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## Nurses, healthcare workers, teachers in demand

# India, Jamaica to boost skilled mobility

**KINGSTON:** India and Jamaica have agreed to further strengthen trade linkages and explore co-operation for recruitment and mobility of skilled professionals, including healthcare workers and teachers, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said.

Addressing a joint press conference here after talks with his Jamaican counterpart Kamina J Smith, Jaishankar said the discussions were comprehensive and they reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral ties, identifying new avenues to deepen the partnership. "We signed several important agreements and discussed effective implementations of MOUs

which have been recently concluded in the fields of digital transformation, cultural exchange, sports and digital payments to ensure tangible outcomes on the ground," he said.

India recognised Jamaica's growing role as a logistics hub and gateway to the Caribbean for trade and investment, Jaishankar said. "We agreed to further strengthen trade, business and investment linkages, explore co-operation for recruitment and mobility of skilled professionals, including nurses, healthcare workers and teachers," he said.

The two sides also discussed expanding co-operation in defence and

security, healthcare, digitisation, agriculture, education and infrastructure, the minister said. Highlighting development co-operation as a key pillar of ties, Jaishankar noted the successful completion of the Improving Rural Livelihoods Project in Kitson Town in March 2026, implemented with Indian assistance of US\$1 million under the India-UN Development

Partnership Fund, benefiting over 200 individuals and impacting thousands more.

He said India is also discussing the feasibility of establishing an artisan empowerment hub in Jamaica and reiterated support for the country's recovery following Hurricane Melissa. As part of humanitarian assistance, India has supplied relief

material, deployed a medical team and is in the process of providing 30 dialysis units. It is also sending 40 fishing boats and 200 GPS units to aid recovery efforts.

The ministers reaffirmed close co-operation in multilateral fora and discussed issues such as reformed multilateralism, climate justice and priorities of the Global South.

## Portugal tightens citizenship rules

**LISBON:** Portugal has tightened its citizenship rules for foreign investors, extending the time required to obtain a passport as the country faces record levels of immigration.

The Bill, signed into law by Antonio José Seguro on May 3, doubles the residency period for most applicants under the golden visa programme, which allows non-Europeans to

gain residency through investment. The golden visa offers a fast-track route through options such as a minimum €500,000 investment in eligible funds, with applicants previously able to seek citizenship after five years in the programme.

What changes for applicants: Under the new law, the timeline to citizenship has been extended across categories: Most foreign nationals: five years to 10 years.

The changes apply broadly across applicants, including those from Lusophone countries, who will now need to wait seven years instead of five to qualify for citizenship. De- ( Cont. on page - 6 )

## India-Qatar pact brings passports to doorstep

**DOHA:** In a significant move to enhance consular services for the Indian community in Qatar, Indian embassy and Qatar Post in Doha have signed an agreement enabling secure, direct-to-home delivery of renewed passports and other official documents.

The initiative is aimed at improving efficiency, re-

ducing waiting times and offering greater convenience to thousands of Indian expatriates residing in the Gulf nation. Under the new system, applicants will no longer need to visit the embassy or collection centers to retrieve their documents. Instead, passports and consular papers will be dispatched directly to their registered residential

addresses through Qatar Post's secure delivery network.

Officials noted that the service includes end-to-end tracking, allowing applicants to monitor the status of their documents from dispatch at the embassy to final delivery. This added layer of transparency is expected to boost user confidence and streamline

the overall process.

The agreement reflects ongoing efforts by Indian diplomatic missions to modernise services and respond to the needs of the Diaspora. With a large Indian population in Qatar, the move is likely to be widely welcomed as a practical step toward more accessible and citizen-friendly governance abroad.



## Vivek Ramaswamy wins Republican nomination for Ohio governor

**WASHINGTON:** Trump-backed Vivek Ramaswamy wins Republican nomination for Ohio governor. Vivek Ramaswamy, the billionaire entrepreneur backed by President Donald Trump has won the Republican Party primary to become its candidate for Ohio governor, defeating an opponent who tormented him with racist propaganda.

Vivek Ramaswamy, the

billionaire entrepreneur backed by President Trump, has won the Republican Party primary to become its candidate for Ohio governor, defeating an opponent who tormented him at to Casey Putsch, and in the November general election, will face Democrat Amy Acton, who ran unopposed for her party's nomination.

