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OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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سلطنة عُمان

SULTANATE OF OMAN

56th National Day of

Sultanate of Oman

Friday, 20th November, 2026

Let us celebrate the rich heritage, remarkable journey and bright future of the Sultanate of Oman.

His Majesty
Sultan Haitham bin Tarik

H.E. Mahboob Issa Al Raisi,
Consul General of Sultanate
of Oman in Mumbai

CONGRATULATIONS & BEST WISHES
On The Occasion Of 56th National Day of the Sultanate of Oman

IPEPCIL

Indian Personnel Export Promotion Council

(Certificate of Incorporation No. 21368 of 1979. The Registrar of Companies, Maharashtra)

CIN No.: U74910MH1979NPL021368 **Website: www.ipepcil.org**

MESSAGE ON THE NATIONAL DAY

On the glorious occasion of the 56th National Day of the Sultanate of Oman, on behalf of the Indian Personnel Export Promotion Council (IPEPCIL),

I extend warm greetings to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik Al Said, the government and people of Oman and His Excellency Mahboob Issa Al Raisi, Consul General of Oman in Mumbai.

India and Oman share centuries-old historical, cultural, maritime and commercial ties, elevated to a Strategic Partnership in 2008. The Indian community in Oman, numbering nearly 6,95,000, remains a vital bridge between our countries.

In 2026, bilateral ties have advanced with the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), effective June 1, widening opportunities in trade, investment, services and professional mobility. Bilateral trade reached US$11.18 billion in FY2025 - 26. Co-operation is expanding in defence, maritime security, ports, logistics, energy, technology, education and tourism. The 11th Oman-India Strategic Dialogue, held in Muscat on November 17, 2026, reaffirmed the commitment to deepen this partnership. IPEPCIL recognises the opportunities for Indian skilled professionals and workers to contribute to Oman's development through ethical recruitment and workforce co-operation.

We reaffirm our commitment to closer India -Oman co-operation and wish the Sultanate continued peace, progress and prosperity.

HAPPY NATIONAL DAY !

With Warm Regards and Best Wishes



V.S. ABDULKAREEM
PRESIDENT - IPEPCIL

OMAN MARKS NATIONAL DAY AMID RENEWED RENAISSANCE



Source:
H.E. Mahboob Issa Al Raisi,
Consul General of the Sultanate of Oman, Mumbai

The Sultanate of Oman will celebrate its National Day on Nov 20 amid renewed development under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. The occasion celebrates its Renaissance and sustainable development drive.

Guided by Oman Vision 2040, the Sultanate aims to strengthen economic competitiveness, diversify income, empower youth, improve quality of life and build prosperity. National programmes are developing productive sectors and preparing the economy for regional changes.

The Oman Vision 2040 First Quarter Report records progress between 2020 and 2025. Average annual growth reached about 3.2pc during 2021–2025, private and foreign investment increased and public debt fell from 65.9pc to 34.6pc of GDP. Oman regained investment-grade status.

Renewable energy reached nine per cent of total consumption, while social protection covered more than 1.5 million beneficiaries by end-2025. Innovation and human development also improved.

Oman advanced from 76th to 39th in the Economic Freedom Index between 2020 and 2026, and by 61 places to 49th in the Environmental Performance Index. The 11thFive-Year Development Plan (2026–2030) prioritises development, private-sector participation, efficient investment and employment for Omani nationals.

In September, Standard & Poor's reaffirmed Oman's investment-grade BBB-rating with a stable outlook and forecast 2026 real GDP growth of around 3.5pc and a fiscal surplus of 4.8pc of GDP. Foreign exchange reserves were approximately US$19.5 billion at end-June. By the third quarter, state revenues had risen 16pc to RO9.828 billion against expenditure of RO9.738 billion, producing a surplus of about RO90 million. Public debt fell by around RO600 million to RO14.1 billion, while RO1.434 billion in private-sector dues was settled.

GDP at constant prices grew 5.1pc in the second quarter to about RO9.9 billion. Cargo volumes rose 15pc Salalah Port and 52pc at Sohar Port in the first half, boosting regional trade. Established under Royal Decree No. 8/2026, the International Financial Centre of Oman aims to attract global financial, banking, investment and insurance institutions, promote finance, innovation and skilled jobs. Its Board, chaired by Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, was appointed in June.

Social development remains central. The 2026 budget allocated about RO614 million to the Social Protection System, alongside support for electricity, water, transport, food and petroleum products. Projects are upgrading infrastructure and services. Health developments include A'Suwaiq and Khasab reference hospitals, the Central Public Health Laboratory in A'Seeb, Sur Hospital's expansion, IZZ Pharma Factory and Mahout Hospital. The foundation stone was laid for Al Nama Hospital, with construction planned over 30 months.

Industrial initiatives include manufacturing, food and chemical projects and the first phase of a wind-turbine manufacturing facility in Duqm, involving investment exceeding RO70 million and planned annual capacity of up to 1,000 megawatts. Transport, tourism and service projects continue.

