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MUMBAI: TUESDAY, 17 MARCH, 2026 • VOL. NO. 3 • Issue No. 13 • DIV. OF FLYCREATIVE ONLINE LIMITED (A unit of Creative Group) • 6 PAGES

IPEPCIL interaction with UP labour & employment department to strengthen global mobility and skill development



IPEPCIL participated in the UP Industry Connect Mumbai 2026, engaged in a G2B meeting with Hon'ble Minister Anil Rajbhar, Principal Secretary Dr Shanmuga Sundaram IAS, Neha Prakash, IAS, Pramod Kumar Kundy, Atul Kumar Gupta from the Department of Labour & Employment, Government of UP and IPEPCIL president VS Abdulkareem to discuss expanding overseas employment opportunities for workers from UP.



The dialogue focused on ethical recruitment, skill development, and strengthening global workforce mobility and digitisation of Rojgar Sangam portal with the stake holders of IPEPCIL member fraternity.

MUMBAI: A high-level interactive session was held by IPEPCIL fraternity with the Hon'ble Minister Anil Rajbhar, Department of Labour & Employment, Government of Uttar Pradesh, together with the senior officials Dr MK Shanmuga Sundaram IAS, Principal Secretary, Dept. of Labour & Employment, Neha Prakash IAS, Director, Pramod Kumar Kundy, Dy. Director and Atul Kumar Gupta IT digitalization, Rojgar Sangam with the senior officials Dr (Cont. on page - 2)

UAE allows expats with expired visas to return without new entry permit

ABU DHABI: The UAE has allowed expatriate residents currently abroad whose residency visas have expired to return to the country without obtaining a new entry permit, under a temporary measure announced by the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Ports Security (ICP).

The decision applies for

one month, from Feb 28 until March 31, and comes in response to exceptional circumstances that prevented some residents from returning to the UAE before their visas expired.

According to the ICP, the measure aims to facilitate the return of expatriate residents and ease travel procedures during the specified period. Eligible

residents will be permitted to re-enter the country and regularise their residency status through the relevant official procedures after arrival. Authorities said the initiative reflects the UAE's continued efforts to support residents and ensure flexible administrative measures in response to exceptional situations.

The initiative is intended

to help expatriate residents return and simplify travel procedures during the designated period. Eligible residents will be allowed to re-enter the UAE and regularise their residency status through the appropriate official channels after arrival.

Authorities noted that the move underscores the UAE's ongoing commit-

ment to supporting residents and to implementing flexible administrative measures in response to exceptional circumstances.

Once back in the UAE, residents can complete the necessary steps to renew or regularise their residency through the appropriate immigration authorities.

Since Dec 2018, the UAE (Cont. on page - 2)

IndiGo suspends flights to seven MidEast destinations

NEW DELHI: India's largest airline IndiGo has decided to suspend its planned flights to seven destinations in the MidEast till March 28 due to the ongoing conflict in the region.

The affected destinations include Doha, Kuwait, Bahrain, Dammam, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah and Sharjah. The airline said the suspension is part



of temporary operational changes to ensure passenger safety and manage the current situation in West Asia.

The decision comes as

tensions and military activity in the region have disrupted normal air travel routes and created uncertainty for airlines.

(Cont. on page - 2)

Umrah visa issuance will stop on Shawwal 1st (March 20)

RIYADH: The Ministry of Haj and Umrah clarified that the last day for issuing Umrah visas for the current annual Umrah season is the first of Shawwal and the last day for the Umrah pilgrims to enter the Kingdom is Shawwal 15. The ministry stated that the last day of pilgrims' stay in the Kingdom will be the first of Dhul Qada.

This was revealed during the ministry's 17th periodic meeting with Saudi Umrah companies, held virtually. During the meeting, the ministry emphasised the necessity of adhering to the regulations governing the Haj season. It reiterated that Haj must be performed with a valid Haj visa and shall not be performed with an (Cont. on page - 2)

IPEPCIL interaction with UP labour & employment department to strengthen global mobility and skill development



IPEPCIL participated in the UP Industry Connect Mumbai 2026, engaged in a G2B with Hon'ble Minister Anil Rajbhar and officials to discuss expanding overseas employment opportunities for workers from UP.

