



# OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

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## Daman-Delhi direct flight takes off

**DAMAN:** Direct air travel between Daman and New Delhi officially began with the launch of the first scheduled commercial flight from NAMO Airport, Daman.

The inaugural flight was flagged off by Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu in the presence of Praful Patel, Administrator of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. The new



**Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu with Praful Patel, Administrator of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, flagged off the direct flight from Daman to New Delhi.**

flight service gives Daman its first regular commercial air connection with the national capital. It is expected to make travel faster and more convenient for passengers while improving connectivity, boosting tourism and supporting business and investment in the region.

**Daman-Delhi flight:** Schedule and Days of operation : Alliance Air has launched scheduled flights

on the Daman-Delhi-Daman route.

The flights will operate twice a week, every Monday and Wednesday, providing passengers with a direct and convenient travel option between Daman and the national capital.

The new service is expected to make travel easier for both tourists and business travellers while improving connectivity between the two cities. Mumbai-Daman-Ahmedabad flights coming soon: Apart

( Cont. on page - 2 )

## Why Emirates ID is required for expats flying back to UAE?

**DUBAI:** Summer is here and many UAE-based expats are packing their bags for a trip home to see family. But before you go, there's one essential item you can't afford to leave

behind: your Emirates ID.

Whether you're returning to the UAE from India, Canada or anywhere else, your airline may ask you to produce your Emirates ID as proof of residency before letting you board. Most residents carry theirs at all times, but it's easy to forget when traveling abroad and a digital version doesn't always work as a substitute.

"No boarding without the original": Why a digital Emirates ID may not always be enough? An Indian expat from Sharjah flew to Mangalore, but for-

( Cont. on page - 2 )



**Sapna Aidasani**  
(Marketing director,  
Pluto Travels)

## NRIs gift Equitas FCNR (B) deposits to loved ones as returns reach 7.52pc

**ABU DHABI:** NRIs work tirelessly across the globe to create wealth for their families back home. Whether it is funding their children's education, creating a safety net for ageing parents, planning weddings or building a long-term family corpus, financial decisions are increasingly driven by family goals rather than individual needs. However, finding the right investment avenue that protects capital while yielding high returns without forex and tax-

ation hassles remains a key challenge.

This is where FCNR (B) deposit stands out as a golden opportunity. By allowing NRIs to invest in the same foreign currency through FCNR (B) deposits, they can eliminate exchange rate /risk while offering assured returns. This way, NRIs are insulated from currency fluctuation costs without any risk.

To support NRIs with wealth creation, Equitas Small Finance Bank has enhanced its FCNR (B) de-

posit interest rates for US dollars, allowing NRIs to earn an industry-leading 7.52pc on deposits with tenures ranging from three to five years (applicable on \$10,000 and above).

The revised rate creates a unique opportunity for NRIs to grow their overseas earnings and create dedicated savings pools for family milestones and future aspirations.

FCNR (B) deposits are the new gold today. And NRIs are gifting FCNR (B) de-

( Cont. on page - 2 )

## Exit Iran, Indians advised

**NEW DELHI:** India has advised its nationals to postpone travel to Iran until the security situation improves and urged those already in the country to consider leaving through available commercial flights amid rising instability and conflict.

In a revised travel advisory, the Indian embassy in Tehran underlined that the "recent days have seen an increase in levels of instability and conflict in Iran", necessitating heightened caution for Indian nationals.

"Indian nationals intending to travel to Iran for any purpose should postpone travel for the time being, until the security environment improves," the mission said. It advised Indians already in Iran to consider temporarily exiting the country using available flight options.

Those choosing to remain in Iran have been asked to exercise the "highest possible level of caution", the embassy said.

"They should carefully monitor the news to

maintain full situational awareness and should avoid locations seeing higher levels of military activity such as those along the southern coast of the country," it said.

The embassy also urged Indian nationals to comply with instructions issued by local authorities. It asked all Indians in Iran who have not yet registered with the embassy to do so immediately and to regularly monitor the mission's website and social media handles for further updates.



## Abu Dhabi airport extends 22 direct flights to Indian cities

**ABU DHABI:** With India being a strong tourism market for Abu Dhabi, the city's Zayed International Airport is to increase direct flights to 22 Indian cities in August, according to a senior executive.

Currently, the airport has 17 direct connections to Indian cities. "We have now, as we speak, 17 cities which are online with Abu Dhabi Airport and in August that number will

( Cont. on page - 2 )

# Travelling to Oman: Do not carry prohibited goods

**MUSCAT:** The Directorate General of Customs of the Royal Oman Police (ROP) warned inbound travellers against importing or carrying prohibited goods into the Sultanate of Oman.

These goods are included in the Prohibited

List in accordance with the provisions of the Unified Customs Law of the Co-operation Council for the Gulf States and relevant national legislations.

