



# OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



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## Emirates not to cut capacity

**DUBAI:** Emirates has no plans to cut capacity despite financial pressures from the war in the MidEast, its president Tim Clark said as the airline presses for Berlin traffic rights.

The airline continues to route passengers through Dubai to destinations including India and Australia, taking precautions

such as carrying extra fuel.

"We have no intention of cutting back or reducing," Clark said, adding he was not concerned about the extra cost. Emirates is also seeking broader expansion in Germany, saying most stakeholders would benefit from new long-haul capacity, while it rolls out

free Starlink connectivity on as many aircraft as possible despite limited hardware. Emirates has long campaigned for greater access to Berlin.

Clark said Emirates had secured slots at Berlin airport but still lacked approval to operate. It has regularly used the air show as a platform to highlight its contribu-



tion to the local economy, German jobs in 2010.

Clark also criticised Deutsche Lufthansa, which has long argued

Gulf carriers enjoy an unfair regulatory advantage in Europe."It is a listed company and it needs to fight its own corner without going to the government and hiding behind its skirts," he said.

## Air India offers Easy Connect flights from Varanasi

**MUMBAI:** Air India opened bookings for its new Easy Connect flights starting June 25, changing international travel operations out of India.

The service positions Varanasi as the launchpad for the Ministry of Civil Aviation's (MoCA) highly anticipated Hub and Spoke model, which will remove the persistent pain point of international transit for passengers travelling out of Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.

Under the current framework, a traveller flying from a non-metro – or spoke – airport to an overseas destination, via a major domestic hub, faces a



disjointed journey. They are typically forced to collect their bags at the transit airport, re-check them at the international terminal and stand in long lines for security and immigration clearances during their layover.

The new policy framework fundamentally alters this flow by shifting the bureaucratic and security burden away from congested

mega-hubs. Beginning with the Varanasi rollout, passengers will complete international exit formalities – including customs, immigration and through-check-in – directly at their point of origin.

Luggage will be tagged straight to the final international destination allowing travellers to transit through hub airports smoothly as international passengers.

The Easy Connect flight from Varanasi to Delhi, operating daily as AI-1111, will depart at 9.50 pm and reach Indira Gandhi International Airport at 11 pm, to maximise connection efficiency. Within a tight four-hour window of landing in Delhi, passengers will be able to seamlessly connect to 17 international destinations spanning Europe, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Subsequent flights integrated into this framework will adopt a dedicated "AI11XX" numbering series, establishing a distinct network identity for Air India's hub-and-spoke feed. Air India's group head for

governance, risk, compliance and corporate affairs P Balaji said: "The successful implementation of the hub-and-spoke model requires close coordination across airlines, airports and multiple government agencies. Together, we are building a more efficient, integrated and globally competitive aviation ecosystem for India."

The structural overhaul is part of a broader, deliberate strategy by the civil aviation ministry to transform India into a global transit powerhouse. By creating an internal, frictionless network, India aims (Cont. on page - 6)

## Court strikes down \$100,000 H-1B visa fee

**WASHINGTON:** In a major relief for thousands of Indian professionals aspiring to work in the US, a federal court in Massachusetts has struck down the controversial \$100,000 fee imposed on new H-1B visa applications under the Trump administration.

The court ruled that the fee was unlawful because it had not received approval from the US Congress, effectively overturning a measure that immigration advocates feared would make skilled migration prohibitively expensive.

The decision has been welcomed by Indian dias-

pora organisations, which say it restores fairness and predictability to the US employment-based immigration system.

Why is H-1B visa important for Indians? The H-1B visa is the primary route through which highly skilled foreign professionals work in the US. Indians account for the overwhelming majority of H-1B visa holders, particularly in the technology, engineering, healthcare and finance sectors.

Companies such as Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Meta and hundreds of US-based firms rely on

H-1B workers to fill specialised roles. Any change in H-1B rules, therefore, has a direct impact on Indian professionals and students planning careers in the US.