(Cont. from page - 1) portal of Labour & Employment, Government of UP to discuss collaborative initiatives aimed at enhancing skill development and global employment opportunities for the youth of UP. The meeting witnessed productive deliberations

between the development officials and prominent members of IPEPCIL fraternity, committed to promoting ethical recruitment and international workforce mobility. The discussions focused on strengthening structured pathways for skilled

youth from Uttar Pradesh to access overseas employment opportunities in a transparent and responsible manner. During the session, emphasis was placed on improving skill alignment, strengthening institutional collaboration and facilitat-

ing international mobility that could significantly enhance employability and global placement prospects for the state's workforce. Both sides acknowledged the immense potential of UP's young workforce and agreed on the importance

of building a robust framework that supports skill enhancement, awareness and responsible migration. As a significant outcome of the meeting, it was mutually agreed to move forward with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Labour & Employment and IPEPCIL.

The proposed MOU will focus on strengthening mechanisms that promote Global Workforce Mobility, Industry participation and capacity-building initiatives for the youth of UP. The collaboration aims to create sustainable employment pathways while ensuring that the state's talent pool contributes meaningfully to the global labour market.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to work together in developing actionable strategies that will empower skilled youth from UP and facilitate greater participation in international employment opportunities, hoped VS Abdulkareem, President of IPEPCIL.

Air India seeks crew duty relaxation as Iran war forces longer flight routes

MUMBAI: Airspace restrictions in West Asia caused by the ongoing war in Iran have led to longer routes and flight hours, prompting Air India to urge the aviation regulator to grant relaxation from crew roster norms to ease certain long-haul operations. Air India has submitted a request seeking varia-

tion from the prescribed Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) on certain sectors due to operational constraints. The carrier has sought relaxation in two rules under crew roster norms. Under the applicable FDTL provisions, the maximum flying time for a two-pilot crew is 10 hours and the maximum Flight



Duty Period is 13 hours. Air India has requested permission to extend this by one hour and 30 minutes, which would increase the flying time to 11 hours and 30 minutes.

For the flight duty period, an extension of one hour and 45 minutes has been sought.

Pakistan's airspace closure for Indian carriers after Operation Sindoor

forced domestic airlines to take longer routes for westbound flights toward European and American countries. According to the sources, the matter is still under consideration. However, sources also confirmed that IndiGo has not made such a request. In Dec last, the government had temporarily relaxed certain provisions of crew roster norms.

IndiGo suspends flights to seven MidEast...

(Cont. from page - 1) Despite the suspension of some routes, IndiGo will still maintain a strong presence in the MidEast. The airline said it plans to

operate 252 weekly flights to and from the region between March 16 and March 28.

According to the airline, these changes are being made to align flight capacity with the current conditions while still maintaining essential connectivity for passengers travelling between India and the Mid-East. IndiGo added that it will continue to closely monitor developments and make further changes if required. Flight operations in the region have been affected by the ongoing conflict involving the US, Israel and Iran, which began on Feb 28.

UAE allows expats...

(Cont. from page - 1) passport has ranked first globally on Arton Capital's Passport Index. As of Jan 1, 2020, a UAE passport holder could travel easily to 179 countries worldwide; 118 destinations offer visa-free travel and 61 offer eVisas or visa on arrival at the airport, according to the UAE Foreign ministry.

Umrah visa issuance will stop...

(Cont. from page - 1) Umrah visa.

