

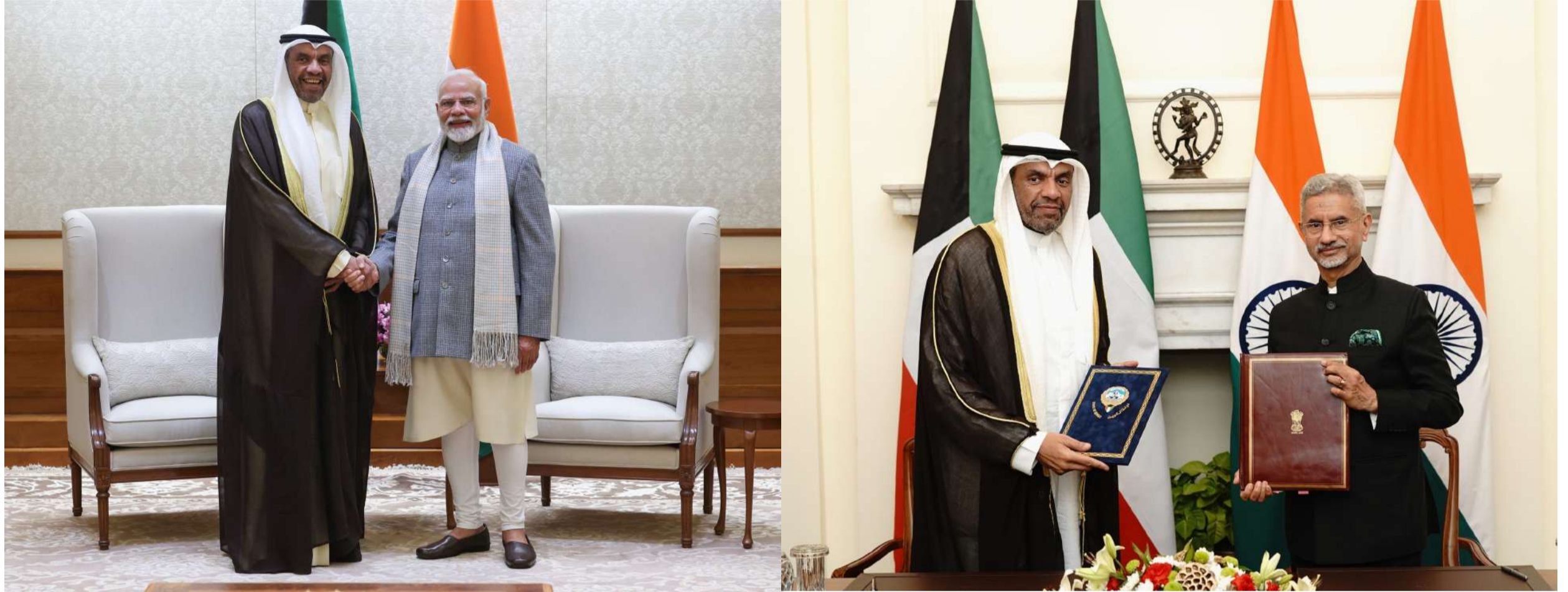


OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT



PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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Kuwait's Foreign Minister His Excellency Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and (right) External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in New Dehi.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulates Devendra Fadnavis on taking oath as Maharashtra Chief Minister in Mumbai on Thursday. Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar were sworn in as deputy CMs.

Skal Club to promote tourism between India, Mauritius

Skal Club South Mumbai President Dr Batra and member delegates of Mumbai South Unit and Skal Club President Mr Clement of Mauritius had a meeting during the familiarisation trip to Mauritius and decided to collaborate among the members to promote tourism between the two nations and to strengthen Skal MOU in the tourism vertical. They discussed in length about the potential outflow of tourists to Mauritius from India, tremendously growing year on year attracting MICE and film shoots substantially apart from the FIT and group traffic. Mr Thomas, secretary general, Skal South Mumbai and treasurer Ms Pinky also participated in the meeting. (More pics on page 2)



In an informal meeting, Dilip Lalwani, CMD Fly Creative Mr VS Abdulkareem and Skal treasurer Ms Pinky with Mauritius Minister of Tourism and Leisure Mr Christian Harold Richard Duval.



