



# OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

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## Global tourism leaders unite at Pattaya summit to shape sustainable future

**PATTAYA:** International Tourism Summit Asia-2026 held in Pattaya on May 13, 2026 brought together leading tourism experts, policymakers, stakeholders and industry professionals from across the world to deliberate on the future of sustainable tourism growth and the importance of stronger global collaboration within the travel industry.

The summit served as a major international

platform for networking, knowledge exchange and strategic dialogue focused on building a resilient, technology-driven and sustainable future

for the global travel and tourism sector.

The event was inaugurated by Poramet Ngam-

pichet, Mayor of Pattaya, who welcomed delegates and emphasized Pattaya's commitment to promoting responsible and inclusive

tourism development.

During the summit, Sunil Kumar delivered a keynote address highlighting the emerging challenges and opportunities. (Cont. on page - 2)

**GLIMPSES ON PAGE 7**



(From left) Mayor of Pattaya Poramet Nagmpichet inaugurated the summit, TAAI president Sunil Kumar presenting the keynote address and the CEO of the International Eco tourism Society (TIES) Jon Bruno addressing the summit.



Keralaites Travels & Tours Consortium (KTTC) President Manoj M Vijayan and MC members honoured Sunil Kumar and VS Abdulkaem, CMD of FlyCreative Online Ltd, at the International Tourism Summit-Asia, at Pattaya, Thailand.

## Modi to sign LPG pact with UAE

**ABU DHABI:** Energy security will emerge as the centre-piece of Prime Minister Modi's high-stakes stopover in Abu Dhabi on May 15 for talks with UAE President His Highness Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, amid escalating tensions in West Asia and shifting global oil equations.

During the three-hour visit to the UAE -- en route his four-nation Europe tour covering the Netherlands,



Sweden, Norway and Italy -- India and the UAE are expected to sign two key memoranda of under-

standing on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) supplies and strategic petroleum reserves, further deepening a partnership critical to India's energy needs.

The visit comes at a time of heightened volatility in global energy markets and renewed focus on supply diversification. Sources said the proposed agreements are aimed at strengthening long-term energy stability for India (Cont. on page - 2)



## Air Express bags four-star World Airline Rating

**MUMBAI:** Air India Express earned a four-star World Airline Rating from Skytrax following its first-ever comprehensive

audit. Skytrax's World Airline Star Rating is the longest-established global quality evaluation system for the aviation industry and a prestigious and unique mark of quality achievement.

The ratings are awarded following an independent, in-depth evaluation of airline standards across the onboard and airport environments, using a unified and consistent global assessment framework. The four-Star rating represents the highest attainable recognition for a value carrier and places Air India Express among a small group of airlines across India and (Cont. on page - 2)

## VD Satheesan next CM of Kerala

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** Senior Congress leader and lawyer VD Satheesan has been named as the next Chief Minister of Kerala. Over the years, Satheesan has built a reputation as an articulate legislator and experienced political leader. Apart from his political career, his educational qualifications reflect a strong academic foundation in social sciences and law. Above all he has a clean image. Minutes after the announcement, supporters erupted in celebration, bursting crackers and distributing sweets in several parts of the state.



## No blanket suspension of flights, clarifies Air India

**NEW DELHI:** Air India has denied reports claiming that it had suspended all international flights till July because of fuel shortage, calling such claims "malicious" and "completely false".

The route reductions come at a challenging time for the Tata Group-owned carrier, which has been grappling with higher operating costs, airspace

restrictions and broader financial pressure while continuing its long-term restructuring exercise. International operations have become increasingly expensive amid instability in West Asia and a sharp spike in aviation fuel prices.

In a statement posted on X, Air India clarified that its international services re- (Cont. on page - 6)



## Austerity alright

Modi government's seven-point austerity drive, though late, is understandable. The government has already taken some fire fighting measures such as prioritising domestic gas supply over industrial use, shielding consumers from a hike in energy prices, raising export levies on diesel and aviation fuel to steady supply and enhancing domestic LPG production are among them. But other challenges such as the weakening of the rupee, the pressure on foreign exchange given the selling by foreign institutional investors as well as India's inability to increase strategic oil reserves --- the current capacity falls well short of the standards set by the International Energy Agency.