Addressing the meeting, Minister of Haj Dr Tawfiq Al-Rabiah commended the efforts of the Umrah companies and their co-operation during Ramadan, acknowledging their contributions to serving pilgrims, helping the situations of stranded Umrah pilgrims and facilitating their return to their destinations. The minister

stressed the importance of continued compliance with the regulations and instructions governing the Umrah season, including the staggered arrival times of pilgrims at airports and the continuous updating of their departure data via the Nusk Masar platform. He also invited the companies to actively participate in the third edition of the Umrah and Visit Forum 2026. The meeting includ-

ed a presentation on the most prominent indicators of the Umrah season and the successes achieved during it, in addition to the preparations for the Umrah and Visit Forum. The forum's role in supporting partnerships, exchanging expertise and showcasing available opportunities was also discussed, all contributing to the enhancement of the Umrah and visit services system.

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Euro	105.22	107.46
Japanese Yen	57.57	58.49
Swiss Franc (CHF)	116.16	118.74
Canadian Dollar	66.98	68.5
Australian Dollar	64.67	66.08
Norwegian Krone	9.34	9.62
Swedish Krona	9.7	9.98
New Zealand Dollar	53.34	54.54
Hong Kong Dollar	11.57	11.93
Kuwaiti Dinar	289.9571	307.0293
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LPG crisis sparks exodus of migrant workers from Kerala

KOCHI: The ongoing LPG crisis, which has led to the mass closure of restaurants and hotels across Kerala, has triggered an exodus of migrant workers returning to their native places, as Ramzan approaches and elections are to be held in West Bengal and Assam.

Restaurant and hotel operators are trying to retain their staff from other states, fearing that if migrant workers leave now, they may not return until after the election. G Jayapal, state president of the Kerala Hotel and Restaurant Association (KHRA), told a TV channel that migrant workers from West Bengal and Assam were expected to return home a week before the elections in their respective states.

“However, with the LPG crisis forcing hotels and restaurants to shut down, migrant workers will start returning to their native places early. They will return only after the elections. Also, Ramzan will be celebrated next week, and people who were working in restaurants will start returning to their states due to the lack of jobs here,” he said.

Jayapal said that in addition to exploring alternative cooking fuels, restaurant operators are also trying to prevent workers from leaving early, expecting that the LPG crisis will be resolved soon. “A majority of the workforce in hotels and restaurants are migrant workers. Restaurants are desperate to keep them here. Howev-



er, small-scale restaurant operators find it hard to maintain staff when their shops are closed,” he said.

Binoy Peter of the Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development (CMID), which closely monitors migrant worker movements, said that around 50pc of Kerala’s migrant workforce comes from the poll-bound states of Assam and West Bengal. “With hotels closed, migrant workers

in the hospitality sector have started moving to their native places. Apart from restaurant closures, the movement is also triggered by Ramzan and the elections in West Bengal and Assam. Reserved tickets in trains to these states are already in the waiting list,” he said.

Usually, migrant workers from Kerala return home mainly during the local body polls in their

state. However, this time, due to the SIR procedure, workers are anxious and want to cast their votes in the Assembly elections in West Bengal and Assam, Peter said.

Shibin, owner of KLR Facility, which supplies workers, especially housekeeping staff, to major malls and hotels, said that aid he used to provide 25 migrant workers for housekeeping at a major mall in Thiruvananthapuram. “Now we have only five workers from other states there. We are managing the situation by recruiting local women for the work. We have already informed the companies to which we supply manpower and requested their co-operation until the elections in West Bengal and Assam are over,” he said.



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GULF FAQs

How to change visit visa to residency permit after receiving job offer?

I am currently in the UAE on a visit visa and actively looking for employment in the country. A company has extended a job offer, which I am happy to accept. What are the next steps? Can I start working on a visit visa immediately after receiving the offer, or must I wait until my work visa is issued?

An employer in the UAE cannot employ an individual without obtaining a valid work permit. This is under Article 6(1) of the Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulation of Employment Relations, which states "No work may be performed in the UAE and no employee may be recruited or employed by any employer without obtaining the work permit from the Ministry (of HR and Emiratization), by the provisions of this Decree-Law and its Execu-

tive Regulations."

Furthermore, an expatriate should not engage in any employment without a valid work permit and UAE residency visa.

