



OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



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Hiring outlook remains positive

NEW DELHI: The hiring outlook for this financial year remained positive as 45pc of employers interviewed said they plan to hire for new permanent positions.

A significant 45pc of employers plan to hire for new permanent positions, while 13pc plan to replace manpower in their existing positions, workforce solutions and HR services provider Genius Consultants said in a report -- Hiring, Compensation & Attrition Management Outlook Survey for 2025-26.

The report is based on insights from 1,520 CXOs and senior-level dignitaries of organisations across various industries for the upcoming

financial year. The report further revealed that the growth of the importance of temporary hiring is widely visible, as 26pc of the employers focus on temporary, contractual or project-based roles. However, 16pc of organisations indicated no hiring plans for



FY26, highlighting a cautious approach. Fintech firm Biz2X plans to hire 200 professionals across roles in FY26.

When asked about the primary focus of hiring, the report found

that 37pc of employers said they aim to recruit mid-level professionals, while 26pc said they are shifting towards gig workers, contract-based roles and advisory positions. This confirms the trend shift in industries towards flexible staffing. Meanwhile, entry-level hiring accounts for 19pc and senior leadership recruitment stands at 18pc, said the report.

Projected workforce growth reflects a balanced strategy with 53pc of organisations foreseeing moderate hiring growth between

(Cont. on page-7)

IndiGo to launch daily flights to Mumbai, Kannur from Fujairah

FUJAIRAH: Fujairah International Airport has announced its partnership with IndiGo, India's fastest-growing airline, to launch two direct daily flights to Mumbai and Kannur starting from May 15, 2025.

This new partnership marks a significant milestone in strengthening the ties between the Emirate of Fujairah and India, offering travellers more travel options and easier access to new destinations, with a strong commitment to punctuality and well-organised flight schedules.

IndiGo's expansion into Fujairah Airport is set to offer passengers

an improved travel experience with excellent customer service, modern aircraft and timely schedules. This partnership will significantly improve connectivity between the UAE and In-



dia, offering more choices for travellers looking to visit family, friends or business partners. The addition of these daily flights comes at a perfect time, as both Mumbai and Kannur are in high demand among residents and tourists alike.

Beyond regional con-

(Cont. on page-7)

India's forex reserves jump to \$676.26b

MUMBAI: India's foreign exchange reserves rose US\$10.872 billion to \$676.26 billion in the week that ended on April 4, extending gains for the fifth straight week.

Barring the latest jump, forex reserves had slumped for about four months, recently hitting an 11-month low. Then

followed the latest rollercoaster movement, with gains some weeks and declines the next. The forex reserves started falling after touching an all-time high of \$704.89 billion in Sept.

They are now lower from their peak. The decline in reserves was most

(Cont. on page-2)

NEW DELHI: The Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) has begun the RRB ALP Recruitment 2025 process, inviting applications for 9970 Assistant Loco Pilot (ALP) posts.

Eligible candidates can now apply for the recruitment drive through the respective official RRB websites.

The Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) has begun the RRB ALP Recruitment 2025 process,

inviting applications for 9970 Assistant Loco Pilot (ALP) posts. Eligible candidates can now apply for the recruitment drive through the respective official RRB websites. The registration window will remain active until 11.59 PM on May 11, 2025.

To apply, candidates must visit their respective regional RRB website, click on the "RRB ALP Recruitment 2025" link, register with valid

details, complete the application form and pay the requisite application fee. After submission, applicants should download and print the confirmation page for future reference.

The last date for submitting the application fee has been scheduled for May 13, with the correction window opening from May 14 to May 23, 2025. In a related update, the second stage of the

(Cont. on page-2)

ACCESS TO NUSUK PORTAL SUSPENDED

Only 20pc of pvt Haj quota to be confirmed initially

MUMBAI: In a major setback to over 52,000 Indians who had booked their Haj pilgrimage through private tour operators, the Ministry of Minority Affairs has issued a fresh circular stating that only 20pc of the private quota that were booked already will be confirmed initially. This means that 80pc of those who registered un-

der Combined Haj Group Organisers (CHGOs) may not be able to perform Haj 2025.