The catalyst for Modi's appeal is the disruption of the Strait of Hormuz, a critical maritime passage between Iran and Oman through which nearly 20pc of the world's oil supply is transported. The disruption has driven the price of Brent crude oil to exceed \$107 per barrel this week. Brent crude serves as the global benchmark for oil pricing, influencing the cost of commodities. While many nations experience a surge in Brent prices as a significant inconvenience, for India, it exposes a fundamental economic vulnerability.

The general feeling is that Prime Minister Modi's sudden trip to UAE (also to some other European nations) is aimed at discussing India's oil crisis. The trip can also be part of the government's move to solve the West Asia war, which is affecting all the nations in the region, given the fact that the UAE president His Highness Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has excellent relationship with President Trump as well as Iran. Modi himself has cordial personal relationship with the UAE president. But some of the austerity measures can be counter-productive. For instance, the suggestion to farmers to shun chemical fertilisers may have an adverse impact on food production. The public prescription to buy less gold will have no takers. Call for work from home, car pooling and slashing foreign travel is an old hat and may or may not work. The prime minister's appeal for austerity measures that would burden citizens come at a time when the government is yet to curb its expenses. Oil represents the most pressing concern. India's expenditure on crude oil and petroleum imports amounts to hundreds of billions of dollars annually, constituting about 22pc of its total import bill. Gold is another concern. In April, India's gold imports increased 24pc reaching an unprecedented high of \$71.98 billion, up from \$58 billion the previous year. India imports nearly 85pc of its gold requirement, positioning it among the world's most gold-buying nations. Every rupee spent on imported gold represents a rupee exiting the domestic economy, thereby exerting pressure on the current account. At a time when the current account deficit is already strained by oil imports, Modi's request is a prudent one. At the same time, increasing import duty on gold can trigger smuggling of the yellow metal.

Raising to the occasion, many trade and industry associations have welcomed the PM's austerity measures. These measures will affect the travel, tourism, hospitality industry etc badly, still they have welcomed the austerity move at same time pointing out their industry's plight. The government will have to take a middle path not to affect the industry as well as the country's economy.

*Editorial*  
By El. Vaidyanathan

# Import duty on gold, silver hiked to 15pc

**NEW DELHI:** Days after Prime Minister Modi urged citizens to defer gold purchases for a year as part of a broader national effort to conserve foreign exchange, the government has sharply increased import duty on precious metals amid concerns over the external sector and the impact of the West Asia crisis on India's import bill.

A finance ministry notification said import duty on gold and silver has been increased to 15pc from six per cent, while duty on platinum has been raised to 15.4pc from 6.4pc.



Consequential changes have also been made to gold and silver dore, coins and related items with the revised rates coming into effect from Wednesday.

"This has been done as a policy measure aimed at safeguarding macroeco-

nomics stability, conserving foreign exchange and moderating non-essential imports during a period of heightened global uncertainty arising from the ongoing West Asia crisis," an official said.

Officials said customs duties on precious metals have historically been adjusted in line with prevailing macroeconomic and external-sector conditions. In the Union budget 2024-25, import duties on gold and silver were cut from 15pc to six per cent and on platinum from 15.4pc to 6.4pc. (Cont. on page - 6)

## Modi to sign LPG pact with...

(Cont. from page - 1) while expanding the UAE's role as one of New Delhi's most trusted energy partners.

The UAE currently meets nearly 40pc of India's LPG

### Global tourism leaders...

(Cont. from page - 1) tunities facing the global tourism industry. He stressed the need for sustainable growth, digital transformation and the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and advanced technologies to strengthen the tourism ecosystem and improve stakeholder engagement worldwide.

Among the distinguished speakers was Jon Bruno, globally recognised for his work at the intersection of purpose-driven artificial intelligence and environmental sustainability. Several other prominent international speakers also addressed the summit, sharing insights on innovation, eco-tourism and the evolving dynamics of global travel. The summit concluded with renewed calls for international co-operation, responsible tourism practices and greater technological integration to ensure long-term growth and resilience in the tourism sector.

requirements, making it the country's largest supplier. It was also India's fourth-largest source of crude oil last year, accounting for nearly 11pc of total imports, while ranking as the third-largest supplier of LNG.