What was the \$100,000 H-1B fee? In Sept last year, US President Trump signed a proclamation introducing a \$100,000 fee on new H-1B visa applications. The move sparked widespread concern among employers and immigrant communities. Critics argued that such a steep fee would discourage companies from hiring foreign talent and (Cont. on page - 6)

## India Inc to hike salaries up to 10.2pc

**MUMBAI:** Corporate India is likely to see salary increments in the range of 8.6pc to 10.2pc across industries this financial year, primarily driven by sustained demand for skilled and execution-focused talent.

Team Lease Services' report, Jobs and Salaries Primer 2026-27, projects average salary increments of 8.6pc to 10.2pc mainly led by high growth sectors including EV and EV Infrastructure, FinTech, Healthcare and Pharma. "India's salary landscape in 2026-27 is becoming more differentiated and execution-led. Increment trends are increasingly being shaped by sector-specific growth and specialised skills. At the same time, compensation growth is no longer concentrated only in traditional metro markets.

"Emerging cities are steadily strengthening their position in the talent economy, supported by industrial expansion, enterprise investments and evolving business ecosystems," (Cont. on page - 6)



## Back to gold smuggling?

It's rather disturbing to note that gold smuggling, which was lying low due to free market trading, is now active again and threatens to surpass the 100-tonne mark in 2026. This revival is due to government's own policy of imposing higher duty on legal gold imports to save foreign exchange.

Gold is a sensitive commodity. Though it has no industrial use as such, Indians love and respect gold and there is no festival in an Indian family without gold. No doubt, gold is the best and safest form of investment. India is the second largest importer and consumer of gold, after China. India does not produce gold and Kolar Gold Fields (KGF) in Karnataka is defunct now. Grey market sources say that there is a profit of Rs 25 lakh on bringing one kilo gold bar despite the risk attached to smuggling. In fact, the soaring grey market margins allow smugglers to undercut banks and refiners of the precious metal.



The Union government more than doubled import tariffs on gold to 15pc in May to curb demand, cut the trade deficit and ease pressure on the rupee. But one man's bitter medicine can be another man's nectar. The move has created an opportunity for smugglers who are able to offer prices legitimate importers cannot match. This situation is fuelling a resurgence in smuggling. Old timers may remember how the unabated gold smuggling in the 1970s gave birth to deadly gangs in Mumbai and gang wars became a frequent affair on the streets of the city.

What's more, smugglers are offering steep discounts because they do not pay taxes on gold, including import tariffs and goods and services tax that total 18.45pc. Thanks to the government's free market policy, gold smuggling fell from 156.1 tonnes in 2023 to 69.2 tonnes the following year and declined further in 2025 to 20.4 tonnes.

Before the duty cut, an average of 108 metric tonnes of the precious metal was smuggled into the country each year over the previous decade. India imported 45.6 tonnes of gold in April, but imports may have halved in May as banks and refiners scaled back overseas purchases amid deep discounts. Hefty discounts in the grey market have disrupted legal trade, pushing domestic discounts on legal gold to more than \$100 an ounce as stocks imported before the duty hike are sold at steep discounts, making refining uneconomical. India levies a 0.65pc lower import duty on gold dore, a semi-pure alloy, than on refined gold, but the alloy has also been affected by the tariff change.

One cannot blame the government alone. Bullion, after oil, is the largest contributor to India's soaring import bill. In Jan-March 2026, gold prices surged 81pc year-on-year and yet domestic buyers actually increased their gold purchases by 10pc in volume terms and 88pc in the value terms.

There are no easy policy fixes here. As gold is also a necessary insurance against geopolitical risks, a depreciating rupee and debt returns that no longer match inflation. Rather than curb legal gold imports — which only pushes the activity underground — enabling remonetisation of the 30,000 tonne gold stockpile held by households presents a better solution. Our temples are literally gold mines, but unfortunately, the government's gold bond policy is not successful.

### LIPSYNCH

"Gold is forever."