The development comes after the Saudi Ministry of Haj and Umrah shut down access to the Nusuk portal—a mandatory online platform used to finalise contracts and services for pilgrims. Due to delays in payments and non-finalisation of

service agreements, the Saudi authorities cancelled Mina Zones 1 and 2, which had been allotted to CHGOs. The remaining zones (3, 4 and 5) have also been held up, further worsening the situation.

According to the circular, the Ministry of Minority Affairs has held private tour operators responsible for the lapse.

It stated that each CHGO was supposed to independently finalise service arrangements on the Nusuk portal, but most of them failed to upload contracts or process payments on time. The Saudi authorities, as a result, revoked access and froze all zones meant for private Indian pilgrims.

However, a private tour operator stated that the

lapses were made from the government's side, as starting last year, the Saudi authorities had made changes to the procedure and had asked the private operators to deposit their payments to through the government channel and the government had to deposit the amount to Saudi authorities. The operator further

(Cont. on page-2)

Immigrants will have to carry papers with them always in US

WASHINGTON: A US judge has allowed the Trump administration to go ahead with a plan to make illegal immigrants register with the federal government.

Any immigrant to the US, including those who are legally allowed to study or work there, may be asked to furnish papers when asked.

Even the “already registered” foreign nationals such as Indian workers with H1-B visas or international students, a majority of whom are

Indians, will need to carry documents with them round the clock.

In a statement, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said: “All non-citizens 18 and older must carry this documentation at all times. This administration has directed DHS to prioritise enforcement, there will be no sanctuary for non-compliance.”

The DHS notification comes amid a US district judge order approving the Donald Trump administration to move forward

with a requirement that everyone in the US illegally must register with the federal government and carry documentation.

Those who entered the US on a valid visa, hold green cards, employment authorisation document, border crossing card or an I-94 admission record are already registered and will not be affected by the process.

Their children would need to re-register and submit their fingerprints within 30 days of their 14th birthday.

Indian consulate in Melbourne attacked

MELBOURNE: The Indian consulate in Melbourne has been targeted again in an act of vandalism with the Indian high commission in Canberra raising the issue with Australian authorities.

The consulate premises in Melbourne have previously been the site of similar provocation with slogans defacing the compound in past years during periods of heightened international tension, The Australia Today reported.

Victoria police said graffiti was seen at the front entrance of the diplomatic premises around 1am. “Officers believe the front entry of the building was graffitied overnight, sometime between Wednesday and Thursday. An investigation is ongoing.”

(Cont. on page-7)

Only 20pc of pvt Haj ...

(Cont. from page-1) added that majority of these operators had deposited their payments to the government while a few might have delayed it. He added prior to 2024, the private operators used to make payments directly from their accounts to Saudi authorities.

“The government, however, while waiting to the payment from all the operators, delayed the payment and that led to the closure of payment channels of Saudi authorities. Because of the negligence of the government, all the operators, including those who had processed their payments are now facing difficulty,” the operator alleged.

Following this chaos, the Ministry of Minority Affairs has taken up the

matter with the highest levels of the Saudi Ministry of Haj and Umrah. As a result, the Saudi side has agreed to temporarily reopen the Nusuk portal—but only for a short and unspecified window. This short reopening will allow CHGOs to upload service contracts and finalise accommodation, transport and logistics arrangements for their pilgrims.

To manage this process, a help desk has been set up at the Consulate General of India (CGI) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

All CHGOs or their representatives have been asked to reach the help desk directly, along with details of their pilgrims and passport numbers, proof of accommodation in Mecca and Madinah, and evidence of payment.

Leh to operate 22 flights daily in this tourist season

LEH: Arrangements are being made to operate at least 22 flights daily from the Kushok Bakula Rimpochee (KBR) Airport, Leh, to cope with the rush of visitors to Ladakh during the coming tourist season.