Rupee's historic fall

With India's foreign exchange reserves dropping for eight straight weeks to dip to their lowest in five months, the rupee too is losing ground against US dollar as well as some other major currencies. What's more worrying is the grim fact that the rupee declined by 0.25pc on Monday in the wake of India's disappointing GDP data. Worse, on Tuesday, the fall continued unabated and this is the rupee's steepest percentage fall in six months. Massive selling of shares by foreign institutional investors also resulted in the outflow of foreign reserve.

The rupee declined to a lifetime low on Tuesday, pressured by the US dollar's rally against its major peers and on concerns over India's slowing growth rate. The rupee slumped to a record low of 23.09 against the UAE dirham (84.74 against the US dollar), inching past its previous all-time low of 23.08 against the dirham (84.69 against the US dollar) on Wednesday. But the rupee was not alone in turning weak, its Asian peers were mostly weaker, with the Chinese yuan dropping to its lowest in a year, while the dollar index rose to 106.50 on back of weakness in the euro.

India's GDP (gross domestic product) growth for the July-Sept quarter dropped to an alarming 5.4pc, the lowest level since quarter-3 of FY23. This figure represents a sharp fall from 8.1pc in the same period last year and 6.7pc in the April-June quarter. Economists had projected a moderation to 6.5pc, but the economy underperformed expectations, plunging to a near two-year low. The unexpected slowdown is likely to increase pressure on the central bank, which has kept the benchmark repo rate steady amidst inflationary concerns.

The decline in the rupee from 84.50 to the current level has been without much resistance. The price action suggests that either RBI intervention has been comparatively mild or that the underlying dollar demand is too much. Either way, it is a worrying sign for the rupee.

The extent of the rupee's decline, while broadly in line with other Asian currencies, was a surprise for bankers and corporate considering that RBI over the last several months has been persistently intervening to hold up the currency at key levels. But a weakening path for the rupee looks inevitable.

"We expect the rupee to remain volatile this week amid volatility in the dollar index and volatility in the domestic equity markets and could trade in the range of 83.55-84.70," says Rahul Kalantri, VP, Mehta Equities.

The routine actions taken by RBI might have prevented further drop in the rupee, even amid significant outflows from domestic stocks and high US bond yields, as noted by market analysts. On Monday, foreign institutional investors (FIIs) sold Indian shares worth Rs 4,329.79 crore, while domestic institutional investors bought shares totaling Rs2,936.08 crore. Until FIIs keep selling stocks, rupee will be under pressure and this would also bring down equities. At this juncture, Investors should wait and watch for some time till the dust settles.

No doubt, exporters will benefit from this weak rupees as they will get more rupees for every dollar, but it may also increase the cost of imported goods. So, what we need is a well balanced rupee with steady parity rates.

LIPSYNCH

"Well done is better than well said."

— Benjamin Franklin

Goa being developed as cargo-cruise hub

NEW DELHI: The Centre, in co-ordination with the Goa government, is developing the state as a major cargo and cruise destination. Under the Sagarmala Scheme, an international and domestic cruise terminal along with a ferry terminal has been developed in Goa.

The Central government has developed an International and Domestic Cruise Terminal, along with a Ferry Terminal at Mormugao

The project is scheduled for completion by March. The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Water-



Port, Goa, with an estimated project cost of Rs 101.72 crore. The

ways is also preparing DPRs for nine coastal jetties in Goa to boost cargo volume, reduce traffic, and improve inland transport.

Efforts to increase cargo include building new terminals, expanding existing ones, enhancing connectivity, upgrading equipment and promoting coastal shipping through subsidies and reduced charges. To further boost cruise activities, the Union government launched the Cruise Bharat Mission in 2024.

The expected economic impacts of such development like creating jobs in transportation, hospitality, retail, and tourism, boosting local business revenue. It also improves local connectivity through enhanced inland waterway services, including ferry and RoRo (Roll-on/Roll-off) services, enabled by integrated cruise circuits.