The items include narcotics and psychotropic substances, explosives,

tools and clothing resembling military clothing, weapons of all kinds and goods that conceal their true nature, such as sticks containing hidden spears or swords, toy guns and pistols resembling weapons and rifle scopes and night vision scopes, rifle

scopes and night vision scopes, stun guns, teasers and ivory.

It may be noted that it is not permissible to import goods that are prohibited internationally or locally or that are subject to international agreements and treaties in force and

local regulations, as well as counterfeit and falsified goods, or contrary to approved specifications or intellectual property rights. The Unified Customs Regulation Law of the GCC States integrates the customs procedures of the GCC States.



## ITC acquires Ahmedabad's Welcome Hotel

**MUMBAI:** ITC Hotels has acquired a hotel in Ahmedabad, the company's second acquisition in three months, as the hospitality major continued with its strategy to grow with managed assets and own properties.

The acquisition of GHK Hospitality and Infrastructures (GHK), which owns the 130-key Welcome Hto-

tel, Ahmedabad, was carried out at an enterprise value of Rs 155 crore. At present, the property is managed by ITC Hotels under an operating services agreement.

The company said the acquisition would expand ITC Hotels' owned portfolio in Ahmedabad as it already has an owned asset in the city in ITC Nar-

mada, a Luxury Collection hotel. Transitioning this established property from a managed contract to full (Cont. on page - 6)

## NRIs gift Equitas FCNR (B) deposits...

(Cont. from page - 1) posits to family members, enabling them to enjoy the benefits of tax-free returns of 7.52pc along with capital protection and freedom from currency conversion risks. Unlike traditional gifts that often wither over time, an FCNR (B) deposit grows steadily and creates lasting value.

For NRIs, it is a meaningful way to stay financially connected with family back home and plan long-term investments in foreign currency.

By earmarking savings for specific family goals, this simple deposit can evolve into a thoughtful

## Daman-Delhi direct flight...

(Cont. from page - 1) from the newly launched Delhi service, flights on the Mumbai-Daman-Ahmedabad route are also expected to begin soon.

The new route will give passengers more travel options and further improve air connectivity from Daman. Once operational, the service will directly connect Daman with Mumbai and

**NEW DELHI:** Airfares will come down from elevated levels once more capacity is added and jet fuel prices cool down, said Nipun Agarwal, chief commercial officer of Air India.

Ticket prices have surged sharply over the last four months in the wake of the West Asia crisis, which pushed up oil prices worldwide. The geopolitical tus-

sle and its impact on energy prices and airspace in the region also forced airlines to cut down their capacity to tide over operational challenges.

Agarwal added that the Pakistan airspace closure, in effect since March 2025, remains a big concern. "I think the airspace between Iran and Iraq should be (Cont. on page - 6)

financial legacy that continues to support the aspirations and well-being of loved ones for years to come.

RBI initiative creates a timely opportunity. The hike in Equitas FCNR (B) deposit rates comes against the backdrop of RBI special FCNR (B) swap facility introduced in June 2026 to encourage foreign currency inflows into India.

Applicable to fresh FCNR (B) deposits, the facility significantly reduces the hedging costs that banks typically incur while raising FCNR deposits. By lowering these costs, banks are in a better position to of-

fer more attractive returns to customers, resulting in higher deposit rates for NRIs.

## Abu Dhabi airport extends...

(Cont. from page - 1) go from 17 cities to 22, which is already an amazing growth," Abu Dhabi Airports Chief Commercial Officer Carsten Norland said. He was speaking at a panel discussion in Abu Dhabi in connection with the launch of new flights to the city by Air India Express. The Tata Group-owned airline this week started flights to Abu Dhabi from Navi Mumbai, Indore and Lucknow. It will commence services from Guwahati to the Gulf city next month.

"India is a really strong market. The number of passengers coming here from India is growing more than 20pc every year. We are running out of traffic rights," Norland said. According to him, there is a high demand for more capacity and more destinations.

## Why Emirates ID is required...

(Cont. from page - 1) got his Emirates ID. When he arrived at the airport to board his return flight to the UAE, he was denied boarding. He had to cancel his trip, wait five days for his ID to be couriered, missed work and even faced a salary deduction.

This incident was shared by Sapna Aidasani, marketing director at Pluto Travels in Dubai.

"Even if no one checks it when you're leaving the UAE, Indian immigration and airline staff, especially in cities like Mumbai or Delhi, often ask for your Emirates ID before letting you board a flight to the UAE. Why? Because your residence visa is now linked to your Emirates ID, and it is the only way to prove you are a UAE resident," Aidasani explained.

To avoid this, it's worth

checking with your airline before you travel to confirm whether a physical or digital copy will be accepted.