Indian companies and ADNOC Gas have signed long-term agreements for cumulative LNG supplies of 4.5 MTPA, making India the largest buyer of UAE-origin LNG.

Modi's visit comes at a time of heightened volatility in global energy markets and renewed focus on supply diversification.

The two sides are also expected to review co-operation on India's strate-

gic petroleum reserves. In 2018, the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd (ISPRL) and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) signed an agreement allowing the UAE to store more than five million barrels of crude oil at the Mangaluru reserve facility, the first such arrangement India entered into with any country.

Energy ties have steadily evolved into a broader strategic partnership involving upstream investments and clean energy collaboration. In 2018, a consortium of Indian firms — OVL, BPRL and IOCL — acquired a 10pc stake in Abu Dhabi's Lower Zakum offshore block

## AI Express bags four-star..

(Cont. from page - 1) West Asia to hold this distinction, positioning it just one step away from Skytrax's global top 10 elite five-Star airlines.

According to Skytrax, the four-Star rating reflects airlines that deliver good overall quality, supported by strong product standards and effective staff service delivery. In the case of Air India Express, Skytrax highlighted positive alignment of the airline's onboard product with customer expecta-

tions, supported by consistent processes, good airport services and a cabin service style that is professional, efficient and well managed.

According to Air India Express, a key pillar of its transformation has been the rapid induction of a modern, fuel-efficient fleet, enabling the airline's evolution from a sub-scale operator into India's second-largest domestic and short-haul international airline by both routes and stations.

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Canadian Dollar	69.05	70.64
Australian Dollar	68.74	70.29
Norwegian Krone	10.25	10.55
Swedish Krona	10.09	10.38
New Zealand Dollar	56.11	57.36
Hong Kong Dollar	11.99	12.36
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# Nagpur Airport to be modernised

**NEW DELHI:** The Nagpur Dr Baba saheb Ambedkar International Airport is set for a major infrastructure upgrade after the Union cabinet approved a long-term public-private partnership (PPP) framework that will make way for the expansion of passenger terminals, runway infrastructure and cargo handling facilities.

The cabinet sanctioned the extension of the lease period of land owned by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and leased to MIHAN India Limited (MIL) beyond August 6, 2039. This move will enable MIL to hand over the airports to GMR Nagpur International Airport Limited (GNIAL) for 30 years concession period from the commercial operation date.

The airport will undergo phased expansion and modernisation to transform it into a "world-class aviation facility". The proposed upgrade includes expansion of terminal infrastructure, development of Code-E compliant runway infrastructure and improvements in integrated



passenger terminal facilities.

The project also aims to significantly increase cargo handling infrastructure under the MIHAN project. The airport is planned to eventually handle up to 30 million passengers annually, which would make it one of the major aviation hubs in central India.

The government stated that the project forms part of the larger Multi-modal International Cargo Hub and Airport at Nagpur

(MIHAN) initiative aimed at developing Nagpur into a major aviation and logistics hub in central India.

Reacting to the cabinet decision, Prime Minister Modi stated that the airport project would provide "a major boost for Nagpur's infrastructure." In a post on X, Modi said that the decision relating to Nagpur Airport would "accelerate its emergence as a crucial aviation and cargo hub" and help strengthen connectivity.

# Saudi cancels 7,200 work visas

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development has cancelled more than 7,200 visas issued to violating establishments and suspended key government services for them after uncovering thousands of labour-re-

lated breaches during nationwide inspections.

The ministry said its monitoring teams and smart surveillance systems examined around 91,000 suspected cases, detecting 13,509 violations linked to invalid employment relationships.

