



OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



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CAUSES UNREASONABLE DELAY AND LAPSE OPPORTUNITIES

Withdraw Country Specific Order in recruitment of nurses, pleads IPEPCIL



MUMBAI : In a strong appeal, the Indian Personnel Export Promotion Council (IPEPCIL), led by its president Mr VS ABDULKAREEM, has urged the Government of India and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA-OE) to reassess and roll back the Country Specific Order (CSO) mechanism imposed since 2016, in recruitment of nurses. The additional norms imposed on nurses' recruitment have escalated compliance costs, creating bureaucratic hurdles that impede efficiency and innovation, particularly affecting small businesses in the overseas recruitment sector.

Mr ABDULKAREEM highlighted the rigidity of the regulatory process, causing a stifling environment for Human Resource Administrators (HRAs) and prompting foreign employers to shift their demands to alternative markets. The CSO, instituted under the guise of protecting women, subjects nurses to a circuitous route, unfairly categorising them for "Emigration Clearance" despite their qualifications exceeding the ECNR passport criteria. However, Mr ABDULKAREEM emphasized that the nurses recruitment and their mobilization should be at par with the ECR categories other than the CSO process and channelize ECNR status nurses also through ECR process.

This discriminatory practice not only hampers the efficiency of the recruitment process but also inhibits the free movement of well-qualified Indian nurses seeking opportunities abroad. IPEPCIL emphasises the need to review and dismantle the CSO, pointing out its irrelevance in the current scenario and advocating for a fair and streamlined recruitment process for both male and female nurses.

The plea aims at addressing disparities within the sector, fostering a more inclusive and efficient environment for overseas recruitment while ensuring that Indian nurses can pursue international employment without unnecessary obstacles.

Air India Express offers discounted fares to mark Independence Day

DUBAI: Air India Express has announced discounted airfares on the eve of 79 years of independence with domestic and international fares starting from Rs 1,279 (Dh53.50) and Rs 4,279 (Dh179), respectively.

As part of its grand "Freedom Sale", the Indian budget carrier is offering five million seats across both domestic and international flights, including UAE destinations. More than 3.7 million Indian nationals living and working in the UAE, as well as millions of tourists visiting the UAE and other countries, can benefit from the sale. It connects Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah to cities across India. With a fleet of 116 aircraft, it operates over 500 daily flights, connecting 38 domestic and 17 international destinations.

The sale opened exclusively on the airline's website and app on Sunday, Aug 10, and will be available across all major booking channels until August 15, 2025. Travel under this offer is valid from Aug 19, 2025, to March 31, 2026, including Onam, Durga Puja, Deepawali, Christmas and other holidays.

The airline said its Xpress Value fares, which include a standard check-in baggage allowance, start from Rs1,379 for domestic and Rs 4,479 for international flights. The airline added that it is also offering special fares and advantages for students, senior citizens, armed forces personnel, and their dependents.



India key market for Malaysia Air, eyeing non-metros: Group MD

MUMBAI: India has emerged as the single largest market for Malaysia Airlines Berhad and the carrier has added capacity in this market by pulling out its flights from the Asean and domestic networks.

Currently operating 77 weekly flights to 10 cities in India, the airline has flown 13 lakh people in and out of the country in the first-half of this calendar year. It will raise the frequency to 80 weekly flights this Dec and then add more next year.

"India is the top market for us in terms of both revenue and passenger numbers among the 24 countries and 67 territories that we fly to. Australia and Europe are the second and third biggest markets for us after India," Izham bin Ismail, group MD of Malaysia Aviation Group Berhad, told a TV channel.

With the flying rights to metros exhausted under the existing India-Malaysia bilaterals, the airline plans to add flights to the non metros here next year as it sees a lot of traffic potential from there too. "India is a very important market to us. And we intend to grow (in) India in the future. We are evaluating other non-metro cities where we could de-

Cont on page - 2



Travel agent held for procuring visas using forged passports

MUMBAI: Marine Drive police have arrested a travel agent from Karnal in Haryana --- Ravi Rajbhar --- for allegedly procuring fake visas using forged Indian passports and immigration documents to facilitate illegal entry into Germany.

The investigation was initiated following multiple complaints lodged by the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Mumbai, alerting authorities about suspicious Schengen visa applications accompanied by fake passports and forged travel documents. The complaint was formally registered by a senior visa advisor at the German Consulate, who, after internal verifications, flagged the anomalies.