Chief Secretary Dr. Pawan Kotwal chaired a meeting to discuss a strategic plan for enhancing air connectivity in the region by ensuring the operation of at least 22 flights daily from the KBR Airport, Leh. The discussions focused on exploring the possibility of utilising the Indian Air Force (IAF) bays

APPLICATION LAST DATE MAY 11...

(Cont. from page-1)

RRB ALP 2024 Computer-Based Test (CBT) has been rescheduled. Earlier slated for March 19 and 20, 2025, the exam will now take place on May 2 and May 6, 2025. Candidates must report to the exam centre by 7.30 AM for Shift 1 and 12.30 PM for Shift 2. The city intimation slip will be available 10 days prior to the exam, and the e-call letters can be downloaded four days before the scheduled test from the official RRB websites. For further details, applicants can check the official RRB portals.



Etihad Airways carries five million flyers in first quarter of 2025

ABU DHABI: UAE’s flagship carrier Etihad Airways has released its traffic statistics for March 2025, continuing its positive performance as among the fastest growing global carriers.

The airline carried five million passengers

during the first quarter and welcomed 1.6 million guests during the month, up 14pc compared with the same period last year, as Etihad’s upward trajectory continued.

The airline recorded a passenger load factor of 87pc in the first quarter of the year, up from 86pc. in the same period in 2024, while expanding its capacity, and increasing its operating fleet size by 10pc.

Antonoaldo Neves, CEO of Etihad Airways, said: “Our guest numbers saw further strong growth and across the 12 months to the end of March 2025, we have welcomed almost 20 million passengers.

“In the past month alone, we have announced two new routes and increased flight frequencies, bringing the total number of new destinations scheduled for 2025 to 16.

Etihad Airways had announced a new route to Peshawar in Pakistan starting on Sept 29, 2025. It joins Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore as Etihad’s fourth non-stop route to Pakistan.

(Cont. on page-7)

India’s forex...

(Cont. from page-1) likely due to RBI intervention, aimed at preventing a sharp depreciation of the Rupee. The Indian rupee is now at or near its all-time low against the US dollar. The latest RBI data showed that India’s foreign currency assets (FCA), the largest component of forex reserves, stood at \$574.08 billion. The gold reserves currently amount to \$79.360 billion.

Estimates suggest that India’s foreign exchange reserves are sufficient to

cover about 11 months of projected imports. In 2023, India added around \$58 billion to its foreign exchange reserves, contrasting with a cumulative decline of \$71 billion in 2022. In 2024, the reserves rose by a little over \$20 billion. Foreign exchange reserves or FX reserves, are assets held by a nation’s central bank or monetary authority, primarily in reserve currencies such as the US Dollar, with smaller portions in the Euro, Japanese Yen and Pound Sterling.

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FOREX RATES
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Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	85.63	86.75
British Pound	111.63	113.26
Euro	96.79	98.86
Japanese Yen	59.79	60.75
Swiss Franc (CHF)	104.15	106.41
Canadian Dollar	61.19	62.57
Australian Dollar	53.25	54.44
Norwegian Krone	7.91	8.16
Swedish Krona	8.68	8.94
New Zealand Dollar	49.34	50.42
Hong Kong Dollar	10.89	11.23
Kuwaiti Dinar	286.16	276.2
Singapore Dollar	64.28	65.71
Saudi Arabian Riyal	22.52	23.23
United Arab Emirates	23.07	23.73

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AUSTRALIAN STUDENT VISA GRANTS
India ahead of china

CANBERRA: In a historic shift, India has overtaken China to become the leading country for Australian student visa approvals in Feb 2025.

According to recent data, more than 2,734 Indian students received visas to study in Australia, up from 2,398 in Jan. By the end of February, over 5,000 visas had been granted to Indian students, positioning India as the top source of international students in Australia.

This development marks a significant change in global education trends, as China has long dominated student visa issuance to Australia.

While China started the year with 3,573 student visas issued in Jan, India's rapid growth signals a shift in student mobility patterns and Australia's increasing appeal among Indian learners.