This is in accordance with Article 5(4) of the Federal Decree Law No. 29 of 2021 Regarding Entry and Residence of Foreigners, which states, "An alien is obligated not to engage in any activity or work except by the legislation in force in the state."

Based on the type of work, an employer and an employee may mutually agree to obtain a work permit as stipulated by the Ministry of HR & Emiratization (MoHRE). The type of work permit may include, but is not limit-

ed to, full-time work permit, part-time work permit, temporary work permit, freelance work permit as mentioned in Article 6 of the Cabinet Resolution No. 1 of 2022 on the Implementation of Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 Regarding the Regulation of Employment Relations. In the event that an employer employs an individual without a valid work

permit and UAE residency visa, it may be penalised with a fine of up to Dh1 lakh. This is under Article 1 of the Federal Decree Law No. 9 of 2024, revising some provisions of Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 Concerning Employment Relations, which states related to the amendment of Article 60(1)(a) of the Employment Law. The said law reads as follows: "In-

dividuals who commit the following violations shall be fined a minimum of Dh1 lakh and a maximum of Dh1 million: Employment of an employee without obtaining a work permit."

Based on the aforementioned provisions of law, you should not work while you are on a visit visa in the UAE. Instead, you may request your prospective employer to obtain a work permit and UAE residency visa.

Your prospective employer should apply for a work permit with MoHRE and an entry permit related to UAE residency. Once the work permit is issued, your prospective employer should make necessary arrangements to change your UAE residency visa status from visit to resident.



How can I check my UAE visa grace period online?

Once a UAE residence visa is cancelled, residents are granted longer flexible grace periods that can range between 30 days and six months, depending on their residence visa category.

If your residence visa has been cancelled or has expired, you may be unsure how long you can remain in the UAE while searching for a new job. Residents are granted flexible grace periods ranging from 30 days to six months, depending on their visa category.

If you are unsure about your timeline, you can check your grace period online within minutes through the smart services portal of the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Se-

curity — here's how.

1. Visit the ICP smart services website - smart-services.icp.gov.ae
2. Click on "Public Services", on the menu tab and then click on "File Validity".
3. Next, select one of the options – "search by file number" or "passport information" and select the

type "Residency".

4. If you selected the passport option, enter your passport number expiry date and nationality. If you choose file number, enter one of the following details: • Emirates ID number • Emirates Unified Number (UID number) • File number
5. Next, enter your date

of birth and nationality.

6. Tick the "I'm not a robot" captcha and click the "Search" button.

You will then be able to view the "allowed days to stay in the country".

ADDITIONAL TIP : Once you receive your UAE residence visa cancellation form, you will also be able to see the exact date by which you should leave the country or change your residency status at the bottom of the form. During the grace period, you can either leave the UAE or apply for a new residence visa.

UAE residence visa categories with six month grace period: The Federal Authority for Identity and Citizenship, Customs and Ports Security (UAE ICP)

has explained that there are five visa categories that are allowed to stay for six months after the expiry of their residency visas:

1. Golden residency holders and their family members.
2. Green residency holders and their family members.
3. The widow or divorcee of a foreigner residing in the country.
4. Students studying after completing their studies and who are sponsored by the universities and colleges in the country.
5. Residents in the country who have skilled professions of the first and second levels according to the classification of the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization.



RBI seeks MidEast exposure data from banks

MUMBAI: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has asked banks to furnish detailed information on their exposure to the MidEast, said bankers.

"RBI has asked for a comprehensive breakdown of exposure, covering not just loans but also contingent liabilities such as guarantees and letters of credit," said one banker, who confirmed the development on condition of anonymity.

Another senior state-run banker added: "We have been asked to provide details of the affected sector operating in the region. The exercise is aimed at mapping risks more closely."

According to them, the



Central Bank has sought granular data on both direct and indirect loan exposure, including letters of

credit and other fund-based as well as non-fund-based facilities extended to corporates with operations in the MidEast.