--- A Chinese proverb

# Monsoon Paradise: Kerala Emerges as the Gulf's Favourite Summer Escape

By Prince Manjalil

As temperatures soar across the Gulf region, an increasing number of travellers are heading south in search of a completely different experience - rain-soaked landscapes, cool mountain air, and rejuvenating wellness retreats. For many visitors from GCC countries, Kerala's monsoon season has become the perfect summer escape.

Often described as "God's Own Country," Kerala transforms into a lush green paradise between June and October. Torrential rains revive rivers, waterfalls roar back to life, and mist blankets the hills, creating a dramatic landscape that feels worlds apart from the desert climate of the Middle East.

The backwater destinations of Kumarakom and Alappuzha remain among the most sought-after monsoon retreats. Nestled along the vast Vembanad Lake, these regions offer luxury resorts, private villas, and exclusive houseboat cruises that allow visitors to experience Kerala's rain-washed beauty in complete comfort and privacy. Watching raindrops dance across the tranquil waters has become a signature monsoon experience for Gulf families.

Further inland, Munnar's rolling tea plantations take on an almost dreamlike ap-



Luxury houseboat cruises offer a serene way to experience the monsoon beauty of Vembanad Lake



Mist-covered hills and emerald tea plantations in Munnar offer a refreshing monsoon escape

pearance during the rainy season. Thick mist drifts across emerald-green hills, while winding roads and cool temperatures provide a refreshing contrast to the intense summer heat of the Gulf. Scenic drives through these rain-kissed mountains are particularly popular among visitors seeking nature, photography, and relaxation.

Another major attraction is Athirapally Falls, often referred to as the "Niagara of India." During the monsoon, the waterfall swells dramatically, creat-

ing a thunderous spectacle surrounded by dense tropical forests. The sight and sound of millions of litres of water cascading over the rocks make it one of Kerala's most unforgettable natural attractions.

One of the season's most spectacular sights is nestled in the Western Ghats, Wayanad transforms into a lush green wonderland during the monsoon. Rolling hills, dense forests, cascading waterfalls, and sprawling spice plantations make it one of Ker-

( Cont. on page - 3 )

## Lakshadweep Takes Flight: India's First Commercial Seaplane Service Bridges Island Gap

**KAVARATTI:** India has launched its first commercial seaplane service, marking a significant step in improving connectivity to remote island regions. Operated by SkyHop Aviation, the service links the picturesque islands of Lakshadweep with the Indian mainland, offering faster and more convenient travel options for residents and tourists alike.

The service uses a 19-seater DHC-6 Twin Otter aircraft, specially

designed to operate from both land and water. By reducing dependence on conventional ferry services and limited air routes, the seaplane is expected to provide seamless last-mile connectivity across the archipelago.

Officials believe the initiative will boost tourism, strengthen local economies, and improve access to essential services for island communities.

The project is also being

viewed as a milestone in India's efforts to expand regional air connectivity and unlock the potential of coastal and island destinations.

With its blend of inno-



vation and practicality, the seaplane service is set to transform travel in Lakshadweep.

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IN THIS PAGE

# Kerala Emerges as the Gulf's...

( Cont. from page - 2 )

Kerala's most enchanting rainy-season destinations. Popular attractions such as Soochipara Falls, Banasura Sagar Dam, and the scenic viewpoints across the district offer visitors breathtak-

Beyond its scenery, Kerala is also renowned for Ayurveda wellness tourism. Traditional Ayurvedic practitioners consider the monsoon season the ideal period for therapeutic treatments. The cool, hu-



The majestic waters of Athirappilly Falls in full monsoon glory

ing views of rain-drenched landscapes. The cool climate and tranquil surroundings make Wayanad particularly attractive to Gulf travellers seeking relief from the summer heat.

mid, and dust-free atmosphere is believed to enhance the body's ability to absorb oils and medicinal therapies, making wellness packages especially attractive to international visitors. Luxury remains a major factor driving monsoon tourism. Premium resorts have tailored their offerings to Gulf travellers, providing spacious family accommodations, private pools, halal dining options, and personalized experiences.