The rise in Indian student enrolments is attributed to a combination of factors, including Australia's high-quality education system, robust career prospects and vibrant campus life. Popular fields of study among Indian students include IT, engineering, business and healthcare.

Additionally, Australian universities and the government have introduced targeted initiatives such as scholar-

ships, student exchange programmes and streamlined visa processes. These efforts have made Australia a more attractive destination for Indian students seeking international education opportunities.

The Premier of South Australia recently visited India to promote educational opportunities, accompanied by university chancellors and vice-chancellors from Flinders University and the University of Adelaide. Their discussions emphasised research collaborations and academic exchange, further strengthening India-Australia ties in the education sector.

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GULF FAQs

Can your employer stop you from switching jobs in the UAE? Here's what the law says?

Can I change my job freely in the UAE?

In the UAE, you're free to change jobs -- if you follow the rules. But what if your old contract tries to stop you from working in the same field? Here's what the law says about such restrictions and whether they can actually be enforced. In the UAE, workers have the right to switch jobs as long as they follow the regulations outlined in the country's Labour Law. A current employer cannot. However, in some cases, employers may try to stop an employee from joining a new organisation by including a non-compete clause in the job contract or by filing a labour ban. But what happens if the non-compete clause is so broad that it effectively bars you from working anywhere in the same field --- even globally? A reader who has been working as a fitness

instructor for the past four years recently faced this dilemma and sought clarification on whether they could accept a new job without facing legal issues. "One month before my contract ended, I gave notice to my employer that I would not be renewing it, as I did not want to continue under the same salary. My contract with the fitness centre includes the following clause: The employee confirms that neither during the employment nor for 12 months after the termination date - whether directly, through others, or on behalf of someone else --- they will not compete with the company or be involved in any business offering similar services in the UAE or anywhere else. Dr. Hassan Elhais, legal consultant at Awatif Mohammad Shوقي Advocates and Legal Consultancy, explained that

under the UAE Labour Law, Federal Decree-Law No. 33 (specifically Article 10), it is stated that in cases where an employee has access to business secrets or is aware of the employer's clients, the employer is allowed to stipulate a non-compete clause in the employment agreement. Therefore, from a legal standpoint, a non-compete clause is valid in the UAE for specific categories of businesses and under certain conditions.

When we look at what the Labour Law states, since the reader is in direct contact with clients and has a close working relationship, therefore a non-compete clause is applicable. Why this clause may not be legally enforceable. In this specific scenario, the non-compete clause by the employer does not fulfil the required conditions of a valid non-com-

pete clause as required by UAE laws. Elhais referred back to Article 10 of the Labour Law to explain why the non-compete clause in this particular case is invalid.

"However, the non-compete clause reproduced in the question does not fulfil the required conditions of a valid non-compete clause as required by the UAE laws. Article 10 of the Labour Law states that a non-compete clause must clearly define a reasonable time limit, geographic location and type of work in the clause to the extent necessary to protect the legitimate interests of the business," he explained.

However, the non-compete clause reproduced in the question does not fulfil the required conditions of a valid non-compete clause as required by the UAE laws. Article 10 of the Labour Law states that a non-com-

pete clause must clearly define a reasonable time limit, geographic location and type of work in the clause to the extent necessary to protect the legitimate interests of the business

This is further detailed under Article 12 of Cabinet Decision No. 1 of 2022, where the application of a non-competition clause requires the following elements to be determined: The geographical scope for the application of the condition. The term of the condition, provided that it does not exceed two years from the date of the expiry of the contract. The nature of the work so as such nature seriously harms the legitimate interests of the employer.

The role of the UAE Civil Code

Elhais also added further context by citing Article 909 of the Federal Law No. (5) of 1985 concerning the civil transactions law of the UAE (Civil Code), which further clarifies that a non-compete clause that does not fulfil the above-mentioned conditions will be considered invalid and unenforceable. According to the law, a non-compete clause must protect the employer's legitimate business interests while ensuring the employee is not deprived of his right to work. The competition clause provided in the question stipulates that the employee must not be involved in any activity or business providing similar services that competes with the company's operations in the UAE or any part of the In short, the Labour Law does not specifically provide for any labour ban in cases of non-adherence to non-competition clauses," Elhais said.