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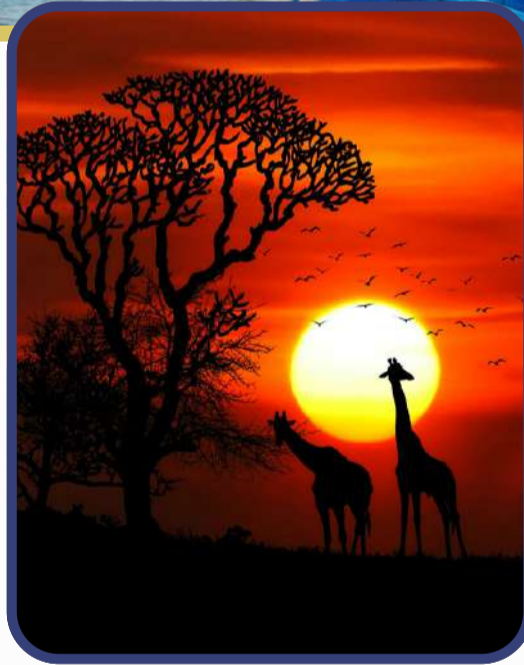
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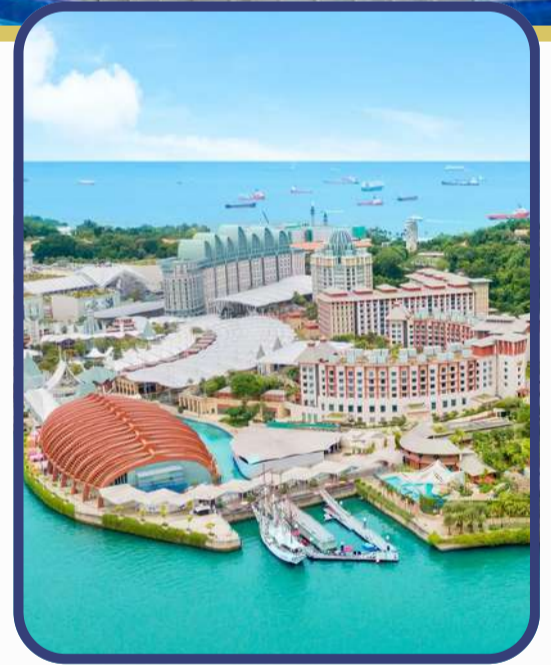
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# GULF FAQs

## Unpaid salaries? How employees can file labour complaint?

**I am an employee at a company with 49 employees. The company has not paid our salaries for the past two months. As many as 22 employees have gone on protest by refusing to work and have threatened to file a complaint against the company. What procedures should be followed for this and how can we file the complaint?**

Pursuant to Article 56 of the Federal Labour Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 and its Cabinet Resolution No.

(1) of 2022 on its implementation:

1. If a dispute arises between the employer and all the establishment's workers or a group thereof, and the parties fail to settle it amicably, the complainant shall file a complaint in accordance with the following rules and procedures:

a. The complaint shall be filed through the channels specified by the ministry.

b. The type and amount of the claims shall be stated.

c. The complaint shall be filed within two weeks from

the date of the dispute.

2. The ministry may address the concerned authorities to impose a provisional seizure on the establishment to guarantee the workers' rights.

3. The ministry may liquidate the bank guarantee or insurance allocated to the workers without the employer's approval if the workers' allegation is substantiated, or it may take any other actions or measures to ensure payment of the workers' entitlements.

4. The ministry shall settle the dispute pursuant

to the procedures determined by a resolution of the minister. If a settlement



is not possible for any reason, or due to the parties' non-compliance with the agreed settlement, the dispute shall be referred to the Collective Labour Disputes Committee.

5. The Collective Labour Disputes Committees, formed by a cabinet resolution based on the minister's proposal, shall settle the disputes referred to them. Their decision shall be final and enforced with the executory formula seal by the competent court.

## How can I update my UAE bank KYC?

**Can you please explain how I can update UAE bank KYC?**

If you've recently received an SMS from your bank asking you to update your KYC (Know Your Customer) details in the UAE, don't ignore it, especially if your Emirates ID is about to expire. Keeping your Emirates ID and KYC information updated is essential to ensure uninterrupted access to your bank account and financial services.

Why you must update your Emirates ID with the bank? Under the regulations of Central Bank of the UAE, all customers are required to provide their latest Emirates ID to their bank. Failing to update your details can result in

service disruptions — including being unable to withdraw cash from ATMs, make debit or credit card transactions or access other personal banking services.

