani Rial	222.61	210.61
Qatari Riyal	23.66	21.41
South African Rand	4.78	3.94

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Lulu's 29-storey IT hub comes up in Kochi

KOCHI: The development of IT infrastructure in Kerala has got a shot in the arm with both state and private sector lugging it in unison to new heights. Recently, in a social media post, Industries Minister P Rajeeve highlighted the mega IT project taking shape on the 246-acre Smart City (SCK) campus in Kochi. Lulu Group is building the tallest IT industry complex here. When operational, it will accommodate about 30,000 IT professionals.

“Once the towers become functional, all the multinational companies that have been wanting to come to Kerala will get to avail all the necessary facilities to set up their branches under one roof,” the minister says. Citing the recent pace with which the state is galloping towards the fourth industrial revolution, Rajeeve further adds: “In two years, Kerala is expected to become the IThub of the country.”

Lulu's 29-storey twin tower, set up with an estimated cost of Rs 1,200 crore, will be ready to be leased out in the third quarter of 2024. Things began perking up at SCK

after a brief lull once the Prestige Group got approval for the non-SEZ status for its Cyber Green project.

The commerce ministry's board of approval (BoA) was via the recently inserted 11B clause of SEZ (special economic zone) rules. Under this clause, there can be non-processing areas for IT/ITeS SEZ. It permits the co-existence of SEZ units and non-SEZ IT/ITeS businesses on the same SEZ premises. Cyber Green I, which occupies 4.61 acres at SCK, has a total built-up area of 8.78 lakh sqft and a leasable area of 5.4 lakh sqft across two towers.

Speaking to a TV channel, sources with the Lulu IT Infrabuild Private Limited say, “Hopefully, the space in the twin tower will become available for leasing by the first week of July. We plan to open the buildings by the first of November.” As to whether the Lulu towers will also follow the Prestige Group's suit and apply for the de-notification as a special economic zone, the Lulu official says: “Not in the immediate future.”

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Govt issues advisory for expats on residence visa cancellation

ABU DHABI: You must ensure your UAE residence visa is cancelled properly when you decide to leave the country permanently, as failure to close the residency status may result in complications in case you want to return to the UAE in the future.

Expats relocating to another country must also cancel the UAE visa of residents whom they have sponsored, such as family members. The UAE Digital government, through its website, states: “If you have a [UAE] residence visa sponsored either by a family member or

by your employer, and you decide to leave the country permanently, your residence visa must be cancelled officially.”

The website points out: “Normally, only the sponsor can cancel your residence visa. You cannot process the application on your

own.”

An ICP official said that the residence visa is automatically cancelled by default if more than six months have passed since the expat exited the country.

• In case the former expat (who had not officially cancelled the residence visa) wants

to return to the UAE after this time, he or she must seek permission from the ICP through its website or app.

The ICP will decide if and when the former expat can return to the UAE and what paperwork and payments may be required.



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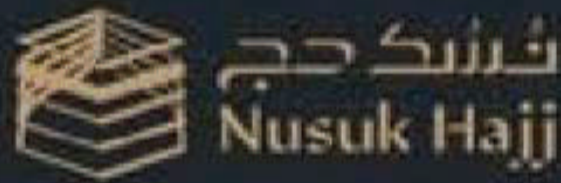
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GULF FAQs

Can employee be asked to work beyond job scope?

I work in a private company in Dubai. If my boss asks me to work beyond the scope of my job, what should I do? I am in sales, but I have been asked to appear in promotional/marketing videos for the company, but I am really not comfortable doing this. If I refuse and it reflects badly on my performance review or I lose my job, can I file a complaint? How do I resolve this without creating any problems for myself?

It is assumed that you are employed by a mainland company in Dubai. Therefore, the provisions of Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulation of Employment Relations are applicable.

In the UAE, an employer may not assign different roles to an employee other than those mentioned in the employment contract without the written consent of the employee. This is in accordance with Article 12(1) & (2) of the Employment Law, which states:

“1. An employee may not be assigned another work which is substantially different from the work agreed upon in the employment contract, unless such an assignment is necessary or aims to avoid an accident or rectify the consequences thereof, provided that the assignment is temporary as specified by the Executive Regulations of this Decree-Law.

“2. An employer may, in cases other than those stated in paragraph (1) above, entrust the employee with a work that is not agreed upon in the employment contract, with the written consent of the employee.”

Furthermore, an employer may not force or threaten an employee to perform a work. This is in accordance with Article 14(1) of the Employment Law, which states, “An employer may not use

any means susceptible of obliging or forcing the employee or threatening him with any penalty, to work for him, or forcing him to do a work or deliver a service against his will.”

If an employer pressurises an employee to perform work other than those mentioned in the employment contract based on the employee’s designation, then the employee may quit the employment without serving the notice period to an employer. This is in accordance with Article 45(4) of the Employment Law, which states, “The employee may quit work without notice and reserve all his entitlements at the end of service if the employer entrusts the employee with a work that is substantially different from the work agreed upon in the employment contract, without the written consent of the employee, except in cases stated in Article 12 hereof.”