By end-September 2026, the Ministry of Labour had generated 53,525 employment, replacement and training-linked opportunities, achieving 89pc of its annual target.

In the 2026 Global Innovation Index, Oman rose eight places to 47th for innovation inputs and ranked 69th overall among 139 economies. As many as 15 sub-indicators placed it among the top 40 globally, including ninth for net FDI inflows as a share of GDP.

Oman's diplomatic engagement expanded through H.M. Sultan Haitham's visits to France, Botswana, Angola, Kazakhstan, the United Kingdom, China and Brunei Darussalam. Agreements and memoranda seek to deepen political, economic, cultural and scientific co-operation.

At the United Nations General Assembly, Oman reiterated its commitment to good neighbourliness, sovereignty, non-interference, international law and the UN Charter. Amid regional tensions, it continues to call for dialogue, restraint, de-escalation and political solutions, supporting reconciliation, stability and maritime safety.

As Oman marks its National Day, its development drive and diplomacy reflect its ambition to build a diversified, competitive and sustainable economy and remain a trusted partner for co-operation and peace.



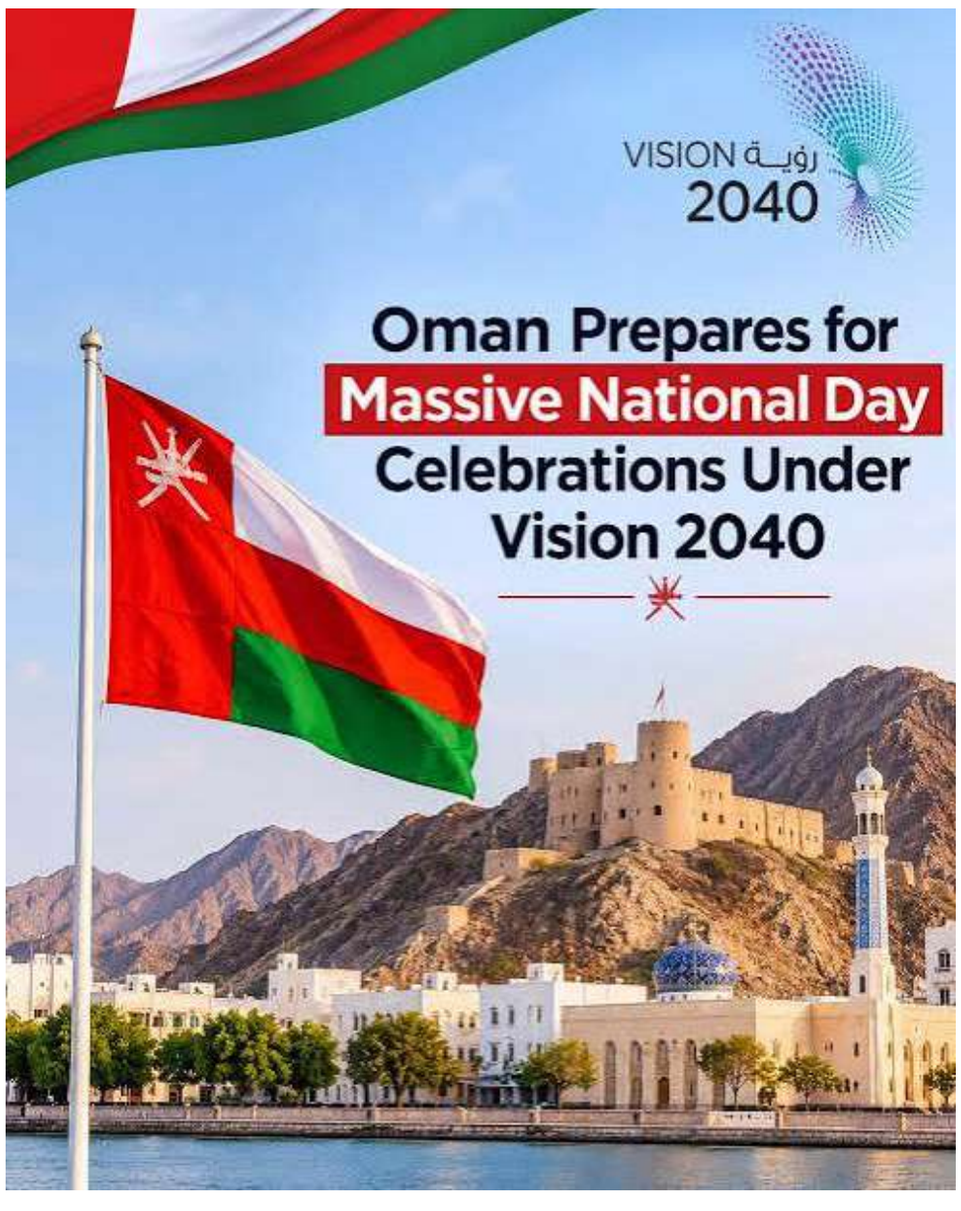
Oman's H.M. Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and French President Emmanuel Macron at their recent meeting in Paris.