Sources said the racket came to light when five people submitted Schengen visa applications with counterfeit visas of foreign countries, border control stamps, and tampered passports between

Cont on page - 2

Inbound as well as outbound tourist flow shows growth

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of Tourism, in response to a query in the Rajya Sabha, released comprehensive data showing trends in Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) to India and Indian Nationals' Departures (INDs) for tourism from 2019 to 2024.

The figures, provided by Minister of Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat reveal a strong rebound in both inbound and outbound travel following the COVID-19 slump. India received 99.5 lakh foreign tourists in 2024, a significant increase from 64.4 lakh in 2022 and approaching the pre-pandemic high of 1.09 crore

in 2019.

Meanwhile, Indian outbound tourism has surged, with 3.08 crore Indians travelling abroad in 2024, up from 2.78 crore in 2023, and surpassing the 2019 figure of 2.69 crore. Among the top contributors to India's tourism in 2024 were the US with 18.04 lakh tourists, followed by Bangladesh (17.5 lakh) and the UK (10.2 lakh).

Other notable countries showing strong arrival numbers included Australia (5.18 lakh), Canada (4.76 lakh) and Sri Lanka (2.81 lakh). A few countries showed substantial recovery and even growth

post-pandemic, such as Japan (1.94 lakh) and Germany (2.56 lakh). On the other hand, Indian nationals travelling abroad reached new highs. The UAE remained the top destination in 2024 with 77.8 lakh Indian travellers, followed by Saudi Arabia (34.2 lakh) and the US (21.4 lakh).

Among the top contributors to India's tourism in 2024 was the US with 18.04 lakh tourists. Malaysian tourism department says over half of country's tourists hail from South India. Thailand (19.1 lakh) and Singapore (15.3 lakh) also saw considerable traffic, indicating the growing

popularity of Southeast Asia among Indian tourists. The data reveals that in 2024, foreign tourists arrived in India from over 65 countries, showcasing the global appeal of India as a travel destination.

Similarly, Indian nationals travelled to more than 65 international destinations during the same year, reflecting the grow-

ing aspiration and mobility of Indian tourists. Destinations like Vietnam, Australia and Indonesia showed impressive year-on-year growth in attracting Indian tourists, with Vietnam growing from 1.23 lakh in 2022 to nearly four lakh in 2024, and Australia increasing from 4.89 lakh to 6.61 lakh in the same period.

Indian diaspora group optimistic about relationship with US

WASHINGTON: Indiaspora, a prominent US-based non-profit organisation representing global Indian diaspora leaders, has reaffirmed its unwavering confidence in the durability of US-India ties, emphasising that people-to-people connections remain the bedrock of the bilateral relationship.

Amid recent diplomatic tensions, the organisation expressed optimism that current challenges are only temporary and that ongoing talks will eventually align with the shared aspirations of both nations and the global Indian diaspora. "With over

five million Indian-Americans actively contributing to the US economy, culture and civic life, this community continues to serve as a living bridge between the world's two largest democracies," Indiaspora said in a statement.

"We believe the US-India relationship is not just important—it is essential," the group emphasised. "As global dynamics shift, this economic and strategic partnership should stand as a cornerstone for stability, innovation, and progress in the 21st century." Despite the current strain, Indiaspora asserted that the longstanding and

multifaceted relationship will ultimately emerge stronger. "We remain optimistic that the ongoing discussions, when concluded, will reflect the aspirations of both nations and the global Indian diaspora that believes in them," the group said.

India key market for...

Cont from page - 1 ploy. We have also been increasing frequency on some India routes. We have a code share with IndiGo that helps passengers connect to their domestic network," Ismail, who had joined the airline as a pilot in 1979, and then rose through the ranks, said. He sees India as a "very promising" market with travel demands from all quarters like leisure, premium and visiting friends and relatives. "The Indian econ-

omy is growing at a truly impressive pace. Urbanisation here is on the rise. Indian carriers have over 2,000 aircraft on order. Middle class income here is growing. We see the Indian population predominantly has very stable disposable income," he said. "So, we put more capacity into India by sacrificing our capacity into Asean & domestic Malaysia. We redirected those capacities to India. I am glad we took a bet on India at the right time," he said,

US visa rules: collect passport in person or get it delivered for Rs 1200

MUMBAI: Got your US visa approval and want your friend in Delhi to collect the visa stamped passport for you? You can't do that anymore. The US embassy in New Delhi said that from Aug 1, 2025, passport collection through a third party or representative is no longer allowed. The embassy said the change is to improve the safety and security of applicants' passports and documents.