Based on the aforementioned provisions of law, you may inform your employer that your employment contract states your role with the employer is only restricted to sales and not to be part of promotional/marketing videos of your employer. However, if your contract states that your role with your employer includes sales and other related activities which are indirectly related to sales such as using your services by appearing in promotional and marketing videos then you should not object to appearing in promotional and marketing videos of your employer.

Additionally, if your employer terminates you from employment for the reason that you’re not agreeing to appear in its promotional and marketing videos, then you may file a complaint with the MoHRE and thereafter file an employment case against your employer in Dubai Court.

How to hire a maid in UAE?

I am looking to hire a maid. I am seeing so much information online that I am confused. How do I hire a maid legally?

It is assumed that you are a UAE resident who wishes to hire (sponsor) a domestic worker. Therefore, the provisions of Federal Decree No. 9 of 2022 Concerning Domestic Workers and Cabinet Resolution No. 106 of 2022 Pertaining to the Executive Regulations of Federal Decree Law No. 9 of 2022 Concerning Domestic Workers are applicable.

The provisions of the UAE Domestic Workers Law and its subsequent ministerial resolutions are silent on the salary requirements and marital status of an employer who intends to employ and/or sponsor a domestic worker. However, by practice, an employer may have to fulfil minimum salary criteria, marital status and number of rooms in the apartment or villa where a proposed domestic worker will work. Furthermore, the provisions of UAE law emphasise recruitment of domestic work through government-recognised maid recruitment agencies.

A recognised maid recruitment agency in the UAE may not recruit a domestic worker in the UAE without obtaining a work permit from the Ministry of HR and Emiratisation (MoHRE). This is in accordance with Article 4(1) of the UAE Domestic Workers Law which states, “Domestic workers may not be hired or temporarily employed without a license from the ministry, in accordance with the

Air India-Nippon sign code-share accord

MUMBAI: Air India, India’s leading global airline and All Nippon Airways, the largest Japanese carrier, have signed a code-share agreement connecting their networks. The new commercial partnership will provide more travel opportunities for customers of both airlines, who will benefit from the enhanced flight selections between India and Japan.

(Code sharing allows airlines to sell tickets to destinations they do not fly to. These agreements allow airlines to offer numerous flights without additional equipment, resources and costs. Code sharing also provides passengers with a wide choice of flights).

With this agreement, already in force, Air India and All Nippon Airways guests will fly to their desired destination by combining those flights between India and Japan with a single ticket.

In addition, guests of both airlines flying on code-share flights will enjoy premium services such as lounge access

and priority boarding that Star Alliance offers to its premium members. Air India will add its “AI” designator code on ANA’s flights between Tokyo Haneda and Delhi as well as Tokyo Narita and Mumbai, while All Nippon Airways will add its “NH” designator code on Air India’s flight between Tokyo Narita and Delhi. Air India and ANA are considering further expanding their co-operation on additional routes.

“This code-share agreement with All Nippon Airways marks an important step forward in connecting India and Japan,” said Nipun Aggarwal, Chief Commercial and Transformation Officer, Air India.

The agreement will contribute to further consolidate the economic and commercial relations between India and Japan and will offer Indian tourists the opportunity to broadly discover the wonders of Japan and to Japanese citizens the opportunity to easily travel to India, ensuring the highest standards of safety.

provisions of the Implementing Regulation of this Decree-Law and the decisions of the Ministry relating thereto.”

It is mandatory for an employer or a recruitment agency of a domestic worker to have an employment contract signed with a domestic worker and registered with the MoHRE. This is in accordance with Article 6 and Article 7 of the UAE Domestic Workers Law.

An employer/sponsor of a domestic worker needs to follow the guidelines and provisions of UAE Domestic Workers Law while employing a domestic worker at his or her residence. It may include but is not limited to providing the domestic worker with the facilities to perform her duties, providing appropriate accommodation, provision of food and means, clothing if required to perform the duties, timely payment of remuneration, incurring costs related to health insurance, be respectful to the domestic worker and the domestic worker should be allowed to retain her official documents. This is in accordance with Article 11 of the UAE Domestic Workers Law which states the obligations of the employer/sponsor towards a domestic worker.

Moreover, Article 7 of the Cabinet Resolution 106 of 2022 on Domestic Workers Law states that an employer/sponsor may not employ a domestic worker for more than 12 hours a day and without a break after continuous work for eight hours a day. Article 8 of the Cabinet Resolution 106 of 2022 on Domestic Workers Law states that an employer/sponsor needs to grant a weekly holiday to a domestic worker.

Job growth in IT sector likely

BENGALURU: The IT sector has been witnessing a decline in employee headcount for at least five quarters now, but projections suggest a notable increase in hiring activity, with expectations of a 10pc rise in recruitment throughout this calendar year.