Oman vision-2040 progressing well

The first-quarter report of Oman Vision- 2040 reviewed the outcome of the first five years (2021–2025) of the Vision's implementation. It also reviewed the most prominent updates and efforts in 2026.

The report examined the economic, legislative and institutional transformations witnessed by the Sultanate. It further addressed the projects and programmes that have been realised and that have contributed in expanding productive and service capacities, enhancing development in the governorates and improving services.

In addition, the report monitored the results of the indicators and foresaw the opportunities and challenges that shape the features of the next phase. The report is distributed across four interconnected chapters.



On the economic side, the performance of real GDP shifted from a contraction of 3.4pc in 2020 to growth of 2.4pc in 2025, with an average annual growth of about 3.2pc during the period from 2021 to 2025, indicating that economic activity has regained its growth path after the repercussions that accompanied the Covid-19 pandemic. At the level of the size of the economy, GDP at constant prices rose from RO 34.48 billion in 2021 to RO 39.29 billion in 2025, an increase of about 13.9pc.

During the early years of implementing Oman Vision 2040, a set of programmes and projects supporting growth and economic diversification were implemented, including investment, economic diversification and financial sustainability programmes, in addition to the expansion of renewable energy projects, green hydrogen, manufacturing industries, logistics services, tourism, and other promising sectors. These efforts contributed in strengthening the productive base of the national economy and raising the contribution of non-oil activities to growth. In the context of enhancing the role of the private sector in economic activity, the ratio of private investment to GDP rose from 15.7pc in 2020 to 16.8pc in 2025, with figures indicating the realisation of investments worth RO 7,073.4 billion in 2025.

The investment environment witnessed, during the early years of implementing Oman Vision 2040, a set of developments supporting the enhancement of the private sector's role, including the development of legislative frameworks regulating investment and public-private partnership, the launch of the "Invest Oman" platform, the activation of the investor residency system, the expansion of partnership projects in multiple sectors, and the establishment of the Future Fund Oman, which contributed to supporting investment in promising economic sectors.



THE REMARKABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH



The Sultanate of Oman has experienced remarkable economic growth since 2004, primarily driven by the exploitation of its oil reserves. Despite a contraction due to the pandemic, Oman's economic recovery continued in 2022 (+4.3pc of GDP) and 2023 (+1.2pc), supported by favourable hydrocarbon revenues. According to official governmental figures, Oman's GDP at constant prices rose 1.6pc year-on-year in 2024 to OMR 37.7 billion (US$98.1 billion), while GDP at current prices dropped three per cent to OMR 40.7 billion, driven by weaker oil activity.

Non-oil sectors grew 3.7pc , led by manufacturing (+8.5pc), wholesale and retail trade (+7.1pc), and financial services (+3.5pc). Oil-related activities declined 3.6pc in real terms due to lower crude output and prices. According to the IMF, real GDP growth is expected to rebound to 2.6pc in 2025, driven by recovering hydrocarbon output (+1.0pc) as OPEC+ cuts ease, and stronger non-hydrocarbon growth (+3.4pc) supported by construction, manufacturing and services. Over the medium term, non-hydrocarbon activity is set to rise to 4.2pc as major private investments are rolled out.

Oman has made significant progress in strengthening its fiscal and external positions while advancing the implementation of Oman Vision 2040. The Medium-Term Fiscal Plan (MTFP), initiated in 2020, has played a crucial role in achieving fiscal sustainability by diversifying revenue streams, controlling expenditures, and prudently managing hydrocarbon windfall savings. The overall budget recorded a surplus of OMR 520 million, compared with

(Cont. on page - 5)

Expats form 43pc of Oman's workforce

Oman has a workforce of 2.69 million out of its five million population of whom about 43pc are expatriates. Prior to the discovery of oilfields, Oman was virtually a subsistence economy that was entirely based on agriculture and fisheries. Nowadays, the latter contributes only marginally to GDP (2.8pc) and employs 5.9pc of the workforce (World Bank, latest data available). Agricultural production is mainly composed of dates, limes and bananas, and owing to the lack of fertile land the country needs to import from international markets. In the agricultural season of 2022/2023, wheat production in the Sultanate of Oman saw a remarkable surge of 229pc, totalling 7,119 tonnes. Additionally, the number of farmers increased by 22pc and the area dedicated to wheat cultivation expanded by 160pc year-on-year to 6,359 acres, according to data from the Ministry of Agriculture.

Moreover, the government has recently implemented various initiatives to support the sector, including the provision of fortified wheat seeds and modern harvesting equipment.