Under the new rules, all visa applicants must collect their passports and related documents in per-

son. For those under 18, a parent or legal guardian can collect the passport, but must bring an original consent letter signed by both parents. Scanned or emailed copies will not be accepted. To make things easier for those who cannot visit in person, the embassy is offering a home or office delivery service for Rs 1,200 per applicant. This can be booked by updating delivery preferences online. Steps to update your delivery option: Log in to your profile at <https://www.ustraveldocs.com/in/en/>

Discounted round trip trains to meet festive crowd

NEW DELHI: To avoid rush by ensuring hassle-free ticket booking experience during the upcoming peak festive seasons, the ministry of railways said that it has decided to formulate a "Round Trip Package" on discounted fare and rebates benefit.

The move will facilitate passengers and redistribute the peak traffic for a larger range during peak festival seasons and ensure both sides utilisation of trains, including special trains. "It has been decided to formulate an experimental scheme named as Round Trip Package for festival rush on discounted fare," the ministry stated.

According to the ministry, the scheme will be applicable for those passengers who choose their

return journey during the prescribed period. Under this scheme, rebates shall be applicable when booked for both the onward and return journey for the same set of passengers. Passenger details of the return journey will be the same as those of the onward journey. Passengers can book their tickets from August 14 for the

advance reservation period (ARP) date of Oct 13. "An onward ticket shall be booked first for the train start date between Oct 13, 2025 and Oct 26, 2025, and subsequently return journey ticket shall be booked by using the connecting journey feature for the train start date between Nov 17 and Dec 1, 2025," the ministry stated.

Travel agent held for...

Cont from page - 1 July and Nov 2022. All five applications — Josy Pallivathuckal Joy from Kerala, Ganesh Rethinam, Senkathir Veeraiyan, and Muruganantham Uthirapathy from Tamil Nadu, and an unnamed applicant from Karnal — were through Rajbhar.

Forensic scrutiny by consulate officials revealed

that several of the passport pages were counterfeited and printed using inkjet printers, whereas genuine Indian passports are produced through specialised offset printing techniques. The fake visas and entry-exit stamps were designed to mimic authentic immigration records, aiming to mislead the authorities.

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A woman sitting on a rock overlooking the ocean

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Currency	BillBuy	BillSell
US Dollar	86.99	88.12
British Pound	117.11	118.73
Euro	101.24	103.36
Japanese Yen	58.99	59.93
Swiss Franc (CHF)	107.38	109.73
Canadian Dollar	62.99	64.41
Australian Dollar	56.6	57.82
Norwegian Krone	8.38	8.62
Swedish Krona	9.01	9.27
New Zealand Dollar	51.54	52.68
Hong Kong Dollar	10.94	11.28
Kuwaiti Dinar	292.6655	281.599
Singapore Dollar	67.49	69.01
Saudi Arabian Riyal	22.88	23.6
United Arab Emirates	23.43	24.1

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GULF FAQs

UAE's probation rule: how evaluations continue after six months

Can you please discuss the UAE probation rules?

After Sharjah recently extended probation period in the emirate's government sector to nine months, the conversation has now turned to the private sector. Experts say some companies are stretching the evaluation phase, especially for strategic or specialised roles, through internal processes that stay within the legal framework.

Under the UAE Labour Law (Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021), probation is capped at six months. Anything beyond that would be a legal violation. Still, firms have found ways to continue assessing new

hires after the official probation ends. "The UAE Labour Law sets a firm limit of six months for probation periods," said Dmitry Zaytsev, founder of Dandelion Civilisation. "What I've seen in practice is that companies fully comply with this legal cap, but often continue structured evaluation and support after probation through internal processes."

These internal practices include: Extended onboarding with regular coaching, performance check-ins or development plans. Post-probation reviews at the nine or 12-month mark to assess leadership potential or readiness for a bigger role

Fixed-term contracts (six

to 12 months) before offering a full-time position, often used for new or complex roles. "These don't extend probation in the legal sense," Zaytsev said, "but they reflect a growing desire to make better long-term hiring decisions." Why some roles need more time? Zaytsev pointed out that longer evaluations often show up in roles where early performance is hard to measure, such as product, innovation or leadership-track positions, or those that are highly client-facing.

"The focus is shifting from just 'can they do the job?' to 'how do they do it?'," he said. "Companies want to see how someone handles pressure, collabo-

rates, adapts, and makes decisions."

Some high-growth firms are even creating tiered onboarding models, like a three-month technical assessment followed by a separate culture-fit review, especially for critical or strategic roles.