According to experts, the second-half of this fiscal looks promising for IT jobs. "The overall hiring landscape within the IT industry is forecast to experience a surge of 12-15pc in 2024, driven primarily by the expansion of GCCs

(global capability centres) and the stabilisation of the global economy," said Kapil Joshi, Deputy CEO of Qness IT Staffing.

Nearly after two decades, TCS, Infosys and Wipro together saw a decline of 63,759 employees in FY24. Also, apart from TCS, no IT firm is likely to visit campus this year.

Infosys CFO Jayesh Sanghrajka during Q4 earnings press conference said that the company's hiring model has changed in the last few years and that they are now on a more agile mod-

el of campus hiring. Also, IT firms are now focusing on utilisation including trainees.

"The reduction in employee headcount at major IT companies in India can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, there's an uncertain demand situation across global markets, particularly in the US and Europe, where cautious spending by clients has led to a decrease in demand for IT services. This decline is evident in the collective headcount drop of over 17,500 employees across the top

eight IT firms in the December quarter alone," Joshi said.

Additionally, geopolitical tensions, such as the conflicts between Israel-Hamas and Russia-Ukraine, have contributed to the downturn, he added.

Nirupama VG, Founder, ADAstra consultants, said the rapid adoption of automation and AI technologies has led to concerns about job displacement, with 30pc of workers fearing technology may replace their roles. The rise of remote

work, with 28pc of office workers globally working remotely, has influenced employment patterns.

"The outlook appears promising despite initial setbacks. The presence of over 1600 GCCs in India, employing more than 1.5 million people, reflects the robust demand for IT professionals. The cybersecurity sector, in particular, shows potential, with a projected need for an 89pc increase in the global cybersecurity workforce by 2023," Nirupama said.

Air Arabia launches early bird offer with fares starting from Rs 5677

DUBAI: Sharjah-based Air Arabia, the leading low-cost carrier in the MidEast and North Africa, unveiled an extraordinary early bird promotion called "super seat sale" with discounted offers on 1.5 lakh seats across the company's entire network.

The promotion includes non-stop flights from India to three airports across the UAE (Sharjah, Abu Dhabi and Ras Al Khaimah) with fares starting from Rs 5,677 one way. This early bird offer is available for booking from April 22 to May 5, 2024, with travel dates spanning from Oct 27, 2024, to March 29, 2025.

The Rs 5,677 ticket

sale extends to non-stop flights originating from Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Nagpur, Kolkata, Goa, Bengaluru,



Hyderabad, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Coimbatore and Kozhikode into Sharjah, Abu Dhabi and Ras Al Khaimah in the UAE.

Operating about 200 routes from its five stra-

tegic hubs located in the UAE, Morocco and Egypt, Air Arabia continues to solidify its position as a leading player in the avia-

tion industry. Committed to providing passengers with comfort, reliability and unbeatable value, Air Arabia is an award-winning airline dedicated to delivering exceptional travel experiences.

Emirates opens luggage collection centre in Dubai

DUBAI: As heavy rainfall lashed the country, many flights in and out of the UAE were cancelled and airport operations



had come to a halt. Many passengers were unable to collect their luggage on arrival due to technical difficulties amidst the unstable weather.

Emirates airline has announced the opening of baggage collection for travellers whose final destination was Dubai

but were unable to collect their luggage on arrival.

The airline explained the steps needed to be followed for travellers to attain their baggage. Travelers must bring their baggage tag along. The collection area is open 24 hours.

The Emirates' team will also deliver bags to those who have filed a report, but it will take time. Those who have delayed baggage and already have a file reference number (PIR), can access information and updates about their baggage at <http://emirat.es/baggagestatus>

Radio Kuwait starts Hindi broadcast

KUWAIT CITY: The Indian embassy in Kuwait announced on Monday that the first Hindi radio broadcast has commenced in Kuwait. This initiative is expected to enhance the bonds between the two nations. In a statement shared on X, the embassy expressed gratitude to the information ministry for launching a Hindi programme on Radio Kuwait, airing on FM 93.3 and AM 96.3 every Sunday from 8:30 to 9:00 pm, starting from April 21, 2024. This move is antic-

ipated to further solidify the relationship between India and Kuwait.

The Indian community, comprising approximately one million individuals, constitutes the largest expatriate group in Kuwait. Among them are professionals such as engineers, doctors, chartered accountants, scientists, software experts, manage-

ment consultants, architects, technicians, nurses, as well as retail traders

and businessmen. The Indian business community in Kuwait has

established a prominent presence in the local market, particularly in retail and distribution sectors. India and Kuwait share traditionally friendly relations, deeply rooted in history and enduring over time. India has historically been a significant trading partner of Kuwait, and until 1961, the Indian rupee served as the legal ten-

der in Kuwait. The year 2021-22 commemorated the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

On April 17, Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Adarsh Swaika met Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah to commend the expatriate-friendly measures implemented during his tenure. Ambassador Swaika also briefed him on recent developments within the Indian community.