Ramaswamy initially ran ( Cont. on page - 2 )

## Saudi leads Mid East tourism surge contributing \$178bn to GDP

**RIYADH:** According to the latest Economic Impact Research (EIR) by the WorldTravel & Tourism Council (WTTC), Saudi Arabia remains the region's largest travel and tourism economy, contributing a significant \$178 billion to its GDP. This represents an impressive 46pc of the Middle East's total travel and tourism economy.

The WTTC's research

underscores the strength of the region's tourism sector, which is flourishing across various key indicators. International visitor spending, domestic travel and business travel are all on the rise. In fact, the Middle East's tourism sector grew by 5.3pc in 2025, surpassing the global average growth of 4.1pc. This achievement places the region at the forefront ( Cont. on page - 6 )



## Coalition Dharma

India is not new to coalition governments. At the centre itself, several coalition governments had come and gone. Kerala is a shining example of coalition govts doing well for a long time. As Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who himself headed coalition govt which was pulled down by Jayalalithaa, once said: " We have to take care of coalition Dharma", when asked about his soft give and take attitude towards coalition partners. Coalition Dharma signifies the ethics, duty and mutual respect required to manage a coalition government. It requires the leading party to accommodate smaller partners' concerns, shared goals (through common minimum programme) and collective decision-making as against unilateral action. Germany, Italy, Japan etc all had coalition govts from time to time. Nearer home, Tamil actor-turned politician Vijay will have no other option but to seek support from splinter groups or the AIADMK to form government in Tamil Nadu. And such a coalition would be another historic first for the state.

*Editorial*  
By EL Vaidyanathan

Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (VTK) has scripted a blockbuster debut in Tamil Nadu, rewriting the state's political history with a single stroke. It has emerged as the single largest party in its very first attempt, winning more than 100 seats in the 234-member assembly. Nevertheless, it has fallen short of the simple majority needed to form a government on its own, resulting in a hung assembly and triggering intense political manoeuvring in Chennai. The verdict is widely seen as a powerful endorsement of the alternative promised by Vijay, and a rejection of both the incumbent DMK government and opposition AIADMK. A deep desire for change from the Dravidian duopoly, charged by the massive popularity of the Vijay brand, propelled the TVK to a remarkable performance in the fierce three-cornered battle. TVK secured around 35pc of the votes, streets ahead of the two majors who have ruled the state for half a century. Probably, this marks the end of the single family rule and the so-called Dravidian politics spiced with self-claimed superiority of the Tamil language.

In West Bengal, where history was made by voting out Mamata Banerjee, the new government comes to power with a massive majority. BJP has laid clear its plans for the next five years and given the track record of the party, these will be achieved. The Centre is waiting in the wings to invest heavily in Bengal, where no industry or entrepreneurship has come in the last 30 years. The state is starving for jobs and investments.

In Assam it was a known case that the BJP will come back to power. With a corruption-free government and simmering anti-Bangladeshi sentiment, Himanta Biswa Sarma's roaring victory was well anticipated. In the southern tip, Kerala has given a golden chance to Congress to prove its credibility. But Kerala needs a very active administration as in the last one decade, no major investment has happened. With Gulf employment shrinking due to war in West Asia, Kerala will have look for other avenues. The little Puducherry, once a French colony, has retained its existing government and has all the backing of the Union government.

In a democratic country like India, elections come and go. Instead of bickering, parties should come together and work for the welfare of the people.

### LIPSYNCH

*"Price is what you pay. Value is what you get."*  
---Warren Buffett

## GTM 2026 to be held from June 3 to 5 In Thiruvananthapuram

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** The second edition of southern India's travel and trade expo, Global Travel Market (GTM) -2026, will be held in the Kerala capital from June 3 to 5, with over 1,000 tour operators from India and abroad expected to participate.

The GTM 2026 will provide a platform for exhibitors and buyers to build business partnerships with key international players in the travel and tourism industry,



while also helping them scale up their enterprises, Biju K, IAS, Secretary of Kerala Tourism, said. The travel and trade exhibi-

tion will be held at the Golden Palace International Convention Centre near Karakkonam in Neyyattinkara. It is jointly

organised by the South Kerala Hoteliers Forum, the Thiruvananthapuram Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Thavass Ventures and Metro Mart, in association with Kerala Tourism and India Tourism.