Industry

The industrial sector accounts for 52.7 pc of GDP and employs 39.4pc of the workforce (World Bank). Its share has increased considerably in the last two decades (employment in industries was as low as 11pc in 2000) as Oman increasingly uses enhanced oil recovery techniques and supports mining and manufacturing. The manufacturing sector alone is estimated to contribute to nine per cent of GDP.

However, the country is heavily dependent on oil and gas resources, which generate between 70pc and 85pc of government revenue on average, depending on fluctuations in commodity prices. According to the National Centre for Statistics and Information, Oman's manufacturing sector grew over 10pc in H1 2024 year-on-year, with output at fixed prices

Indians account for about 20pc of Oman's total population. This includes roughly 676,781 NRIs and about 2,000 Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) who hold Omani citizenship.



establishments, attract local investment and boost the sector's GDP contribution. By the end of 2024, industrial licences in special economic and free zones rose to 183, with industrial cities accounting for 125 or 68pc of the total.

The services sector accounts for 47.2pc of GDP and 54.6pc of the workforce (down from 82.4pc in 2000). In 2026, oil production is projected to grow by more than four per cent with agriculture growing by 6.1pc, industry by 2.8pc and services by 3.2pc. Manufacturing and services anchor non-oil resilience, while logistics and tourism have been affected by the conflict; hydrocarbons and fertilisers are named as main exports.

Foreign trade

Oman's economy is highly open, with trade constituting approximately 101pc of the country's GDP, according to the World Bank. The Sultanate primarily exports hydrocarbons and petrochemicals but has been striving to diversify its economy in recent years, with an increasing share of industrial products in total exports. In 2023, exports of oil accounted for 57.6pc of total exports, while liquefied natural gas recorded a share of 11.6pc. Other exports included iron ores (2.9pc) and fertilisers (two per cent).

THE REMARKABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

(Cont. from page - 4)

OMR 830 million in the same period of 2023.

MGovernment revenues rose four per cent to OMR 10.2 billion by Oct 2024, driven by oil revenues (+11pc), goods and services taxes (+18pc) and stable non-oil receipts. Public spending increased eight per cent to OMR 9.68 billion, including higher allocations for development projects and sectoral subsidies. The 2025 budget aims to maintain fiscal discipline, further reducing the non-hydrocarbon primary deficit, while keeping spending on social safety nets largely unchanged compared with 2024. Government net financial assets are projected to turn positive in 2025 for the first time since 2017, rising to 6.8pc of GDP by 2029, driven by asset accumulation and modest deleveraging as debt approaches 30pc of GDP. Oman is assessed to be at low risk of sovereign debt stress, supported by strong financial buffers that mitigate liquidity and solvency risks.

Oman poised for sustained tourism growth

Oman is expected to emerge as one of the Middle East's strongest long-term tourism growth markets despite short-term geopolitical disruptions weighing on the regional travel industry, according to new forecasts released by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC).

The WTTC's latest Economic Impact Research (EIR) says Oman's travel and tourism economy will expand from $7.9 billion in 2025 to $12 billion by 2036, supported by continued investment in tourism infrastructure, destination development and economic diversification. The positive outlook comes even as the Middle East is forecast to be the only global region to record a decline in travel and tourism GDP this year. WTTC estimates the sector will contract by 14.5pc from $386 billion in 2025 to $330 billion in 2026, reflecting the impact of regional conflict on airspace and travel flows through one of the world's most important aviation hubs, which handles around 14pc of international passenger traffic.

Despite these near-term challenges, WTTC expects the MidEast to become the world's fastest-growing travel and tourism region between 2026 and 2036, with sector GDP projected to grow at an average annual rate of 6.3pc to reach $605 billion by 2036.



The recovery is expected to be led by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman and Qatar, which together generated $272 billion in travel and tourism GDP in 2025 and are projected to increase this figure to $435 billion by 2036.

Saudi Arabia remains the region's largest growth story with travel and tourism contributing 14.1pc of GDP and international visitor spending forecast to more than double over the next decade. The kingdom also recorded 19.4pc growth in tourism investment in 2025, driven by Vision 2030 reforms and a pipeline of large-scale tourism developments.

The UAE continues to benefit from its mature tourism ecosystem, with the sector accounting for 11.9pc of GDP and nearly $57 billion in international visitor spending. Qatar, meanwhile, continues to leverage its global profile, with visitor spending accounting for 94.1pc of all services exports.



H.M. Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said
Sultanate of Oman



H.E. Mahboob bin Issa Al Raisi
Consul General of the
Sultanate of Oman in Mumbai

Congratulations
& best wishes on
the occasion of the

56th

OMAN NATIONAL DAY

Friday, November 20, 2026

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OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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West Asia war impacts Kerala's aviation sector more

KOZHIKODE: Kerala's aviation market has borne the brunt of disruptions in West Asia, with scheduled airline capacity contracting 28.6pc during April-Nov, the steepest decline among major Indian states, as the Iran-US war triggered uncertainty over Gulf connectivity and disrupted travel plans of expatriates and migrant workers.