Mismatch of cheque signature, what to do?

A year ago, I lent some money to a man. In return, he gave me a security cheque equivalent to the loan amount. When I presented it to the bank, it turned out that the cheque cannot be encashed due to a non-matching signature. What is the appropriate legal action I should take in this case of fraud?

You have to raise a criminal complaint in the case, because signing a cheque in a way that intentionally prevents you from encashing it is considered a criminal act according to Article 675 of the Federal Decree-Law No. 50/2022 Issuing the Commercial Transactions Law. The law states that anyone committing either of the following actions shall be sentenced to serve prison for a period of



not less than six months and not more than two years and/or pay fine of not less than 10pc of the cheque value, of a minimum Dh5,000, and shall not exceed double the value of the cheque; instructs or requests the drawee, before the drawing date, to dishonor a cheque issued thereby in other than the cases set out in Articles 651 and 656 hereof; closes the

account, withdraws the whole balance therein or knows of closing of the account before the issue of cheque, or before the presentment of cheque to the drawee for drawing, or intentionally causes the freezing thereof; intentionally executes or signs the cheque in a way that prohibits honouring thereof; in case of repeat, the penalty shall be doubled.

Moreover, if conviction is judged according to Article 679 of the same law, the court may order the withdrawal of cheque book from the convict and prohibition of issue of new books to him for a period of not more than five years. The convict shall be sentenced to pay fine of not less than Dh50,000 and not more than Dh1 lakh if the cheque book in his possession is not delivered to the related banks within 15 days from the date of service thereon. Article 681 also gives the court the right to order the prohibition of practice of any commercial or professional activity by the convict for a period of not more than three years if the crime is committed due to or on the occasion of the practice of such activities.

MF gain by NRI cannot be taxed in India under India-Singapore tax treaty

MUMBAI: In a major relief to an NRI investor, the Mumbai bench of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) has held that short-term capital gains of Rs 1.35 crore arising from the redemption of mutual fund units are not taxable in India, under the India-Singapore tax treaty.

According to Gautam Nayak, tax partner at CNK & Associates: "This ruling brings out one as-

pect of the India-Singapore tax treaty (and other similar tax treaties) that many NRIs investing in India are not aware of. By virtue of the tax treaty, capital gains on sale of mutual fund units is taxable only in the country of residence, and not in India."

"This benefit of capital gains on sale of units not being taxable in India will equally apply to tax treaties with other countries

having similar provisions — such as those with UAE, Mauritius, Netherlands, Spain and Portugal to name a few. In these tax treaties, assets other than immovable property and shares of a company fall under "the residual clause". This clause provides that the gains are taxable only in the country of residence of the seller," explained Nayak.

In the matter heard by the ITAT, A Shah, a Singapore tax resident, had declared capital gains of Rs 88.75 lakh from debt mutual funds and Rs 46.91 lakh from equity mutual funds during the financial year 2021-22.

In her Income-Tax (IT) return, she claimed exemption for these capital gains under the residual clause of Article 13 of the tax treaty, which provides that the gains would be taxable only in her country of tax residence (Singapore) and not in India.

The IT officer rejected the claim and taxed the capital gains.

Indian consulate...

(Cont. from page-2)

tion into the damage remains ongoing," a police spokesperson said. In a post on X, the high commission said it had raised the issue with Australian authorities.

"The incident of defacing at the premises of the consulate-general of India in Melbourne by miscreants has been raised with Australian authorities. All necessary steps are being taken to ensure the safety and security of Indian diplomatic and consular premises and personnel in the country," the post

said. The police have not confirmed whether any suspects have been identified. The authorities have urged those with information to come forward, the police spokesperson said.

The act has reignited concerns within the Indian-Australian community which has expressed frustration over a growing pattern of targeted incidents involving temples and Indian government establishments across Melbourne, the news portal said.