He added that more than 200 stalls will showcase innovative tourism products at the expo and prominent experts from the travel and tourism industry will lead sessions on various topics during the three-day event.

## Qatar Airways resumes daily flights from Amritsar

**AMISTAR:** In a major relief for international travellers from Punjab, Qatar Airways has resumed its daily flight operations from Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport here from the last week of April.

Earlier, the airline was operating only two flights a week. It has now restored its regular schedule after suspending services in the first week of March, when Qatari airspace was closed due to the Iran-Israel conflict.

According to available information, the flight from Doha arrives in Amritsar at around 2.30 am, while the return departs at approximately 3:30 pm. The service is considered highly important for passengers



travelling from Punjab to the US, Canada and Europe via Doha.

In another positive development, Air India Express has also resumed its daily flights to Sharjah. Previously, multiple daily flights from Amritsar to Sharjah and Dubai were operating, catering to a large number of Punjabi travellers heading to Gulf countries. However, operations were halted after the war.

Meanwhile, IndiGo has

not yet restarted its Sharjah flights from Amritsar, though passengers remain hopeful that the airline will soon restore the service. Some services on the Dubai route also continue to be affected.

Adding to the relief for travellers, Qatar Airways has announced that passengers who have booked for travel up to Oct can change their travel dates without incurring change fees, although fare differences may apply.

## Vivek Ramaswamy wins Republican...

( Cont. from page - 1 ) against Trump for the Republican presidential nomination in 2024, but withdrew and backed Trump. Trump appointed him as the co-head with Elon Musk of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to streamline government operations and cut expenses. He had a run of only about a month in that controversial role, with personality clashes with Musk, the abrasive entrepreneur who founded the electric car manufac-

turer Tesla and the SpaceX aerospace company, and owns the social media platform X. Ramaswamy then received Trump's blessings to run for Ohio governor. If Ramaswamy is elected in Nov, he will be the third Indian American to hold the office after fellow Republicans Bobby Jindal in Louisiana and Nikki Haley in South Carolina. He would be the first Hindu to become governor. (Jindal is a Catholic convert, while Haley is a Christian because of her marriage,

but also keeps her Sikh traditions.) Ohio has not had a Democrat governor in 35 years, both its senators are Republicans and Trump carried it with a 12pc lead in 2024, giving Ramaswamy an edge in Nov. Ramaswamy's father, Vadakanchery Ganapathy Ramaswamy, was an engineer with General Electric and his mother is a psychiatrist. The 40-year-old Ramaswamy has a law degree from Yale University, but went on to build a career as an entrepreneur.

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Australian Dollar	68.16	69.62
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Swedish Krona	10.12	10.41
New Zealand Dollar	55.91	57.17
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India top remittance recipient country, adds over \$137bn

**NEW DELHI:** India has become the top remittance recipient country in the world and the only nation to surpass \$100 billion dollars, the UN agency on migration said, adding that the country received over 137 billion dollars in remittances in 2024.

"India consistently leads as the top recipient of remittances, followed by Mexico," the World Migration Report 2026, released by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), said.

In 2024, India, Mexico, the Phil-

ippines and France were the top four remittance recipient countries globally. India, however, continued to be well above the rest, receiving more than \$137 billion and remained the only country to surpass \$100 billion, the report said.

US has consistently been the top remittance-sending country in the world, with a total outflow surpassing \$100 billion in 2024. As per the UN report, the distribution of remittances varies across regions as well, with

South Asia estimated to experience the highest growth in 2024 at 11.8pc, driven by continued strong inflows to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Since 2010, India has been the top remittance receiving country in the world, when it had received \$53.48 billion which grew over the years to \$68.91 billion in 2015, \$83.15 billion in 2020 and \$137.67 billion in 2024.

Asian countries continue to account for the largest share of internationally mobile students.

In 2022, more than one million international students came from China, the single largest origin country worldwide. India ranked second, with over 6.2 lakh students abroad.

