



# OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

## PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



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### RUSSIA NEEDS INDIAN WORKERS

# India-Russia labour agreement likely

**NEW DELHI:** India and Russia are set to sign a new agreement on worker mobility at the annual summit in New Delhi next month. The pact is aimed at protecting the rights of the growing number of Indian workers in Russia.

Experts say it could also help increase the number of Indians working in the country in the coming years.

This comes after reports that India's oil imports from Russia are expected to fall next month due to new US sanctions on two major Russian oil firms.

Facing a declining pop-

ulation, Russia is keen to increase the number of Indians in their workforce. Indian workers are finding jobs in sectors like construction and textiles but there is a growing demand for skilled workers in ma-

chinery and electronics sectors in Russia.

A little more than 70,000 Indians will be employed in Russia by the end of 2025 as per a quota fixed by the Russian labour ministry. India's labour minister

met his Russian counterpart in Doha this week on the sidelines of an international meet and the issue of Indian labour force is understood to have figured in the discussion.

The growing Indian di-

aspora could become a pillar of India-Russia partnership in the coming years, according to an expert on Russian affairs. Meanwhile, boosting economic co-operation, In-

(Cont. on page - 2)

## GCC unified visa to be launched in 2026

**DUBAI:** The Gulf's long-planned unified visa is set to go live next year, marking the most significant step yet toward integrated regional travel and a more connected tourism economy across the GCC. The confirmation came from Saudi Minister of Tour-

ism Ahmed Al-Khateeb, who said the initiative had reached a major milestone after four years of co-ordinated work among Gulf governments.

Speaking at the Gulf Gateway Investment Forum in Manama, Al-Khateeb said the GCC is

moving through a historic period of tourism expansion, supported by cultural depth, modern infrastructure and a consistently safe environment. He said these strengths are positioning the region among the world's leading destinations. "The Gulf Co-op-

eration Council countries are witnessing a historic transformation in their tourism sectors, with tourism emerging as a key economic pillar alongside oil and trade," he said.

The unified entry permit, officially known as the GCC Grand Tours Visa, will allow travellers to visit the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman using a single application. The programme was formally approved in Nov 2023 at the meeting of GCC interior ministers in Oman and is widely viewed as a Schengen-style model designed for the Gulf. Officials see it as a central piece of the region's economic diversification strategy, expected to attract interna-

(Cont. on page - 2)

## AI Express adds two international flights

**MUMBAI:** Air India Express (IX) has expanded its growing network by adding Nagpur (NAG) to its list of destinations. The airline continues its rapid domestic and international growth, offering greater connectivity for travellers across India and the Gulf region.

Starting Dec 2025, Air India Express will introduce new routes connecting Delhi (DEL) and Pune (PNQ) to Abu Dhabi (AUH), and twice daily flights between Nagpur and Benga-



luru (BLR), strengthening its presence in central and southern India.

Air India Express continues its network expansion with the addition of Nagpur, enhancing accessibility in Maharashtra and boosting connectivity between key Indian cities.

Beginning Dec 1, 2025, the airline will operate twice daily flights between Nagpur and Bengaluru, with convenient departure and arrival timings designed for both business and leisure travellers.

In addition, from Dec 2, 2025, Air In-

dia Express will launch new routes to Abu Dhabi, featuring four weekly flights between Delhi and Abu Dhabi, and three weekly flights between Pune and Abu Dhabi. These new links will enhance travel between India and the UAE, catering to both growing demand and diaspora movement in the Gulf region.

(Cont. on page - 6)

## No US visa for persons with obesity, diabetes, heart disease

**WASHINGTON:** Foreign nationals applying for a visa to live in the US might be rejected if they have health conditions such as diabetes or obesity, according to a government directive issued by the Trump administration.

The guidelines were issued by the State Department, which says that people with issues could become a "public charge"

and potentially drain the US resources. The guidelines were sent through cable to American embassies and consulates, reported KFF Health News, based in Washington. While screening for communicable diseases, checking vaccination history, infectious diseases and mental health conditions have always been part of the visa application process; the

new guidelines add fresh medical conditions to be considered.