While the regulator has not flagged any immediate concerns, the data collection exercise is expected to help it build a sharper picture of systemic exposure and prepare for potential stress scenarios. According to report by SBI research depart-

ment, exposure of Indian banks to Qatar immediate country risk basis stood at \$ 2.25 billion as of Dec 2025, while exposure to Oman and UAE stood at \$800 million and \$ 7 billion, respectively.

The report also pointed out that total GCC countries hold a share of 13.06pc in India's export and 16.18pc share in India's total imports during Apr-Dec 25 period. Other West Asian countries holding a share of 2.03pc in

export and 3.94pc share in India's imports during the same period. The move comes as RBI intensifies its monitoring of overseas risks that could potentially spill over into the domestic financial system. Officials familiar with the matter said the regulator wants to assess the extent of vulnerability Indian banks may face if the situation in the MidEast escalates further, impacting trade flows, remittances and corporate operations.

India extends visas, waives overstay fines for stranded foreigners

NEW DELHI: India has announced an extension of visas and a waiver of overstay penalties for for-

ign nationals, including those from the Gulf countries, who find themselves stranded in the country

due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia.

The Indian consulate in Dubai shared the decisions, which were taken by the Indian government taking into account the conflict situation in Gulf region.

Under the new measures, all types of Indian visas and e-visas that are expiring or due to expire soon will be extended by one month on a gratis basis. The extensions will be granted by jurisdictional Foreigners Regional Registration Offices (FRROs) on a case-to-case basis for affected nationals.

The government has also confirmed that penalty for any overstay by affected foreign nationals

due to ongoing developments in West Asia after February 28, 2026, would be waived off.

EXIT PERMITS AND LANDING: Exit permits for affected foreign nationals will also be provided free of charge. Importantly, the failure to apply for an exit permit or visa extension will not be treated as a violation of migration laws, offering significant reassurance to those who may have been unable to comply with standard procedures.

Additionally, a Temporary Landing Permit (TLP) will be granted on a gratis basis to any foreign national arriving in India due to flight diversions linked to the conflict.

CBSE Class 12 Board Exams cancelled in Middle East

NEW DELHI: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has cancelled the Class 12 board exams for students attending CBSE-affiliated schools in several West Asian countries. Circular-6 issued on social media X, announced that the examinations scheduled for students in Bahrain, Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE from March 16 to April 10, 2026, will not take place.

Though not stated, the reason for this cancellation is the ongoing war.

According to the notice, students in the specified MidEast regions will not be able to take any of the Class 12 exams that are scheduled between March 16, 2026 and April 10, 2026. Additionally, the board clarified that exams that were previously postponed through earlier circulars dated March 1, March 3, March 5, March 7

and March 9, 2026, have now been formally cancelled.

CBSE stated that the feasibility of conducting the examinations had been reviewed several times in response to feedback and requests from schools and authorities in the relevant countries.

Based on this assessment, the board chose to cancel the exams rather than continue with the current schedule.

Asia's largest tulip garden in Srinagar opened for tourists

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday threw open Asia's largest tulip garden on the banks of Dal Lake here for visitors and hoped that the tourism sector bounces back from the setbacks of last year.

Abdullah was accompanied by his cabinet colleagues and National Conference MLAs to the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden on CheshmaShahi Road, officials said. "This

will be a new start for those associated with the tourism industry. They had to go through a very tough phase. However, the situation keeps changing, and we hope that it improves to enable people from outside to come and enjoy the beauty of Jammu and Kashmir," Abdullah told reporters.

The tulip garden was among 44 destinations closed for tourists last year following the Pahal-



gam terror attack in April that killed 26 people. It reopened this year after a security audit. Abdullah said various stakeholders are working on making

floriculture a commercial venture whereby flowers grown here are exported to other parts of the country. "Most things are in place. A reliable cold chain is the is-

sue right now. Once we get that, be it through rail or air, this sector can bloom," he said. Abdullah also said that efforts are underway to develop tulip bulbs locally to save the expenditure on importing them from the Netherlands. "This will save foreign exchange as well," he said. On security at tourist places, Abdullah said those responsible for security would definitely make their presence felt at all the tourist destinations.