Probation vs internal assessment: Talal Ahmed, Head of HR and Government Relations at Innovations Group, said extended evaluations are especially common in senior leadership, legal, finance, cybersecurity and engineering roles --- jobs where the cost of a bad hire can be high. "Longer evaluation periods help companies manage risk and ensure long-term alignment with culture

and business goals," he said. "It's also about seeing whether someone can lead, adapt and deliver in complex environments."

While the formal probation still ends at six months, Talal noted that internal evaluations can quietly continue for up to a year, often with structured onboarding, mentorship, or phased reviews.

"This reflects a shift toward prioritising quality of hire over speed," he said. How it affects employees?

Not everyone sees this as a positive. According to Anam Rizvi, a senior HR consultant and workplace culture advisor, extended evaluation periods can backfire if they're not managed well.

Employer should bear expenses when a worker dies

A worker passed away at our company. What procedures need to be followed for his burial and who is responsible for the expenses? Also, what happens to his end-of-service benefits? Will his family be entitled to claim them or will they be forfeited?

In the event of a worker's death, the employer is responsible for handing over the worker's entitlements to his family and bearing all costs related to the burial or transportation of the body to the worker's home country. This is stipulated in Article 15 of Federal Decree-Law No. (33) of 2021 Concerning the Regulation of Labour Relations, which states the following:

1. In the event of the worker's death, the employer shall hand over to the family any wages or financial entitlements owed to the worker, including the end-of-service gra-

tuity, in accordance with the provisions of this Decree-Law and its Executive Regulation. This must be done within 10 days from the date of death or from the date the employer is informed of the worker's death.

2. Subject to the provi-

sions of Clause (1) of this Article, the worker may, during their lifetime, designate a family member in writing to receive these entitlements in the event of death.

3. The employer shall bear all costs involved in preparing and transporting

the body of the deceased worker to his country of origin or place of residence, if requested by his relatives.

5. Simple Retirement Mistakes With Devastating Results. There is a small group of common retirement mistakes that many

retirees miss, but they have devastating results.

6. If it is not possible to hand over the entitlements to the family or rightful beneficiaries, the ministry, in co-ordination with the concerned authorities, may establish a mechanism to retain the worker's dues.

That signed visa form doesn't guarantee your dues

I worked at a company for five years before resigning and cancelling my visa. The company refused to pay my end-of-service dues, claiming that I had declared receiving all my entitlements when I signed the Ministry of Labour's printed form, which is required to be signed by the worker before residence cancellation. Is the company's position legally valid, and what steps can I take to claim my end-of-service dues?

An acknowledgment is considered evidence when it is issued in an explicit form with certainty and conviction. Moreover, Article 65 of

the Labor Law stipulates:

"Every release, reconciliation or waiver of the rights arising to the worker under this decree by law shall be considered null if it is in violation of its provisions."

You should file a case against the company to claim your end-of-service dues.

The ministry of labour's printed declaration on the residence cancellation form stating that the worker has received his entitlements, which the worker is required to sign before the residence is cancelled, it does not include the worker's rights and the value of each of them exclusively. The rights are mentioned in an

absolute, general and anonymous manner without specifying any of them.

Therefore, the declaration is not binding on the worker and does not constitute evidence that the worker has received his labour dues. The form is not initially prepared to prove the fulfilment of the worker's due labour rights, on the one hand, and the company should provide a separate and specific document showing that the worker received a certain sum of money in exchange for his end-of-service gratuity. In the absence of such evidence, the declaration alone is not sufficient in proving that the worker received his dues.

Emirates sets new rules for power banks onboard flights from Oct 1

DUBAI: Using any kind of power bank is prohibited onboard Emirates' flights, effective Oct 1, 2025, the airline has said in a statement. Emirates customers are still permitted to carry one power bank onboard with specific conditions listed below, but the power banks should not be used while in the aircraft cabin — neither to charge devices from the power bank, nor to be charged themselves using the aircraft's power source.

Emirates' new regulations include:

*Emirates customers may carry one power bank that

is under 100 Watt Hours.

*Power banks may not be used to charge any personal devices onboard.

*Charging a power bank using the aircraft's power supply is not permitted.

*All power banks accepted for transport must have capacity rating information available.

*Power banks may not be placed in the overhead stowage bin onboard the aircraft and must now be placed in the seat pocket or in a bag under the seat in front of you.

*Power banks are not permitted in checked luggage (existing rule).

Why is Emirates making this change?