The combination of exclusivity, wellness, and natural beauty has helped Kerala carve out a unique niche in the international tourism market.

The growing popularity of Kerala's monsoon season among GCC travellers is also linked to school summer holidays across the Gulf. While many European tourists avoid the rainy months, Arab families increasingly see the monsoon as Kerala's most en-



Traditional Ayurvedic treatments offer relaxation, rejuvenation, and holistic well-being

chanting season. Tourism campaigns across the Gulf have successfully highlighted the state's misty landscapes, wellness traditions, and luxurious hospitality, creating what many industry observers now call the "Arab Summer Shift."

As dark clouds gather over Kerala's hills and backwaters, they bring

more than just rain. They herald a season that has become synonymous with relaxation, rejuvenation, and discovery - proving that for thousands of Gulf travellers, the perfect summer getaway begins with the monsoon, says VS Abdulkareem, CMD, FlyCreative Online Ltd, a popular DMC for Kerala Tourism.

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# GULF FAQs

## Can companies rehire employees who resigned?

**Is it okay to rehire an employee who voluntarily left the company? What are the factors that must be considered?**

Rehiring former employees, colloquially known as “boomerang employees”, can be a strategic move for companies looking to infuse their workforce with familiar talent who bring new experiences and skills back to the fold. Let’s unpack this with an example and consider the essential factors companies must keep in mind.

Think of Alex, a graphic designer with a flair for vibrant visuals, who originally cut his creative teeth at a bustling advertising agency in Dubai. Driven by a desire to diversify his artistic prowess, he swapped desert sands for the bustling streets of New York to work with some of the biggest names in branding. Here’s how his comeback could unfold:

Just like an exclusive club for the corporate elite, Alex’s former company maintains a vibrant alumni network. It’s not just a professional formality but a dynamic community ready to roll out the red carpet for returning talent, offering interviews and sometimes even a fast track back to integration. **Reassessment:** Alex isn’t just coming back with a new portfolio; he’s loaded with international acclaim and fresh perspectives. However, it’s showtime for reassessment: Does his avant-garde style still sync with the agency’s current market campaigns and strategic direction? This is where the plot thickens.

**Evaluating current fit / assessment:** This isn’t just about slipping back into old habits. It’s about ensuring Alex’s new experiences elevate the agency’s narrative, turning his comeback into a catalyst

for innovation and inspiration. **Compatibility check:** Both Alex and the agency have evolved. Now, it’s about finding harmony between his evolved artistic vision and the agency’s current ethos—can he enhance the new creative landscape and deliver the new vision of the agency?

**Structured reintegration/induction:** If the stars align for Alex’s return, there’s no skipping the dress rehearsal. He’ll be treated to a comprehensive reintroduction to the agency’s latest tools, techniques,

and teams, ensuring he’s tuned to the current creative frequency.

**1. Past performances:** Dive into Alex’s portfolio from his previous stint—what were the standouts and where did he need more ink? It’s not just about celebrating past triumphs but

also setting the stage for new achievements.

**2. Legal and logistical:** Any lingering contracts or commitments from his globe-trotting days? These need a thorough review to ensure a smooth transition and compliance with current policies.

**3. Reason for leaving:** Why did Alex leave in the first place? If it was just for growth, great! But if there were creative clashes or concerns, performance or misconduct issues? These need a spotlight to ensure the sequel isn’t just a repeat of past drama.

In weaving these elements into Alex’s narrative, the agency not only champions a culture of growth and reintegration but also models how returning talent can reinvigorate and enrich a collaborative workspace. This approach highlights that sometimes, the best new hire is a familiar face, ready to inject fresh ideas into the familiar framework.



## Can you resign without notice?

**Can I resign without giving notice to my company?**

In most cases, employees in the UAE must serve a notice period before leaving their job. However, there are specific situations where you can resign immediately without serving a notice. These exceptions are set out in Article 45 of the UAE Labour Law. You can resign without notice in the following cases:

\*If your employer has violated your rights:

If your employer breaches your rights under the Labour Law, its executive regulations or your employment contract, you may resign without notice — but certain conditions must be met.