The conflict, which broke out in late Feb, prompted airspace restrictions and flight disruptions across West Asia, leaving many travellers stranded or scrambling to return home. Uncertainty over the security situation also weighed on travel decisions, particularly in Kerala, the country's largest migrant-sending region, where a substantial share of overseas workers is based in Gulf countries.

Airlines scheduled 6.13 million departing seats from Kerala during the eight-month period, down from 8.58 million a year earlier, according to an analysis of data from aviation analytics firm OAG. The contraction represents approximately 2.46 million fewer seats than in the corresponding period last year. The figures include both domestic and international scheduled departures.

The decline has been sustained throughout the period, with capacity falling year-on-year in every month. The reduction was particularly sharp in June, at 36.4 pc followed by 35pc in May and 29.4pc in April. Capacity contracted 27.1 pc in July, 22.7pc in August, 26.2pc in Sept, 27pc in Oct and 24.7pc in Nov.

The contraction is substantially sharper than the national trend. The country's overall scheduled capacity declined 1.2pc during April-Nov, with domestic capacity falling 0.5pc and international capacity contracting 2.7pc.

Kerala's dependence on overseas employment, particularly in the Gulf, makes it especially vulnerable to geopolitical disruptions affecting international aviation. The Kerala Migration Survey 2023 estimated 2.2 million emigrants from the state, with 80.5pc heading to GCC countries. Air connectivity is a crucial link for migrant workers travelling between employment destinations and their families, as well as for returning expatriates.

The impact of the West Asia

(Cont. on page - 2)

US plans stricter green card rules, longer hiring process for foreign workers

WASHINGTON: The US has proposed stricter rules for employment-based green cards for foreign workers to ensure Americans get priority in recruitment for jobs ranging from physical therapists and nurses to highly skilled professionals.

The Department of Labour has proposed a new rule to modernise the labour market test under the Programme Electronic Review Management (PERM) immigrant visa process, marking the first major revision of the rules in 20 years.

Under the proposed changes, employers would be prohibited from tailoring job opportunities to foreign workers. The rule would require employers to level the playing field during recruitment by using the same channels and methods to advertise vacancies.

The proposal seeks to replace traditional print advertisements with online recruitment through employer websites, job portals, social media platforms, job fairs and campus recruitment.

It would also extend the minimum advertising period for vacancies from the existing 30 days to 90 calendar days and require employers to demonstrate that they had made genuine efforts to recruit qualified American workers.

"This proposed rule change will ensure American workers are first in line for high-skilled, high-paying job opportunities over

(Cont. on page - 6)

Taj Ginger partners with Lords Hotels

MUMBAI: Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), which owns and runs the Taj group of hotels, has announced Ginger's foray into franchising through a strategic partnership with Lords Hotels & Resorts. As part of the partnership, Lords Hotels & Resorts will transition select hotels from its existing portfolio to the Ginger brand. The arrangement will also cover future hotel signings.

The partnership will begin with three hotels in Goa, Kota and Gandhidham. IHCL aims to

(Cont. on page - 2)

Air connectivity between India, Egypt to be strengthened

CAIRO: The Indian government has been looking at measures such as increasing bank credit allocation to the aircraft leasing sector and considering rupee-denominated financing and regulatory changes to make aircraft leasing easier for airlines. India's commercial airlines are poised to order an additional 1,000 planes to expand operations amid the rising demand for air travel.



Addressing journalists in Egypt, the minister said India's airlines such as IndiGo, Air India and Akasa had already placed orders for more than 1,200 planes with Boeing and Airbus. Still, the total requirement is more than 2,000 aircraft. He further said the airlines are asking aircraft manufacturers to speed up deliveries to meet growing demand for air travel.

Goyal also said that air connectivity between India and Egypt would improve as airlines expanded their fleets, enabling them to add more flights on the route. The minister is on a two-day official visit to Egypt for talks on strengthening bilateral trade and investment ties between the two countries.

India's aviation sector is expected to expand rapidly, with its commercial aircraft fleet projected to grow at an annual rate of 7.1pc between 2026 and 2036, according to consultancy Oliver Wyman's 2026 forecast. This is among the highest pro-

(Cont. on page - 2)

Deepak Rajawat AI Express CEO



DUBAI: Air India Express has appointed its current chief financial officer, Deepak Rajawat, as its new CEO, effective Dec 1, 2026, as the Tata Group-owned budget airline continues to expand its fleet and route network across India and international markets, including West Asia. Rajawat, an aviation executive with more than two decades of experience, takes the helm at a time when Air India Express is expanding its operations and strengthening its in-

(Cont. on page - 2)

Inflation again

Till recently, we were discussing problems of plenty in India. Rice, milk or any other edible items, there was practically no scarcity and within reasonable prices. But India's retail inflation is now hitting its highest level (in two years) indicating weakening purchasing power and a squeeze on household budgets. Measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) at 6.09pc last month, inflation has crossed the RBI's upper tolerance projection limit of six per cent. This is likely to keep monthly instalments on loans elevated for a longer period. Food prices, which account for nearly 40pc of the price index, continue to be a major contributor. Vegetables, pulses and groceries are costlier, while grains, oilseeds and sugar are seeing simultaneous price pressures. Food inflation accelerated to 8.94pc in October.