Dr Batra presenting his book on homoeopathy to Mr Clement Cartier.



Skal Club South Mumbai President Dr Batra and member delegates of Mumbai South Unit, Fly Creative group CMD Mr VS Abdulkareem and Skal Club President Mr Clement Cartier of Mauritius had a meeting during the familiarisation trip to Mauritius. They decided to collaborate among the members to promote tourism between the two nations and to strengthen Skal MOU in the tourism vertical.

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India, Oman review bilateral relations at IOSCG meeting

NEW DELHI: India and Oman reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations between the two nations during the 13th round of the India-Oman Strategic Consultative Group (IOSCG) meeting.

The meeting was co-chaired by Secretary Arun Kumar Chatterjee of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and Undersecretary for Political Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Oman Sheikh Khalifa Alharthy.

The meeting had discussions ranging from political and strategic co-operation, trade and investment, energy, maritime and defence partnership, digital collaboration, cultural exchange and people-to-people ties. Both nations also exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest and agreed to hold the next round of IOSCG in Muscat on a mutually convenient date.

EAM Jaishankar highlighted the strength of In-

dia-Oman relations during his meeting with Khalifa Alharthy, noting the wide range of co-operation and new opportunities between the two nations in trade, investments, technology and space.

"Glad to receive Khalifa Alharthy, Under Secretary for Political Affairs of Oman, today. Noted our wide-ranging co-operation and new opportunities in trade, investments, technology and space," Jaishankar remarked on X. The Sultanate of Oman is a key strategic partner for India in the Gulf and an important interlocutor within regional organisations like the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Arab League and Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

Airports leased out through transparent process

NEW DELHI: Civil Aviation Minister K Ramohan Naidu has said six airports were leased out to the Adani group through a thorough, competitive and transparent process.

State-owned Airports Authority of India (AAI) has leased out six airports -- Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Mangaluru, Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram -- to the Adani group.

While mentioning about the leasing out of these airports, Trinamool Congress leader Saugata Roy said in the Lok Sabha that NitiAayog and the Department of Economic Af-

fairs (DEA) were of the view that two airports should not be given to the same entity.

Naidu, however, said there was no fact in the member's statement.

These are wild allegations and an empowered group of secretaries, headed by NitiAayog CEO, where DEA secretary was also a member, was constituted, he said.

A thorough process was followed for the leasing out of the airports, he said, adding when they (NitiAayog CEO, DEA secretary) were members of the group, where does the point arise that they had opposed the same.

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Telangana : Telangana is the link between the North and South of India.

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

I was fired without valid cause, what to do?

I have been working in a private company for five years. Three years ago, the company asked me to work

the matter is not settled amicably, you have to transfer the matter to the court. The employer, as per Article-12 of



for its branch outside UAE and I worked there for a year, after which I returned to work for the company in UAE again. Currently, I have submitted my resignation, but the employer refuses to give me my end-of-service dues for the period of one year during which I worked in the company's branch outside UAE. He also refuses to give me my entitlements for annual leave allowance for three years. According to the employer's statement, I am not entitled to end-of-service allowance for a period of one year, considering that this service has nothing to do with the company's branch in UAE. And as for vacation, I am entitled to only one year's allowance. My question is: What is the position of the law on the employer's behaviour and what are the legal procedures that must be followed to obtain my rights?

To answer such question, I would advise the questioner that: You have to file a complaint in the labour department. If

the labour law no. 33 of 2021, may assign the worker to undertake work not agreed upon in the employment contract, provided that the worker provides his consent in writing. You have to prove that the employer assigned you for such work.

You may use all tools of evidences included but not limited to the salary transfer any written emails, documents... etc. because, the burden of proving what you claim falls on you.

Regarding the annual leave allowances, the employer shall grant you the annual leave regardless of the leave duration. This is stated in Article-29 of the same law, the employee shall be entitled to a wage for the accrued leave days if he quits the work before using them, regardless of the leave duration, with respect to the period for which he did not obtain his leave. The employee shall also be entitled to receive leave wage for parts of the year in proportion to the period he spent in work and it shall be calculated according to the basic wage.