Updating your KYC is also a compliance requirement that helps banks follow Anti-Money Laundering (AML) laws and verify that your identity and contact details are accurate and up to date. How to update your KYC details? Most UAE banks have made it simple to complete the KYC process online.

You can typically update your details through your bank's mobile app, website or online banking portal without visiting a branch. In some cases, you can still

visit the nearest branch if you prefer to update your information in person.

To complete your update, you'll need to fill out a KYC or Re-KYC form and submit the required documents. Your bank will usually send an SMS or email with a direct link to the form or clear instructions on how to proceed.

While requirements may vary slightly between banks, most will ask for the following: Renewed Emirates ID (front and back), passport copy, residence visa page proof of address such as a tenancy contract or utility bill, source of income details, most banks accept scanned copies in PDF, JPG, JPEG or PNG format.

## Privacy violation

I received a verdict from the criminal court confirming a violation of my privacy by a man who took a photo of me while photographing himself and then used it for advertising without my permission.

My question is:

**How much compensation can I claim, and is there a maximum limit for the claim?**

You are entitled to compensation for the harm you suffered based on the verdict from the Criminal Court, which serves as proof of the case. The verdict clearly shows that the man was convicted of violating your privacy, and the unlawful act cited in the verdict forms the basis for your current lawsuit. The man's liability, the harm you suffered and the caus-

al link between the act and the harm have all been established by the verdict. However, there is no specific amount or maximum limit for compensation.

You have the right to request an amount based on the harm and damages you have incurred and the court will assess the appropriate compensation accordingly.

It is important to submit any supporting documents you have to strengthen your claim.

In all cases, compensation is determined based on the extent of harm suffered by the victim, along with any loss of profit, provided that such loss is a natural consequence of the harmful act, in accordance with Article 292 of the Civil Transactions Law.

## Can you appeal against eviction judgment?

**Five days ago, the Rental Dispute Center issued a judgment ordering me to vacate my apartment and pay Dh28,000 to the landlord, who had filed the case to evict me due to non-payment of rent. I was informed that I do not have the right to appeal this judgment because the claim amount is less than Dh1 lakh. Do I have the right to appeal this decision or**

**not?**

I would advise that you have the right to appeal this judgment, even though the claim amount is less than Dh1 lakh. This is because eviction judgments are excluded from the rule restricting appeals based on claim value, as stated under Article (17) of Decree No. (26) of 2013 Concerning the Rent Disputes Settlement Centre in the Emirate of Dubai.

Article (17) provides

that: (a) Judgments of the First Instance Division may be appealed to the Appellate Division, except for judgments issued in rent claims whose value is less than Dh1 lakh which shall be final and not subject to appeal.

(b) However, judgments issued by the First Instance Division for claims valued at less than Dh1 lakh may still be appealed in certain cases, including when an eviction judgment is issued.

In addition to eviction cases, Article (17) also lists other circumstances under which First Instance judgments can be appealed even if the claim value is below Dh1 lakh.

These include: When the judgment breaches the rules of jurisdiction. When the judgment grants relief not requested by the parties, exceeds what was requested or fails to address relief requested by the parties. When the judgment

is issued against a person who was not duly represented in the case or where the service of summons was invalid.

When the judgment is based on documents later proven or judicially declared to be false or based on testimony later declared to be false. When a party to a contract concealed evidence or documents from the First Instance Division that could have changed the judgment.

# CIAL to facilitate seaplane trials for Kochi to Lakshadweep connectivity

**KOCHI:** In a major boost to connectivity with the Lakshadweep islands, Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) is set to facilitate trial seaplane operations linking Kochi with multiple island destinations.

The trials are part of an initiative to study the feasibility of launching regular seaplane services to Lakshadweep, a move expected to improve tourism, emergency travel and regional connectivity. The 20-seater Twin Otter seaplane, owned by Skyhope

Aviation, will operate on routes including Kochi–Agatti–Kalpeni–Kavaratti and Kochi–Kadmat–Kiltan–Agatti.

According to CIAL, 12 trial operations have been planned over three days covering several islands in the Union Territory. "CIAL will extend all necessary operational support and coordination for the successful conduct of the trials in association with the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Lakshadweep Administration, Airports Authority of India

and other stakeholders involved in the project," the airport operator said in a statement.