Editorial By EL Vaidyanathan

A private analysis showed that the rate had increased for 12 straight months after bottoming out at 0.04pc in Oct 2025. In Oct 2026, the food-inflation rate, at about nine per cent, was the key driver of the headline rate though the core rate too inched up. Almost all economists agree that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of RBI will increase the policy repo rate by another 25 basis points in its Dec meeting, following a 25-basis point increase in the Oct meeting to 5.5pc.

The MPC in Oct had projected the retail-inflation rate at six per cent for this quarter and 5.7pc for the next. The rate was projected at 5.6pc for the first quarter of 2027-28. The latest inflation rate published by a financial newspaper has pushed the real repo rate into negative territory, making a policy-rate adjustment necessary. The extent of adjustment in the December meeting and later will depend on several factors, such as the inflation projection for next financial year, prospects of second-order effects through higher food prices and the level of the real policy rate the central bank is willing to maintain at this stage.

An earlier study by RBI economists had estimated the neutral rate — the real policy rate that is neither expansionary nor contractionary - at 1.4 - 1.9pc. It is possible that it has changed. Even assuming that RBI is comfortable maintaining the real policy rate at 1-1.25pc, the repo rate needs to be adjusted by 50-75 basis points, given that the central bank expects the inflation rate to average five per cent in 2027-28, according to its latest biannual Monetary Policy Report (Oct). However, much depends on possible shifts in inflation projections. The monsoon season ended with a rainfall deficit of about 13pc as against the long-period average. Given the expected strong El Niño conditions, with adverse implications for rain in winter and lower reservoir levels, agricultural output could also be affected in the rabi season, potentially keeping food prices high.

Inflation is the silent killer of governments. It may be recalled that in the early 1980s, inflation was blamed on onion prices and this resulted in the downfall of a state government. Inflation pinches all. With some state elections around the corner, inflation can play spoilsport for the BJP government. Both RBI and the govt will have to step in without wasting time.

LIPSYNCH

"It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop." --- **Confucius**

Taj Ginger partners with...

(**Cont. from page - 1**)

add 50 hotels to Ginger's portfolio over the next 24 months through this collaboration.

The hotels in Goa, Kota and Gandhidham will offer a range of amenities including all-day dining and meeting facilities addressing the needs of these markets. IHCL targets faster Ginger expansion through Lords partnership. Puneet Chhatwal, MD and CEO of IHCL, said: "This strategic alliance of a franchise platform marks a significant milestone in strengthening Ginger's leadership and expanding its footprint in India's fast-growing mid-scale hospitality segment. He added: "The alliance combines Lords' operational strengths with IHCL's distribution reach, loyalty network and brand standards to accelerate Ginger's growth. It advances our strategy of building scale and growing fee income through capital-light expansion."

Lords Hotels looks to expand footprint through Ginger franchise Pushpendra Bansal, CEO, Lords Hotels & Resorts, said: "Ginger has demonstrated strong performance across diverse markets and emerged as a preferred brand in India's mid-scale segment. Backed by IHCL's extensive distribution network and powerful loyalty ecosystem, it offers a compelling proposition for hotel owners.

"This collaboration marks a significant milestone in Lords growth journey, enabling us to expand our footprint across high-potential markets, accelerate hotel signings and create greater value for our ownership partners. By combining Ginger's brand strength with Lords proven development and operational expertise, we are well-positioned to drive scalable and sustainable growth in the years ahead."

The Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) is India's largest hospitality company by market capitalisation. Founded by Jamsetji Tata, the company opened its first hotel, The Taj Mahal Palace in Mumbai, in 1903.

Deepak Rajawat Al...

(**Cont. from page - 1**)

tegration within the wider Air India Group.

He replaces Aloke Singh, the former managing director and CEO of Air India Express, who stepped down on March 19 after more than five years at the airline. The airline currently operates about 585 daily flights connecting 48 domestic and 17 international destinations across South, Southeast and West Asia. Its fleet comprises 108 Boeing 737 and Airbus A320 family aircraft.

Air India Express Chairman Nipun Aggarwal said Rajawat's experience across finance, commercial operations and airline strategy would support the carrier's next phase of growth. "Deepak brings a rare combination of financial expertise, commercial acumen and deep aviation experience, built over more than a decade across the Tata group's airlines," Aggarwal said.