Can I refuse to sign new employment contract?

I have been working in a private company for two years as a manager. Currently, the employer is asking me to amend the employment contract and according to the new contract, my position will be reduced to an employee and the salary will also be cut by half. I refused to sign the new contract and my employer asked me to stop working. What is the appropriate procedure to take against the employer and am I obligated according to the new law to amend the employment contract?

According to Article-65 of the Labour Law no. 33 of 2021, the employer or worker may not misapply the provisions of the Labour Law, its Implementing Regulation and the resolutions

issued for the implementation of its provisions and they may not commit an action that would limit the freedom of others, the freedom of other workers or employers to achieve any interest or viewpoint adopted which contradicts freedom of work.

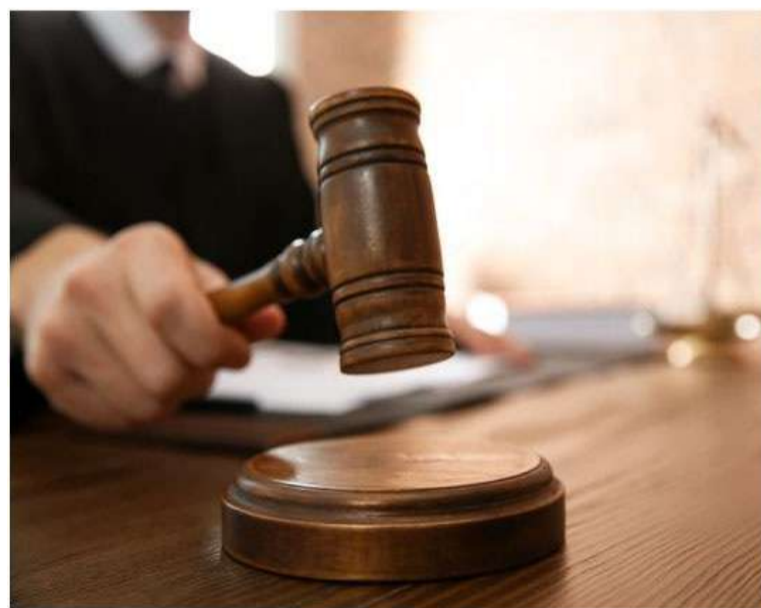
Moreover, Article-14 prohibits the employer from using any means that would oblige or force the worker, threaten him with any penalty to work for it, or compel him to undertake work or provide a service against his will.

Based on this, the employer doesn't have the right to oblige you to amend the employment contract neither regarding the position nor the salary unless you approved the amendment

by signing the new contract. But on the contrary, he has the right to terminate the employment relationship and you also have the same right.

The procedure to be taken against the employer is to file a suitcase against him in the labour office which will try to settle the matter amicably. In case the matter was not settled between you and the employer, then it will be transferred to the court which shall decide about your end-of-service dues as per your requests taking into consideration that the court in this regard will not oblige the employer to return you to your job.

Company secrets leaked, what to do?



I am a company owner. A month ago, I discovered that an employee had disclosed information to competing companies. This act caused me great loss, and therefore I filed a complaint with the police, in which the employee admitted what he had done. My question is: What other procedures need to be taken against this employee? How can I force him to compensate me for the damages I suffered?

Disclosing confidential information on the occasion of work is a criminal act according to UAE Penal Code no. 31 of 2021 which states that the offender ("Shall be sentenced to detention for a minimum period of one year and to a minimum fine of Dh 20,000 or one of these two penalties whoever by virtue of his profession, craft, position or art is entrusted with a secret and divulge it in cases other than those allowed by law or if used for his own personal interest or for the interest of another person, unless authorised by the confiding person to disclose or use it.")

The employer may terminate the worker according to Article 44 of the labour law without notice if the worker disclosed one work secret related to industrial or intellectual property, which resulted in losses to the employer, missed opportunity or achieving a personal benefit for the worker. You may file a civil case against him for temporary compensation accompanied with the criminal case.