The Indian diaspora has been instrumental in the expansion of India's technology sector. As per the UN report, all of the five largest migration corridors involving countries in Oceania comprise migrants to Australia, with the largest corridor being from the United Kingdom to Australia.



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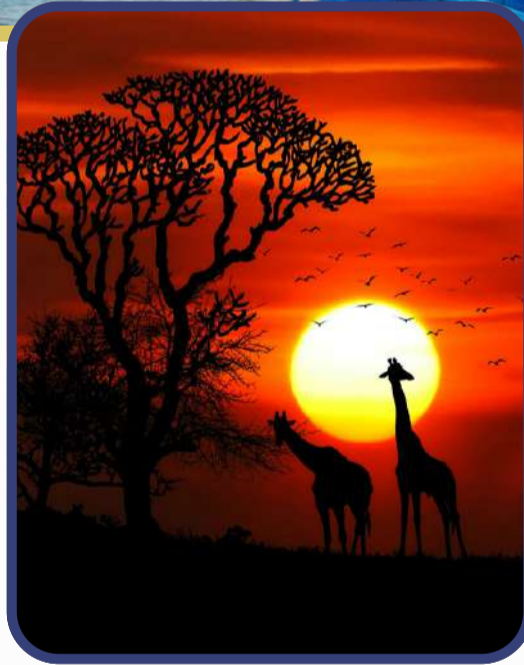
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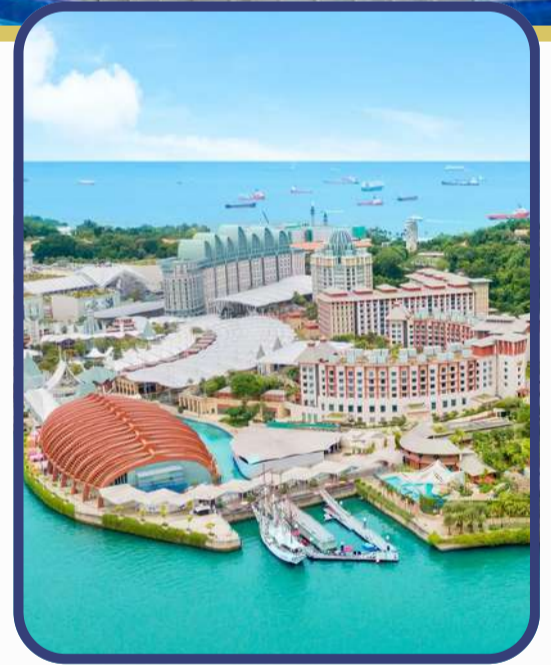
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# GULF FAQs

## Can your job cost you child custody?

A recent Dubai court ruling shows that while having a job does not decide custody on its own, it may matter if it affects a child's daily care and stability.

### Can your job cost you child custody?

In a case shared by legal consultant Dr Hasan Elhais from Amal Al Rashedi Lawyers and Legal Consultants, a mother lost custody of her two daughters after the court found that her job required her to be away from home often and for long periods.

According to Hasan, the ruling by Dubai's highest court upheld an earlier decision to transfer custody of the children to their father, with the main focus on the children's welfare. Hasan said the ruling shows that custody is not automatically given to either parent. "The court will always look first at where the child's welfare is best protected and whether the custodian can provide stable, continuous care," he said.

The case involved a mother who worked as a flight attendant, whose job required her to travel and stay away from home for several days at a time. According to Hasan, the court found that such absences

could affect the children's routine, supervision and overall stability. The father, on the other hand, was described as being consistently present and able to take care of the children's daily needs, with support from family members.

He said the court also considered findings from a custody committee, which reviewed the living arrangements and concluded that the children's best interests would be better

served in the father's care.

He stressed that the ruling does not mean that working mothers automatically lose custody. "This is an important point for the public. The court did not say that a working mother loses custody just because she has a job. What it said is that the full situation must be looked at, including whether repeated travel or long absences affect the child's routine, supervision and emotional

stability," he noted.

He also added that having a nanny or domestic help does not replace the need for a parent to provide direct and continuous care. "In cases involving young children, the court looks at who is consistently available, who can manage their daily needs and whether the arrangement provides stability," he said. Legal experts said the ruling is a reminder that custody cases in the UAE

are decided based on the details of each case, with courts focusing on what is best for the child rather than the wishes of either parent. "The broader message is that the court is focused on the child, not on punishing one parent or favouring the other," said Hasan. "Where the evidence shows that the child's welfare would be better served in the care of the other parent, the court can make that decision."