\*You must: Notify the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MOHRE) at least 14 days before submitting your resignation.

\*Give the employer an opportunity to correct the violation.

\*Ensure the employer fails to rectify the issue despite being formally notified by MOHRE.

\*If these conditions are met, you can resign immediately under Clause-1 of Article 45 and retain your legal entitlements.

\* If you are assaulted at work:

If you are assaulted by your employer or their legal representative, you may resign without notice. In

this case, you must report the incident to the relevant authorities and MOHRE within five working days from the date you were able to report it.

\* If the workplace poses serious safety or health risks:

If your workplace exposes you to serious dangers affecting your safety or health, and your employer fails to address the issue despite being aware of it, you can resign immediately without serving notice.

\* If you are forced to do a different job without your consent: If you are asked to perform tasks that are fundamentally different from what was agreed in your employment contract — and you have not agreed to the change — you may resign without notice.

In all of the above situations, you can leave immediately and still retain your legal rights, including end-of-service benefits. You do not have to serve notice or pay compensation.

Outside of the exceptions above, the standard rules for termination are set out in Article 43 of the UAE Labour Law. Either the employer or employee may terminate the contract for any legitimate reason, provided that written notice is given, the notice period is at least 30

days and no more than 90 days and the contract continues to be executed during the notice period. Key rules to know: The employment contract remains valid throughout the notice period and only ends once the period expires. The employee is entitled to full salary during the notice period, based on their most recent wage. If either party fails to serve the required notice, they must compensate the other party with a “notice period allowance”. This compensation is calculated based on the employee’s last received wage — even if the other party did not suffer any actual damage.

If the employer terminates the contract: If you are terminated by your employer, you are entitled to: One unpaid day off per week during the notice period to search for a new job. You may choose which day to take off, provided you inform your employer at least three days in advance. Can the notice period be reduced?: The notice period can be reduced or waived entirely if both parties agree. However, the agreement must not infringe on either party’s rights. The notice period must be the same for both employer and employee, unless a shorter period is in favour of the worker.

# India's pharma industry can double in 5 years

**NEW DELHI:** Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Piyush Goyal said India's pharmaceutical industry, currently valued at around \$60 billion, could double in size over the next five years.

Addressing the Global Ambassador Meet on Pharmaceutical Sector and Curtain Raiser Ceremony of GDRC (Global Durg Regulators Conclave) 2026 and IPHEX (International Pharma

and Healthcare Expo) 2026 in New Delhi, Goyal said India is looking to move beyond generics into innovation-driven pharmaceutical products while continuing to provide affordable medicines to patients across the world.

He said India sees itself as an integral part of global pharma supply chains and a trusted partner for countries across the world, whether

as a customer, innovator, technology partner, clinical trial destination or manufacturing hub.

The minister said India remains the world's fastest-growing large economy even amid global turbulence, including conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia and the imposition of 50pc tariffs by the US. He noted that India's economy grew by 7.7 pc at constant prices during the year ended March 2026. He further stated that India is prepared to provide market access to high-quality innovative pharma products.

## Court strikes down \$100,000 H-1B visa fee

( **Cont. from page - 1** )  
make the visa inaccessible for many skilled workers. The Massachusetts federal court has now ruled that the executive branch lacked the legal authority to impose such a fee without congressional approval. Why are Indian groups welcoming the ruling? The Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies (FIIDS) described the judgment as an important step toward protecting America's competitiveness. "Ac-

cess to highly skilled global talent remains essential for the continued growth of US technology, healthcare and advanced manufacturing sectors," said Khanderao Kand, FIIDS Chief of Policy and Strategy.

He argued that the ruling reinforces the principle that major immigration policy changes must be grounded in statutory authority and economic realities. FIIDS said a balanced, merit-based immigration framework benefits both

American businesses and the broader economy.