According to the report, the cable says: "You must consider an applicant's health. Certain medical conditions – including, but not limited to, cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, cancers, diabetes, metabolic diseases, neurological diseases and

(Cont. on page - 2)



**55th OMAN NATIONAL DAY**  
20th & 21st November 2025

We are very pleased to announce that, **one** is coming out with a special **Oman National Day** supplement along with the regular issue on **18th November, 2025.**

**one** OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT  
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www.overseasne.com  
8828737706 / 8828656610  
prince@overseasne.com • media@overseasne.com  
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**NEW DELHI:** After a five-year suspension, flights between India and China are once again operating at full capacity signalling strong pent-up demand and renewed curiosity over one of Asia's most diverse and dynamic destinations. The travel industry has gathered full speed. Airfares and hotel rates are largely back to pre-pandemic levels, says industry leaders.

Flight services between

## India-Russia labour...

(Cont. from page - 1) India has imported a record volume of diamonds and gold from Russia this year

Russia's diamond exports to India surged to \$31.3 million in Aug, more than double the \$13.4 million recorded in Aug 2024, according to a report in Russian media Ria Novosti. However, the total volume of Russian rough diamond supplies to India decreased by nearly 40pc

the two sides were suspended during the pandemic in 2020, and remained shut consequently due to border skirmishes.

In Oct last year, the two sides firmed up a disengagement pact, after which a series of measures were undertaken to repair ties, including resumption

in the first eight months of this year, reaching \$342.1 million.

Russia is the world's largest producer of rough diamonds and has historically been one of the key suppliers for India's giant cutting and polishing industries. However, western sanctions against Russia's diamond trade and its biggest mining company, Alrosa, have affected Indian industry.

## No US visa for persons with obesity, diabetes, heart disease

(Cont. from page - 1) mental health conditions – can require hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of care." Visa officers have also been instructed to assess if applicants are capable of paying for the medical treatment. However, a senior attorney for the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, a non-profit legal aid group, Charles Wheeler, has said that al-

though the guidelines are for all visas, it will likely be used only for permanent residency cases. "Does the applicant have adequate financial resources to cover the costs of such care over his entire expected lifespan without seeking public cash assistance or long-term institutionalisation at government expense?" the cable says.

Noting a potential com-

## GCC unified visa to be...

(Cont. from page - 1) tional visitors who want multi-country itineraries without repeated paperwork, separate fees and varied entry rules. Early indications suggest the visa will be valid for tourism and family visits, with online applications only. Travellers are expected to be given the choice between access to a single country or all six, with validity ranging between one and three months. Costs are expected to be lower than securing individual visas for each destination.

Once launched, applicants will likely need a passport with at least six months of validity, accommodation details, a passport-size photo, proof of travel insurance, evidence of funds and a return or onward ticket. The full list will be published closer to launch.

The application itself is expected to be straightforward, processed through an official online portal where travellers upload documents, pay the fee and receive their digital entry permit via email.

of flights and the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra. The return of connectivity marks a significant step toward rebuilding travel and tourism exchanges.

### China calling

Air India, too, is preparing to relaunch services before the end of the year. At the time of writing, the average return fares stood at around Rs 28,000 for IndiGo's route and Rs 60,000 for China Eastern's Delhi-

Shanghai service. With 60 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, the second-highest in the world, and a blend of heritage and modernity, China is attracting Indian travellers seeking both cultural depth and contemporary experiences.

"Our expanded China portfolio has been curated to showcase the destination's diversity—from the historical treasures of Beijing and Xi'an to

the vibrance of Shanghai and the scenic beauty of Zhangjiajie and Guilin. Alongside leisure, China's exceptional infrastructure and growing event ecosystem position it as a key market for corporate meetings and incentives," said Kale of Thomas Cook India.

Agreeing with this, SD Nandakumar, president and country head, holi-

(Cont. on page - 6)

## Airlines worried about passengers carrying lithium battery gadgets

**DUBAI:** The world of aviation has implemented several restrictions on electronic devices in recent times, amid growing concerns on the dangers of overheating batteries, which can cause mid-air fires and lead to catastro-

phes.

Recently, three airlines issued a ban on carrying Bluetooth earphones in checked baggage as these devices are constantly active, which contradicts the requirements of PEDs with built-in lithium ion batteries needing to be switched off in checked baggage.

Two fires erupted in the span of a month, one at the airport due to a lithium power bank, and one during the flight, identified as a lithium-battery fire. At least, 150 travellers were evacuated from the Qantas business lounge as it filled with smoke after an overheated power bank burst into flames. The man caught on fire and suffered severe burns on his legs and fingers as

the power ban ignited in his pocket. In a separate incident, passengers panicked as fire erupted in an overhead compartment on an Air China flight, due to a lithium battery placed in cabin baggage. The flight was forced to make an emergency landing.