After a comprehensive safety review, Dubai's flagship carrier is taking a firm and proactive stance



to mitigate risk when it comes to power banks onboard. There has been a significant growth in cus-

tomers using power banks in recent years, resulting in an increasing number of lithium battery-related incidents onboard flights across the wider aviation

batteries is a self-accelerating process where heat generation within a battery cell exceeds its ability to dissipate heat, leading to a rapid and uncontrollable temperature increase. This can result in dangerous consequences like fire, explosions, and the release of toxic gases.

Most phones and sophisticated lithium battery-powered devices have an internal trickle system which slowly adds current into the battery to prevent overcharging, but many basic power banks may not have this safeguard, increasing the risk. All power banks are subject to the new rules onboard Emirates. Emirates new regulations will significantly reduce risks associated with power banks by prohibiting their use while onboard the aircraft. Storing power banks in accessible locations within the cabin ensures that in the rare event of a fire, trained cabin crew can quickly respond and extinguish the fire.

industry.

Power banks primarily utilize lithium-ion or lithium-polymer batteries, and their function is as a portable battery pack designed to recharge devices on the go. The batteries contain lithium ions suspended in an electrolyte solution. The ions flow through the electrolyte, travelling back and forth between two electrodes as the battery charges and discharges.

If the battery is overcharged or damaged, it may result in 'thermal runaway.' Thermal runaway in

Saudi stock market may open to global investors

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's Capital Market Authority (CMA) is currently studying the feasibility of opening the Saudi stock market to all investors worldwide.

The CMA said that the recent move to allow residents of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to trade directly in the Saudi market was a "logical and natural" step, citing strong economic, social and regulatory ties across the region.

Notably, these residents will remain eligible to trade even if they relocate outside the Gulf.

The move comes amid broader efforts by the Kingdom to liberalise its financial markets, attract global investors and diversify sources of capital.

Foreign investors from outside the GCC accounted for a record 35pc of Saudi equity purchases during the second quarter of 2025, according to

Bloomberg Intelligence.

Saudi Arabia has ramped up its push to attract high-frequency trading firms, broadened the diversity of its IPO pipeline, and relaxed some restrictions for foreign participation in the equity market.

India worried over pilot poaching

NEW DELHI: India is concerned over foreign airlines poaching Indian pilots and presses for global "code of conduct".

"Airlines from other (countries) tend to recruit experienced pilots, engineers, technicians and cabin crew from Indian carriers, preventing India's civil aviation sector from achieving planned and orderly growth," India wrote to the UN.

Indian government had said in April that the country would need 30,000 pilots over the next 15-20 years. India wants countries to agree on a new code of conduct on hiring each other's airline staff after raising concerns that its fast-growing aviation system is being stifled

by the poaching of Indian pilots and cabin crew without adequate notice. India, one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets, is wrestling with a shortage of experienced pilots, denting Prime Minister Modi's aspiration of developing a job-creating global aviation hub.

India's letter to the United Nations aviation agency says: The recent fatal crash of an Air India jetliner (in Ahmedabad) has sparked tighter scrutiny of the sector. But foreign airlines are repeatedly hiring skilled staff from Indian airlines, "adversely impacting India's ability to develop its civil aviation sector in an orderly manner," India said in an Aug 1 working paper submitted

to the UN's aviation agency, the International Civil Aviation Organisation. "Airlines from other (countries) tend to recruit experienced pilots, engineers, technicians and cabin crew from Indian carriers, preventing India's civil aviation sector from achieving planned and orderly growth," India wrote in the paper, without identifying any foreign airline by name. "This practice creates a vicious cycle where Indian carriers are forced to continuously recruit and train replacement personnel by diverting resources from expansion activities and operational improvements." The paper was released on the ICAO website ahead of its triennial assembly.

Diaspora youths visit Tamil Nadu

MADURAI: Members of the Tamil diaspora touring the state as part of the Tamil Nadu government's "VerkalaiThedi" (reaching out to the roots) programme visited places like Thirumalai Nayakar Mahal in Madurai and also interacted with the district collector.

Collector KJ Praveen Kumar briefed the visitors, numbering around 100 non-resident Tamil youths, on the historical and culturally important places in the district with a slideshow presentation. He also touched upon local food delicacies and

products like the Sungudi saree. Following this, the visitors toured the ThirumalaiNayakar Mahal as well as the Keezhadi onsite museum. One of the visitors, MathangiSachithanatham(29), who works in a pharmaceutical company in Canada, said that the artefacts unearthed during the Keezhadi excavation made her aware of the origins of Tamils. "It is my first visit to Tamil Nadu. But I would like to visit these places again with my family," she added. "I am excited to experience the culture and heritage of Tamil Nadu.