Aggarwal added that Rajawat's leadership would help the airline build on its existing momentum while creating closer operational and commercial links across the Air India Group.Before joining Air India Express, Rajawat held several senior leadership positions at Vistara, where he had been associated with the airline since its inception.

West Asia war impacts...

(**Cont. from page - 1**)

conflict on international connectivity has been particularly visible at Calicut airport. In its consultation paper on airport tariffs, the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERA) noted that international passengers account for approximately 75pc of the airport's passenger traffic. It explicitly attributed weakness in international traffic to geopolitical tensions in the MidEast, including the US-Iran war.

Calicut handled 2.92 million international passengers in FY26, down from 2.97 million in the previous year, while total passenger traffic stood at 3.86 million. AERA said international passenger traffic had contracted about two per cent during the financial year, citing geopolitical developments affecting civil aviation.

The capacity squeeze is not confined to Kerala alone. Telangana and Tamil Nadu recorded cumulative reductions of 11.7pc and 10.3pc respectively, during April-Nov while Goa saw a 12pc decline.

Karnataka's contraction was limited to two per cent while Delhi and Maharashtra recorded growth of 5.6pc and 7.3pc , respectively. However, the contraction in Kerala was significantly steeper than in any of these states, making it the worst-affected major aviation market in the country.

Air connectivity between India...

(**Cont. from page - 1**)

jected growth rates in the global aviation market. According to figures compiled by the ministry of civil aviation, several large orders placed by Indian carriers were still awaiting delivery, with some aircraft scheduled for induction as late as 2034. Aircraft manufacturers appear to be saddled with large order backlogs from airlines worldwide, while shortages of engines and other components have affected production and delivery schedules.

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FOREX RATES

As on 19th November 2026 (In rupees)

Currency	Bill Buy	Bill Sell
US Dollar	92.59	93.81
British Pound	121.79	123.51
Euro	101.38	103.53
Japanese Yen	57.97	58.9
Swiss Franc (CHF)	109.38	111.76
Canadian Dollar	64.37	65.82
Australian Dollar	61.84	63.22
Norwegian Krone	9.42	9.7
Swedish Krona	9.02	9.28
New Zealand Dollar	50.69	51.85
Hong Kong Dollar	11.65	12.01
Kuwaiti Dinar	308.4551	296.343
Singapore Dollar	71.51	73.11
Saudi Arabian Riyal	24.36	25.13
U A E Dirham	24.94	25.66



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India to achieve $1trn exports in current year

NEW DELHI: India is well on course to achieve its ambitious $1-trillion export target for the current financial year with exports of goods and services reaching around $480 billion in the first- half, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said, expressing confidence that the second-half would deliver stronger growth.

Addressing the curtain-raiser for the third edition of Bharat Mobility Global Expo, scheduled for Feb 4-9, 2027, Goyal said India had already achieved about 48pc of its annual export target in the first six months, while September's export performance had reinforced the positive outlook. He hinted at a strong October performance, saying the numbers, to be released on Nov 15, would come as a surprise.

"Our $1-trillion export target this year is sacrosanct. We have to achieve it," Goyal said. On the India-EU trade agreement, Goyal said opening up India's automobile market should be seen as an opportunity to attract European manufacturers to set up production facilities in the country rather than merely increase imports. European automakers facing high manufacturing costs and regulatory pressures at home could use India as a manufacturing and export hub, given its large domestic market, competitive costs and growing component ecosystem.

July-Sept unemployment rate falls to five per cent as rural joblessness declines

NEW DELHI: India's unemployment rate declined to 5.1pc during July-Sept 2026 from 5.4pc in the previous quarter, mainly due to a fall in unemployment in rural areas.

The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), showed that rural unemployment fell to 4.3pc from 4.8pc in April–June 2026. However, unemployment in urban areas increased slightly to 6.8pc from 6.7pc.

The ministry stated: "Overall UR for persons of age 15 years and above improved to 5.1pc during the current quarter, compared with 5.4pc in the previous quarter."The data also showed that more people were working or looking for jobs during the quarter.

The share of people aged 15 years and above who were either employed or seeking employment increased to 55.5pc from 54.6pc in the previous quarter.

In rural areas, this share rose to 58.1pc from 56.9pc while in urban areas it decreased marginally to 50.4pc from 50.2pc. The proportion of people who were actually employed also improved to 52.7pc from 51.7pc in the previous quarter.



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Probation within three months for monthly-paid workers

MUSCAT: The ministry of labour has clarified the regulations governing probation periods in employment contracts, stating that the probation period cannot exceed three months for workers receiving monthly salaries and two months for those paid on a different basis.

According to the ministry, an employee cannot be placed on probation more than once with the same employer. The ministry also clarified that the probation period will be counted as part of the employee's overall service period if the worker successfully completes probation.

Both employers and employees have the right to terminate an employment contract during the probation period if it becomes evident that continuing the employment relationship is unsuitable.