## Can a pregnant employee be sacked?

**I worked as an employee for three years. The company's attitude towards me changed from the date they learned I was pregnant, with emails being sent to me questioning my performance and accomplishments and stating that I was taking sick leave due to my pregnancy. I filed a complaint against the company for such behaviour, but the company terminated me after this complaint, citing lack of performance. My question is: do I deserve compensation for arbitrary dismissal?**

According to Article 47 of the Labour Law, the



termination of a worker's service by the employer is considered unlawful if it is due to the worker filing a serious complaint to the ministry or filing a lawsuit against the employer, pro-

vided the validity of such complaint or lawsuit is proven.

In general, filing a labour complaint with the ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization

is not, by itself, considered by the court as a reason for unlawful termination, unless it is clearly and evidently proven through documents. This was established in the court's ruling No. 33/2024 Labour Cassation on 26/3/2024.

Whoever claims that an unlawful termination has occurred bears the burden of proof. This means you must demonstrate that your termination was not due to lack of performance, but rather as a result of filing a complaint against the company. Therefore, the court shall have the authority to determine whether the situation constitutes an arbitrary dismissal or not.

## What to do if an employee leaves without clearing fines?

**I am a company owner. One month ago, I terminated an employee but I discovered that he didn't return the petty cash amounting to Dh10,000 and there were some fines on the car of the company he was driving during his work amounting to Dh7,500. I filed a complaint before the ministry to recover these amounts from the employee.**

**Two days ago, the ministry rejected my claim. My question: What should I do now to get such amounts?**

When the ministry renders its decision or judgment which is not satisfactory, you will still have the right to file the case before the competent Court of First Instance within 15 working days following notification of the decision, knowing that the decision of the First Instance Court shall be final because the value of the claim is not more than Dh50,000.

According to Article 54 of the Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 the ministry will render a final judgment on any dispute

submitted to it if the value of the claim is not more than Dh 50,000 or if neither party complies with an amicable settlement decision relating to the subject matter, regardless of the value of the claim. The ministry has the authority to resolve the dispute, and the decision shall be annotated with execution in accordance with customary practice.

If the decision is not satisfactory to either party, either party may file a lawsuit before the relevant Court of Appeal for a

review of the decision within 15 working days following notification of the decision. Upon filing, the court will schedule a hearing to consider the case within three working days, and the case will be adjudicated within 15 working days.

The decision of the court of appeal shall constitute a final verdict, and an appeal will suspend the implementation of the decision.

If an appeal is filed, the execution of the decision described above will be suspended.

# Govt clears Rs 5,000 cr lifeline for aviation sector

**NEW DELHI:** The government of India has approved a massive Rs 5,000 crore emergency relief package under ECLGS 5.0 to support the country's aviation sector amid rising fuel prices and disruptions linked to the ongoing West Asia crisis.

The financial assistance, cleared on May 6, aims to help airlines manage mounting opera-

tional costs, route uncertainties and pressure on international flight schedules. Aviation companies have been struggling with volatile crude oil prices, increased insurance expenses, and longer flight diversions caused by regional tensions.

Officials said the package is designed to stabilise the sector, protect jobs and ensure uninterrupted con-



nectivity for passengers and cargo operations. Industry experts believe the relief measure could provide temporary breathing space to airlines already facing shrinking profit margins and growing global uncertainty. The move highlights growing concern over the wider economic impact of geopolitical instability on global travel and transportation networks.

## India opts for Diet Coke parties as Iran war disrupts supplies

**NEW DELHI:** "Diet Coke parties" are in vogue across India as bars and restaurants tap a social media frenzy sparked by a shortage of the cola linked to the Iran war.

Unlike most other markets, Diet Coke is sold only in cans in India, making the Coca-Cola beverage more vulnerable to supply chain disruptions caused by shipments stuck in the Strait of Hormuz.