As the international aviation industry body seeks to promote the safe handling of devices powered by rechargeable batteries, UAE's flag carrier Emirates prohibited the use of power banks on board flights from Oct 1.

When devices are allowed, it is with certain conditions; it is essential that passengers visit the airline website to clarify the necessary steps to carry these items.

## ERNAKULAM-BENGALURU VANDE BHARAT LAUNCHED



Artistes dressed up in Kathakali costumes pose in front of Ernakulam-KSR Bengaluru Vande Bharat Express ahead of its inaugural journey from Kochi.

**TAP ON THE YELLOW BANNER BELOW THE REQUIREMENT ADVT TO CONNECT WITH THE RECRUITMENT AGENCY**





# Lakshadweep

**BOOK  
NOW!**



## Travel Tour

Lakshadweep, a tropical paradise of 36 islands, is famed for its turquoise lagoons, coral reefs, and pristine beaches. It offers a perfect blend of natural beauty, marine adventures, and serene island life.

### Agatti Island

Agatti Island is a stunning coral island in Lakshadweep, famed for its turquoise lagoon, white sands, and vibrant marine life.

### Bangaram Island

Bangaram Island is a serene, turquoise-ringed paradise in Lakshadweep, perfect for a tranquil escape.

### Kavaratti Island

Kavaratti Island is the serene capital of Lakshadweep, known for its turquoise lagoons, white sandy beaches, and rich marine life.

# GULF FAQs

## How to deal with forged degree certificates?

**I am heading an HR team in a small company in Dubai. Recently, a couple of new employees have submitted fake degrees. Could you please explain how to deal with this situation and what the penalties and fines are for employees submitting forged certificates?**

If an employee submits a forged educational certificate, it may be considered a criminal offence under Federal Law by Decree No. (31) of 2021, Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law.

Article 251 of the UAE Penal Law defines forgery of a document as any act that changes the authenticity of a document through specific methods, with the intent to use it as a valid document, resulting in

harm. Forgery includes altering an existing document by adding, deleting, or changing text, numbers, marks, or photographs. It also involves placing a forged or altered signature, seal or thumbprint on a document. Obtaining someone's signature or seal through fraud or without their knowledge of the document's content is also considered forgery. Additionally, creating a fake document and attributing it to someone else, filling out a blank signed or sealed document without consent, impersonating another person in identity-related documents, or falsifying facts in documents intended to confirm truth all constitute forgery under this law.

Furthermore, anyone who forges an official document may be subject to

a penalty of imprisonment and/or a fine. This is under Article 252 and Article 253 of the UAE Penal Law, which reads as below: Article 252 of the UAE Penal Law: "Forgery of an official document shall be punished with imprisonment



for a period not exceeding 10 years, and forgery of a non-official document shall be punished with incarceration."

Article 253 of the UAE Penal Law: "A penalty of

imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years shall be imposed on whoever forges a copy of an official document and such copy has been used, or uses a copy of an official document knowing of its forgery. The penalty shall be

incarceration if such copy is of an unofficial document."

Additionally, anyone using a forged document may also be imprisoned and/or fined as mentioned in the aforesaid Article 252 and

Article 253 of the UAE Penal Law. This is in accordance with Article 258 of the UAE Penal Law, which states, "Whoever knowingly uses a forged document shall be punished by the penalty prescribed for the crime of forgery as the case may be. Whosoever unlawfully uses or benefits from a genuine document or the copy thereof in the name of another person shall be punished by the same penalty, as the case may be." In the UAE, submitting a fake degree certificate to obtain a job may also be considered fraud or misrepresentation, which may lead to termination under Article 44 (1) of the Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulations of the Employment Relations. This article reads as follows: "The employer may dismiss the employee without notice after conducting a written investigation with him and the dismissal decision shall be in writing and justified and the employer or its representative shall hand it over to the employee in any of the following cases:

1. It is proven that the employee impersonated another person or submitted forged certificates or documents."

In accordance with the aforementioned, if it is confirmed that your employees have forged their educational certificates you as an employer may explore appropriate measures, which may include disciplinary action, potentially leading to termination of such employees without notice and, reporting the matter to the police.