Officials said the proposed service could significantly cut travel time to the islands and improve accessibility, especially to destinations that currently depend heavily on ship services.

The initiative is also expected to open up new opportunities for sustainable tourism and faster transportation between Kerala and Lakshadweep.

The Lakshadweep ad-



ministration had first floated tenders for seaplane connectivity in 2019. In 2025, the Union Civil Aviation Ministry included 48 routes in Kerala under the UDAN regional connectivity scheme. Ticket

fares for the service are expected to be around Rs 12,000 initially. However, if the routes are brought under the UDAN scheme, fares could come down to between Rs 2,000 and Rs 4,000.

## SpiceJet ends its operations at Goa's Manohar airport

**PANAJI:** SpiceJet has discontinued its operations at Manohar International Airport as part of the airline's route rationalisation and network reduction plans for 2026.

The move comes amid broader operational restructuring by the budget carrier, which has been scaling down services on several routes across the country.

With the suspension of flights from Mopa airport, passengers travelling to and from Goa may now



have fewer connectivity options on routes previously operated by SpiceJet. However, other airlines continue to operate services from the airport.

Manohar International Airport, which serves as Goa's second international airport, has witnessed changing airline schedules and route adjustments

since commencing operations. Further details regarding the possibility of SpiceJet resuming services at the airport in the future are yet to be announced.

## Import duty on gold...

( **Cont. from page - 2** ) 6.4pc, reflecting what officials described as a more comfortable external-sector position at the time.

The government has simultaneously tightened the concessional import route available under the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), raising the duty on gold imported under the tariff rate quota to 14pc from five per cent. The move preserves only the existing one percentage point preferential margin over the standard

duty rate and is aimed at plugging a possible arbitrage route after the sharp increase in headline customs duty.

The tightening comes amid growing concern over rising gold imports routed through Dubai. According to an analysis by the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), India's gold bar imports from the UAE surged to \$16.5 billion in 2025 from \$2.9 billion in 2022, while the UAE's share in India's gold imports rose to 28pc from 7.9pc during the same period.

## No blanket suspension of flights...

( **Cont. from page - 1** ) main operational and that no blanket suspension of overseas flights has been announced.

Rumours of Air India suspending all international flights until July 2026 are misleading. The airline has temporarily reduced services on select routes due to rising costs and geopolitical tensions, not a complete cancellation. Flights to major global destinations continue, though some long-haul sectors face reduced frequency.

Wrong news that Air India has suspended all international flights until July 2026 has triggered confusion among travellers across India and abroad. However, the claims are

misleading. Air India has not cancelled all international operations. Instead, the airline has temporarily reduced or adjusted services on select overseas routes due to rising operational costs, geopolitical tensions in West Asia and increasing pressure on profitability. The airline continues to operate flights to major destinations across Europe, North America, Australia and Asia, although some sectors are currently witnessing reduced frequency and schedule changes.

Out of more than 1,000 daily domestic and international operations conducted by the airline, roughly 100 flights may face temporary reduction,

cancellation or rescheduling during this period. Air India continues flights to major global destinations despite the temporary reductions, Air India has not announced any blanket cancellation. Travellers may, however, experience fewer weekly flights on certain long-haul sectors as the airline attempts to manage costs and operational challenges. Why Air India is reducing international operations? According to a report published by ANI on May 8, Air India CEO Campbell Wilson informed employees that several international routes had become increasingly difficult to operate profitably.

## Eid Al Adha holidays announced

**DUBAI:** The Dubai Government Human Resources Department (DGHR) has announced that the Eid Al Adha holiday for Dubai government entities, departments and institutions for the year 1447 AH will commence on Monday, May 25, 2026, and conclude on Friday, May 29, 2026. Official working hours will resume on Monday, June 1, 2026.

Entities operating on a shift basis or those responsible for customer services and public service facilities, may determine working hours in line with their operational requirements to ensure continuity of services throughout the holiday period.

Authorities in Dubai will hold a public moon-sighting event for the Dhu Al Hijjah crescent on May 17.

# GLIMPSES OF INTERNATIONAL TOURISM SUMMIT ASIA - 2026 AT PATTAYA