Amid a supply squeeze, Diet Coke cans can still be scooped up online but in limited quantities. Indian pubs and social media influencers have spotted a chance to profit from the scarcity, organising parties that come with a US\$10 to \$16 entry fee and offer access to Diet Coke, as well as music, alcohol and activities such as can decoration and themed T-shirt painting.

In New Delhi, revel-

lers dressed in Diet Coke-themed attire experimented by mixing the drink with local spices, jalapenos and honey.

At a Mumbai event, entry tickets doubled as raffle entries, with two winners each taking home 50 Diet Coke cans. "We had a cocktail menu, which we



call Coke-tails. The idea was to bring fans together," said 25-year-old marketing executive Gupta, who calls herself a "big Diet Coke fan". Coca-Cola and Pepsi count India as a major growth market and with the exception of Diet Coke, most of the drinks are sold

in plastic and glass bottles, as well as cans.

A Ninecamp Ventures restaurant is hosting a party near New Delhi next week, where it will offer "Diet Coke on the house" with snacks for US\$16.

Ninecamp chief executive Chaitanya Mathur said that organisers had requested 500 Coke cans, which they had in stock. "For the young people, it's about scarcity being a premise of the entire event. That's where the fun is – the less there is of something, is when they want more of it," Mathur said. Diet Coke is also a preferred mixer with alcohol in India, often paired with rum. It is also popular among health-conscious consumers, and its shortage has seen social media flooded with humorous memes showing people hoarding the cans across the country.

## Saudi leads Mid East tourism surge...

(Cont. from page - 1) of global travel, positioning it as one of the most dynamic travel markets worldwide.

Notably, the Middle East continues to outperform both the global average and its own regional economy in the tourism sector. International visitor spending increased by 5.2pc, a sharp rise compared to the global 3.2pc increase. The

total contribution of travel and tourism to the region's GDP reached a remarkable \$385.8 billion in 2025, sustaining 7.1 million jobs. This growth further solidifies the sector's growing importance in the Middle East's economic landscape. Saudi Arabia, in particular, has shown exceptional performance in 2025.

The country's travel and

tourism GDP grew by an impressive 7.4pc nearly doubling the global sector growth rate of 4.1pc. This growth is about 40pc higher than the Middle East regional average of 5.3pc. Saudi Arabia's ability to outperform both regional and global trends speaks volumes about the kingdom's expanding appeal as a major global destination.

## Eid Al Adha travellers see summer airfares soar

**DUBAI:** UAE residents planning overseas trips for the Eid Al Adha break later this month are entering one of the most expensive summer travel markets in years, as soaring jet fuel prices trigger higher airfares, tighter seat availability and growing schedule pressure across airlines worldwide.

The disruption comes just as outbound travel demand accelerates ahead of the holiday period during the last week of May and the wider summer vacation season. Airlines worldwide are grappling with a sharp increase in jet fuel prices linked to the US-Israeli war on Iran and instability around the Strait of Hor-

muz, a critical artery for global energy shipments and aviation fuel supplies.

Jet fuel prices have surged from roughly \$85-\$90 per barrel to as high as \$150-\$200, several regulatory platforms indicate. The increase has jolted an industry where fuel already ranks among the largest operating expenses. The effects are now spreading rapidly through airline networks. Germany's Lufthansa is removing 20,000 short-haul flights through October. Netherlands' KLM canceled 160 European flights in one month, while Sweden's SAS scrapped 1,000 flights in April because of elevated oil and jet fuel prices.

## Portugal tightens citizenship...

(Cont. from page - 1) despite approving the Bill, Seguro raised concerns about how the changes could affect applications already in progress.

"That would constitute an undesirable breach of trust in the state at the domestic and international level," said Seguro, referring to the possibility of the new rules being applied retrospectively.

He added that there was a need to ensure pending applications remain unaffected. "The importance of guaranteeing that pending processes are not, effectively, affected by the legislative change, which would

constitute an undesirable breach of trust in the state, at the domestic and international level," said Seguro.

On delays in processing, he said timelines should not be extended due to administrative inefficiencies. "The importance of ensuring that the counting of legally fixed timelines for obtaining nationality is not affected by the slowness of the state," he said.

The policy shift comes as Portugal deals with a sharp rise in its foreign population. A record 1.5 million residents, around 15pc of the population, are now foreign nationals.