Additionally, you may register a complaint against the said employees with the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MoHRE). It is recommended to consult a legal professional in the UAE to ensure any actions taken are compliant with the UAE Laws.

## Is six-month sick leave possible in case of major illness?

**I have just been diagnosed with a major illness for which I will need to take extended breaks. Can you explain the UAE's official sick leave policy for private sector employees, both paid and unpaid? Can I also use my paid annual leave for treatment? Are there any humanitarian considerations in this regard? For example, can I request a six-month leave?**

If an employee is sick due to reasons not caused by a work injury, he/she must inform their employer within three working days and needs to submit a medical certificate. This is under Article 31 (1) of the Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulations of Employment Relations: "If the employee is infected by a disease not arising from a work injury, he shall inform the employer or his representative

about his sickness, within a period not exceeding three working days, and submit a medical report on his condition, issued by the medical entity."

An employee is entitled to 90 days of sick leave in a year upon completion of his/her probation period with an employer. This is in accordance with Article 31(3) of the Employment Law, which states: "An employee who completes his probationary period shall be entitled to a sick leave not exceeding 90 days, successive or otherwise, in respect of each year of service, to be calculated as follows:

- The first 15 days with full pay.
- The next 30 days with half pay.
- Subsequent period without pay.

Furthermore, an employee may avail leave without pay with the consent of their employer. This is in

accordance with Article 33 (1) of the Employment Law, which states: "The employee may, after the consent of the employer, take an unpaid leave, other than leaves referred to herein."

Additionally, an employer may terminate an employee, if an employee does not resume work upon completion of applicable sick leave. This is under Article 31 (5) of the Employment Law, which states: "The employer may dismiss the employee if he fails to report to work, after exhausting his sick leave referred to in this Article, and the employee shall reserve all his entitlements pursuant to the provisions of this Decree-Law and its Executive Regulations."

The Employment Law and its subsequent ministerial decrees are silent on the nature of sickness to avail of sick leave.

Based on the aforementioned provisions of law,

you may apply to your employer stipulated sick leave as per the Employment Law and request additional days of sick leave on compassionate grounds considering your serious health issues. In accordance with Article 31 (1) of the Employment Law, you are eligible for full salary for the first 15 days of your sick leave. Thereafter, half salary for the next 30 days of sick leave and without any pay for any subsequent period of your sick leave. Furthermore, you must provide a medical certificate/report to your employer on availing sick leave within three days from the date of you availing sick leave. As you intend to avail long sick leave, you may request your employer to combine your sick leave with annual leave and further if required you may also request to grant you unpaid leave due to your long-term sickness.

# Sri Lanka drops mandatory ETA for tourists

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka has revoked its recent decision to make an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) mandatory for all short-stay visitors. The rule, which was due to take effect on Oct 15, 2025, has been suspended until further notice, Sri Lanka's ambassador to India, Mahishini Colonne, said.

The department of immigration confirmed that all ETA and visa services

will continue to operate as they did before Oct 15. This means travellers can apply for visas under the pre-Oct 15 procedure until a fresh policy is announced.

The earlier announcement making ETA mandatory for all short-stay visitors from all countries from Oct 15, 2025 has been revoked until further notice. For Indian travellers, the reversal removes an extra

step and should simplify trip planning to the island. Sri Lanka is keen to keep travel links with India strong; Indians accounted for a sizeable share of visitors last year and remain a major source market. Recent reporting puts Indians at more than 31pc of total visitors in a recent month and around 4.16 lakh Indian tourists visited Sri Lanka in 2024.

Sri Lanka's tourism au-

thorities have set an ambitious target of welcoming five lakh tourists from India in 2025. Buddhika Hewawasam, chairman of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, said Indian travellers are venturing beyond traditional spots such as Colombo and Bentota to visit the central highlands and attractions on the Ramayana Trails. He also noted that the tourism board is work-

ing to raise the average daily spend per tourist.

Officials are not only promoting leisure tourism but also targeting destination weddings and MICE travel, offering support to Indian agents for venue sourcing, co-ordination and bespoke packages. The tourism board has been emphasising these verticals to increase visitor numbers and revenue per traveller.