However, the party seeking termination must notify the other party at least seven days in advance. The ministry highlighted these provisions as part of its efforts to raise awareness of employment regulations and ensure that both employers and employees understand their rights and obligations under Oman's Labour Law.

IndiGo ranked world's top 10 most reliable airlines



NEW DELHLI: IndiGo has earned international recognition after securing the sixth position in TIME's "Most Reliable Airlines 2027" ranking. The achievement places the Indian carrier among the world's top 10 airlines for operational reliability, while Ireland's Ryanair has claimed the number one spot. Air India has also featured in the category, securing the 37th position.

The rankings are part of TIME's inaugural "World's Best Airlines 2027" list, which evaluates airlines on passenger experience and operational performance. While neither IndiGo nor Air India made it to the overall list of 100 best airlines, their appearances in the reliability category offer Indian aviation a notable mention on the global stage. Meanwhile, Emirates topped the overall rankings, emerging as the world's best airline for 2027.

Ryanair secured the first position in the Most Reliable Airlines category, followed by four US-based carriers in the next four spots. IndiGo entered the top 10 at number six, making it the highest-ranked Indian airline in this category. Air India Express, meanwhile, occupied the 37th position.

The reliability ranking focuses on actual flight operations rather than just passenger feedback. It considers factors such as punctuality and flight cancellation rates, using independent aviation data supplied by OAG.

Indian court has jurisdiction to decide divorce of couple who acquired Canadian citizenship

MUMBAI: The Bombay High Court ruled that the family court at Latur holds territorial jurisdiction to decide on a divorce petition under the Hindu Marriage Act (HMA), even though the couple had acquired Canadian citizenship after marriage and the wife continues to reside in Canada.

Citing another High Court judgement, the Aurangabad bench of the High Court observed that a Hindu marriage can be dissolved only under HMA, and foreign courts have no jurisdiction to entertain such proceedings. "Thus, considering this position, even if the respondent-wife has filed divorce petition in the court in Canada, the said court cannot be said to have jurisdiction to entertain such proceedings," the division bench of justices Sandipkumar More and Vaishali Patil-Jadhav said.

The decision is significant as determining the territorial jurisdiction of courts would impact divorce proceedings under the HMA between warring partners living in different countries. The judges clarified that the family court in Latur had "definitely erred" in holding that it lacked the territorial jurisdiction to hear the husband's petition seeking divorce under the HMA.

The court was hearing a petition filed by the 41-year-old man against his 42-year-old wife, who lives in Calgary in Canada. They met via social media in 2007, when the man lived in Chicago, US and the woman in Toronto, Canada. They got married in Borivali in Dec 2008, whereas their marriage was registered under the HMA in Latur, the man's native place. After marriage, the couple moved to the US and later Canada, where they obtained citizenship in 2013 while continuing to hold Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI). In 2015, they had a son. The couple jointly owned two properties in Canada and one in Bengaluru.

In 2019, the couple visited Latur for the man's sister's wedding. They fell out bitterly while in Latur, following which the woman returned to Canada while the husband stayed back.

According to his petition, he even went back to Canada urging his wife to reconcile but she filed a petition seeking divorce in Canada. The husband claimed that at the time of filing his divorce petition in 2022, he lived in Latur while his wife lived in Canada, a place which is outside the territories to which the HMA applies. Challenging the Latur family court's March 15, 2023 decision in which it held that it lacked territorial jurisdiction, he argued that the court had territorial jurisdiction under section 19 (iv) of the HMA.

The court noted that section 19 of the HMA states where a divorce petition can be filed while clause (iv) under it states that the petition can be filed "where the petitioner is residing at the time of the presentation of the petition, in a case where the respondent is, at that time, residing outside the territories to which this Act extends".

The wife's lawyer argued that she was never domiciled in India and the proceedings before the court in Canada preceded the husband's divorce petition in Latur in 2022. The husband had also participated in the court proceedings in Canada and subjected himself to that court's orders, the lawyer said.

US plans stricter green card...

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foreign labour," Secretary of Labour Keith Sonderling said.

The department also proposes eliminating the administrative exemption that allowed employers to bypass the statutory labour market test for certain occupations.

Under the revised framework, employers recruiting physical therapists, nurses and candidates for positions requiring exceptional ability in the sciences or arts would have to consider qualified American applicants. The proposal also seeks to strengthen safeguards for American workers who have been laid off. Employers would be required to continue considering qualified laid-off workers throughout the labour certification and immigrant petition processes. It would also bar certain employers who have laid off American workers within the preceding two years from seeking permanent labour certification for the same or similar positions.

PERM labour certification is the first step for most US employers seeking to sponsor foreign nationals for permanent residency. Under the existing process, employers must test the domestic labour market and establish that no able, willing, qualified and available American worker has applied for the position.

The Labour Department said the current rules no longer reflect contemporary recruitment practices and allow some employers to use different hiring procedures for sponsored positions than those followed for regular vacancies.