Hiring outlook remains...

(Cont. from page-1)

5-10pc while 33pc planning a substantial hiring increase exceeding 10-15pc, it added. Among industries, the retail, e-commerce and Q-commerce sector (21pc) is expected to experience the highest manpower recruitment, due to which, recruitment requirements in Logistics and Warehousing are also expected to grow, as confirmed by nine per cent of the respondents. Around 15pc of employers expect higher recruitment in automobiles and EV, as 11pc predict the rise of recruitment needs in the renewable energy and engineering projects.

IndiGo to launch daily flights...

(Cont. from page-1) nectivity, the introduction of these destinations is set to provide a major boost to Fujairah's tourism and business sectors. With more international visitors passing through Fujairah International Airport, they will have the opportunity to discover the region's natural beauty and exceptional tourist attractions, contributing to the local economy and enhancing the region's appeal as both a tourist and economic hub.

"We are thrilled to welcome IndiGo to Fujairah International Airport," said Captain Esmail Al Baloushi, General Manager of Fujairah International Airport. "This partnership enhances our mission to offer passengers more travel options while improving the con-

nectivity of Fujairah with key destinations in India. We believe this will further cement Fujairah's position as a preferred gateway for both international and regional travellers, while also giving a significant boost to the local tourism industry."

Vinay Malhotra, Head of Global Sales at IndiGo, said: "We are pleased to announce the launch of daily direct flights from Mumbai and Kannur to Fujairah, a hidden gem in the UAE that's rich in natural beauty and economic potential. As our 41st international destination and fifth in the UAE (we already fly to Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ras Al Khaimah and Sharjah), Fujairah offers a unique blend of mountainous landscapes and a thriving coastline on the Gulf of Oman".

Post-marriage name change in passport made easy

MUMBAI: In a bid to ease passport formalities, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) now allows Indian citizens to add their spouse's name to their passport without a marriage certificate. Instead, applicants can submit a self-declared joint photo affidavit, known as Annexure J.

This change benefits many, especially in states like UP and Bihar, where marriage registration is less common. Until now, couples without a registered marriage certificate often faced delays or rejection when applying to update their marital status on their passports.

What is Annexure J? Annexure J is a signed joint declaration by both spouses, con-

firming their marital status. It must include:

- *A self-attested joint photograph.
 - *Full names, address, and marital status.
 - *Aadhaar numbers, voter IDs, and passport numbers (if available).
 - *Date, place and signatures of both parties
- To remove or change a spouse's name on the passport, applicants still need to provide one of the following:
- *Divorce decree
 - *Death certificate of the spouse
 - *Re-marriage certificate
 - *Annexure J (in case of mutual update)
- This reform is part of the MEA's ongoing efforts to streamline passport-related processes and make them more accessible across India.

Hiring domestic workers: UAE puts more burden on job agencies

ABU DHABI: In a move to simplify the hiring process for domestic workers in the UAE, the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MoHRE) has rolled out new regulations that shift several key responsibilities from employers to licensed recruitment agencies.

The updated rules aim to streamline procedures, improve service standards, and ensure better support for both employers and workers.

Under the updated regulations, recruitment agencies are now required to handle a range of services on behalf of employers, including the electronic submission, receipt and printing of applications to the ministry, as well as assisting in medical examinations and the issuance of Emirates ID cards.

Agencies must also facilitate the pickup of domestic workers from the airport, ensure safe transport to the em-

ployer's residence, and provide information on available nationalities and job roles for recruitment. Additional responsibilities include offering pre-employment interviews, training and preparing workers for their roles, and arranging suitable accommodation for the recruited domestic workers.

Leh to operate...

(Cont. from page-2) shared their challenges and concerns during the meeting. Kotwal assured them that all issues would be taken up seriously and resolved in a timely manner. He emphasised that the administration is committed to working for the overall welfare and development of Ladakh.

The Chief Secretary also directed all concerned stakeholders to maintain close co-ordination with the IAF, Airport Authority of India (AAI) and other relevant agencies.