## Oman to mark National Day With formal two-day holiday

**MUSCAT:** Starting in 2025, Oman will officially observe National Day as a two-day holiday on Nov 20 and 21 marking the historic 1650 expulsion of Portuguese forces. The celebrations highlight national identity, cultural heritage and community pride, featuring parades, fireworks, camel races and tradi-

tional events, while giving citizens an extended period to reflect, rejoice, and spend time with family. Oman's National Day commemorates the end of Portuguese control over the country. The Portuguese arrived in Oman in 1507, shortly after Vasco da Gama's voyage around the Cape of Good Hope to India.

## One more Taj hotel in Chennai planned

**CHENNAI:** Tata Group's hospitality arm Indian Hotels Company Limited has announced the plans to open a second hotel under its Taj brand on the East Coast Road in Chennai. With the addition of this hotel, Taj will have 16 hotels in Chennai, including six under development.

Suma Venkatesh, Executive Vice President – Real Estate & Development,

IHCL, said: "Chennai's hospitality landscape is shaped by its strong corporate base, anchored by the automobile industry and a thriving IT ecosystem.

Driven by its cultural richness and infrastructure, the city also benefits from a steady influx of leisure travellers and a growing MICE segment."

The signing of this new Taj hotel on ECR is a strategic move to tap into this multi-dimensional demand, and we are delighted to partner with MGM Healthcare, the property developer, for this project, she added. Spread across 13 acres of pristine beachfront land, the 151-key Taj ECR Chennai, will

offer direct views of the Bay of Bengal, according to the company. Designed to offer a harmonious blend of leisure and business, the hotel will feature an all-day dining restaurant, two specialty restaurants and a bar. The resort will also have facilities for large-scale events and conventions, with two large banquet venues of approximately 10,000 and 5,300 square feet, multiple meeting rooms and expansive beachfront lawns.

"We are excited to collaborate with IHCL, we will together offer a world-class experience to guests in Chennai," said MK Rajagopalan, MGM Healthcare.

## Travel industry gathers full speed

**(Cont. from page - 2)** days and corporate tours at SOTC Travel, added: "The resumption of travel to China has reignited demand across leisure, business, and MICE segments. China continues to captivate Indian travellers with its cultural richness and iconic landmarks. Our itin-

eraries now combine marquee destinations such as Shanghai and Beijing with experiential locales like Chengdu, Chongqing, and the Avatar-inspired Zhangjiajie mountains. The positive response highlights the growing appetite for rediscovering China in new and mean-

ingful ways." Other platforms are seeing parallel interest. A senior spokesperson at EaseMyTrip said: "With the resumption of flight connectivity between India and China, there has been an early uptick in demand, mainly from business travellers and students. The gradual reopening of routes has encouraged more movement for professional and academic purposes, signalling a cautious but steady return of traffic."

EaseMyTrip is preparing to launch specially curated China tour packages spanning leisure, business and MICE travel. "Each package will provide convenience, value and a seamless travel experience," the spokesperson said. "With China emerging as both a cultural and commercial hub, we aim to meet the diverse needs of travellers while promoting smoother connectivity and tailored itineraries."

## Air Express adds two...

**(Cont. from page - 1)** With Nagpur now part of the network, Air India Express connects 60 destinations, marking a significant milestone in its expansion journey. Maharashtra remains a key focus, with over 130 weekly flights from Mumbai, 90 from Pune and new operations from Navi Mumbai, covering major cities including Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad and Kolkata. Bengaluru has emerged as a crucial hub for Air India Express, with the airline operating over 530 weekly flights from

the city.

The newly added Nagpur-Bengaluru route complements recently launched services to Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Dehradun, Jodhpur, and Udaipur. Additionally, Bengaluru now connects directly to Bangkok, Jeddah, Kuwait, and Riyadh, extending the airline's reach beyond India. From Delhi, Air India Express operates more than 400 weekly flights, linking 25 domestic destinations and several international ones, including Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Muscat.

## Move to bring back 44 Indians serving in Russian army

**NEW DELHI:** The ministry of external affairs has said it has identified 44 Indian nationals currently serving in the Russian army amid the ongoing war with Ukraine.

The ministry added that it has once again taken up the matter with Russian authorities to seek their release and end the practice of such recruitment. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, addressing the ministry's weekly press briefing said India remains in touch with both Russian officials and the

families of those affected.

Jaiswal said the government is providing regular updates to the families and co-ordinating with Moscow to ensure the safe return of the affected individuals.

The remarks come ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin's scheduled visit to India in December and days after families of several Indian youths allegedly forced to fight in the Russia-Ukraine war held protests at Delhi's Jantar Mantar.