When the criminal court issued a judgement against him, you have to file a civil case for compensation and you are entitled to request material and moral compensation provided that the elements of the prejudice and the losses you had suffered, must be proved by you. This case is recommended to be filed after you get the judgment from the criminal court.

Himanshu Patil takes charge as OTOAI President for 2024-26



Newly elected Working and Executive Committee Members for the year 2024-26

The Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI) successfully concluded its elections on Dec 5, 2024, marking the end of the 2022-2024 term.

The association expressed gratitude to the outgoing team for their remarkable contributions, which included hosting impactful events, forming strategic collaborations and signing multiple MOUs that significantly enhanced OTOAI's footprint in the tourism industry.

This new leadership team is poised to lead OTOAI with vision, dynamism and a commitment to fostering growth in the outbound tourism sector.

The election process was managed with fairness and transparency by Sanjay Datta, Man-

aging Director of Airborne Holiday, who served as the Election Officer for the OTOAI elections. His expertise ensured smooth proceedings and successful outcomes.

Executive Committee Members: To strengthen the governance structure, the Executive Committee (EC) comprises both retained and nominated members, ensuring

Newly Elected Working Committee Members:

President: Himanshu Kesari Patil, Kesari Tours and Travels.
Vice President: Shравan Bhalla, High Flyer
General Secretary: Sidharth Khanna, Khanna Enterprises (Regd.)
Joint Secretary: Monia Kapoor, Travel O Holidays
Treasurer: Gurdeep Singh Gujral, Gujral Tours and Travels

Executive Committee Members:

Riaz Munshi, N. Chirag Travels
 Adl Abdul Karim, Flycreative Online
 Ankush Nijhawan, Travel Boutique A Unit of Lap Travels
 Rohit Shorey, Destination Travel Services
 Vineet Gopal, Engee Holidays
 Vinayak Laud, Vinaayak Holidays

a diverse and capable team.

The new team is set to assume its responsibilities effective Dec 6, 2024. With a renewed focus on innovation, collaboration and mem-

ber engagement, the 2024-2026 team is dedicated to advancing the interests of OTOAI and its members while promoting outbound tourism on a national and international scale.

SpiceJet to operate 100 special Haj flights

MUMBAI: SpiceJet has secured the rights to operate 100 special flights in 2025 for Haj pilgrimage from four Indian cities—Kolkata, Guwahati, Srinagar and Gaya.

each with a seating capacity of 324 passengers. In 2025, the airline is planning to further improving its services, ensuring all necessary arrangements are in place

abad, while also linking Ahmedabad with Pune.

This expansion comes after the launch of 32 new flights in Oct 2024, including two international routes connecting



The airline which carried 13,000 pilgrims in 2024, will now increase its capacity by 18pc and carry 15,500 pilgrims. SpiceJet has been operating special Haj flights annually since 2019. During the previous Haj season, SpiceJet had deployed two wide-body Airbus A340 aircraft,

to provide a comfortable and seamless journey for the pilgrims.

SpiceJet recently expanded its domestic network as well with eight new flights launched since Nov 15. The airline announced that its new routes will connect Jaipur to Varanasi, Amritsar and Ahmed-

Delhi with Phuket. In Oct, SpiceJet launched UDAN flights connecting Shivamogga in Karnataka with Chennai and Hyderabad and introduced double daily flights between Chennai and Kochi, improving connectivity between key regional and metropolitan cities.

Foreign visitors can drive in Oman

MUSCAT: Foreign visitors to the Sultanate of Oman are allowed to drive under certain conditions.

According to ROP, foreign visitors with driving licences issued

International driving licences are issued by Oman Automobile Associations. According to ROP, it is not possible for all expatriates to swap their home country's licence for an Oma-



in their home countries are permitted to drive in the Sultanate of Oman for tourism or transit purposes only.

The validity of the international or driving licence must not exceed three months from the date of entry into the Sultanate of Oman.

ni one, but a foreign tourist can drive a car in Oman as long as have a visit visa valid for three months. However, the Permanent Resident must get an Omani driving licence.

The minimum age for getting a driving licence in Oman is 18 years.