What does the ruling mean for Indians? The immediate impact is that the additional \$100,000 burden on new H-1B applications will no longer apply. For Indian professionals, this means: Lower barriers to securing H-1B sponsorship. Greater willingness among US employers to hire foreign talent. Improved predictability in employment-based immigration. Reduced uncertainty for Indian students graduating from US universities. The ruling is particularly significant because Indians make up the largest share of H-1B beneficiaries every year. Is the issue completely settled? Not necessarily.

Legal experts say the ruling restores the status quo for now, but the US government's next move will be closely watched. The ad-

ministration could appeal the decision or explore alternative measures to tighten immigration rules. Until then, the court's ruling offers significant relief to employers, universities and thousands of Indian professionals who depend on the H-1B programme.

## India Inc to hike salaries...

( **Cont. from page - 1** )  
TeamLease Services Senior Vice President Bala subramanian said. Salary increments for electrical engineers are projected at 11.2pc, quality control inspectors at 10.9pc, IT support executives at 10.3pc and both quality assurance engineers and site engineers at 10.2pc.

Meanwhile, industries under the sustainable growth category, including automotive, retail, insurance and BPO are expected to follow with in-

crements between 8.9pc and 9.5pc. While overall growth remains moderate, select roles continue to push beyond this band, led by project engineers at 10.7pc and EHS officers, IT support executives and relationship executives at 10.1pc. A more measured compensation trend is visible across gradual growth industries such as banking, construction and real estate, telecom and textiles, where increments are projected between 8.6pc and 8.8pc.

## Air India offers Easy Connect...

( **Cont. from page - 1** )  
to recapture the massive volume of international traffic that currently flows through traditional foreign stopover hubs like Dubai, Doha and Singapore.

By processing passengers at decentralised spoke locations, major hubs can mitigate terminal crowding.

Furthermore, it allows carriers to optimise aircraft utilisation, filling international long-haul widebodies with highly efficient domestic feed.

Beyond passenger comfort, the model is said to provide significant operational upside for airlines.

# Global tourism 2030: the resplendent renaissance of civilisations, connectivity and conscious exploration



**By NSN Mohan**  
(Vice President 2026 & President Elect 2027, Skal International)

( **Cont. from previous issue** )

nations are embracing regenerative tourism models that protect ecosystems, empower local communities and preserve cultural heritage. The future belongs not to those destinations that attract the largest crowds but to those capa-

ble of balancing growth with responsibility. In the tourism economy of 2030, sustainability will define competitiveness. Perhaps tourism's most profound contribution lies beyond economics. In an era often characterised by political division and cultural misunderstanding, travel remains one of humanity's most effective instruments of soft diplomacy.

Every journey creates opportunities for cultural exchange, empathy and mutual respect. Tourism dismantles stereotypes, reduces prejudice and encourages dialogue where differences once existed. It transforms strangers into

friends and destinations into shared experiences. Few industries possess such remarkable power to simultaneously strengthen economies while strengthening humanity itself.

The next decade promises unprecedented innovation and opportunity. Experiential luxury travel will continue its rapid expansion. Wellness and longevity tourism will attract growing demand. Sustainable aviation technologies will reshape mobility. Emerging destinations will gain prominence alongside traditional tourism leaders. Artificial Intelligence will curate deeply personalised travel experi-

ences, while space tourism may gradually move from aspiration to reality.

Yet despite these advances, the essence of tourism will remain unchanged. Travellers may admire architecture, infrastructure and innovation, but what they remember most are the emotions they feel, the hospitality they receive and the human connections they create.

Global tourism stands today at the threshold of a new golden era. An era where technology complements tradition. Where economic growth aligns with environmental responsibility. Where cultural exchange fosters global

understanding. And where travel becomes a catalyst for both personal transformation and collective progress. Tourism is no longer simply about crossing borders. It is about crossing boundaries of perception, understanding and possibility.

As we move toward 2030 and beyond, one truth becomes increasingly clear: the destinations and nations that welcome the world with authenticity, sustainability, innovation and humanity will not merely lead global tourism—they will help shape the future of global influence itself.

( **Concluded** )