Another Sharjah-based expat travelling from Kerala faced the same issue. Even after presenting his UAE residence visa and digital Emirates ID through the UAE Pass app - the official government platform for verified digital documents, the airline rejected it and insisted on seeing the original physical card. "A lot of people don't know this, but if you're travelling from India to Dubai, you must carry your physical Emirates ID, not just a photo or digital version," Aidasani added. "Do not rely on photocopies or screenshots. Always carry your original Emirates ID with you. It can save you a lot of stress and money."

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# Shares tumble due to weak sentiment

**MUMBAI:** Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled in early trade on Monday, dragged by heavy selling in blue-chip HDFC Bank and a sharp spike in crude oil prices due to the ongoing tensions between the US and Iran.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 523 points to 77,628 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty declined 134 points to 24,198.

From the Sensex pack, Axis Bank and HDFC Bank declined nearly five per cent after announcing their quarterly earnings over the weekend."HDFC Bank has disappointed, particularly on the NIM front," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Kotak Mahindra Bank, InterGlobe Aviation, Maruti and Bajaj Finance were also among the laggards from the blue-chip pack. Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, NTPC, Reliance Industries and ICICI Bank were among the gainers.

Reliance , India's most valuable company, traded

nearly one per cent higher after it reported record quarterly core profit and EBITDA for the June quarter, powered by strong performances across its oil-to-chemicals and telecom businesses.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, quoted 2.41pc higher at US\$90.22

per barrel."There are near-term headwinds and tailwinds for the market now. The strongest headwind is Brent crude spiking above \$90 on escalating tensions between the US and Iran. If this trend continues, India's vulnerability to energy shock will resurface with negative implications for

the rupee and FPI flows," Vijayakumar said.

On the positive side, the weakening of the AI trade continues in markets like the US, South Korea and Taiwan, he said, adding that this can make markets like India attractive to the FPIs.

In Asian markets, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index quoted higher, while South Korea's KOSPI tanked 4.35pc. US markets ended lower on Friday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 376.41 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. On Friday, the Sensex had bounced back 964.58 points, or 1.25pc to settle at 78,151.45. The Nifty climbed 261.55 points or 1.09pc to end at 24,334.30.



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# GULF FAQs

## Can employers refuse summer annual leave due to staff shortage?

**I want to take a four-week leave during the summer break, but my boss wants me to postpone it because of a staff shortage during the summer months. Can my boss reject my leave application based on this reasoning? Aren't my annual leaves mine to take at my discretion, whenever I want?**



Pursuant to your queries, it is assumed that you are employed by a mainland company in the UAE. Therefore, the provisions of the UAE employment law and its ministerial and cabinet resolution are applicable. In the UAE, it is at the discretion of an employer to decide on dates of annual leave of its employees on rotation based on the work requirements.

This is in accordance with Article 29 (4) of Fed-

eral Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulation of Employment Relations (the "UAE Employment Law")

## Who pays for your UAE work health insurance?

**Can you please explain how health insurance for employees works?**

In the UAE, employers are legally required to provide and fund health insurance for their employees, a rule that also extends to

which states: "The employee shall use his leave in the year of entitlement. The employer may fix the

sponsors of domestic workers. However, the specifics can get complicated, as regulations vary by emirate and depend on factors like employment status and family circumstances.

While employers generally cover both employ-

dates of leave according to the work requirements and in agreement with the employee or rotate leaves among employees for the smooth progress of work and shall notify the employee of the date of his leave at least one month before the same."

However, an employer is obligated to grant annual leave to an employee at least once in two years unless an employee agrees to carry forward the annual leave or get

paid in lieu of leave by an employer. This is in accordance with Article 29(8) of the UAE Employment Law, which states: "The employer may not prevent the employee from using his accrued annual leave for more than two years unless the employee wants to carry it over or be paid in lieu of leave according to the establishment bylaws and as specified by the executive regulations of this Decree Law."

Based on the aforementioned provisions of law, your employer may decline your annual leave due to work requirements. Therefore, it is recommended that you may mutually agree your annual leave dates with your employer.

ees and their dependents, the type of policy and level of benefits differ across Abu Dhabi, Dubai and the northern emirates. The rules vary slightly from one emirate to the next, but one principle holds throughout the UAE: employees should never have to pay for their own mandatory work health insurance.

Employers, including companies based in free zones must provide and pay for their employees' health insurance. They are not permitted to deduct this cost from an employee's salary. Dependents, such as a spouse or children, must be insured by the sponsor if they aren't already covered under an employer's plan. Under the Dubai Health Insurance Law, every sponsor must provide at least an Essential Benefits Plan (EBP). Premiums for this plan typically range from Dh550 to Dh650, making sure that even lower-income employees have access to essential healthcare. Employers and sponsors must

provide health insurance for employees and their eligible dependents in line with the emirate's regulations. Coverage must extend to the employee, their legally sponsored spouse, and up to three children.

Since 2025, mandatory health insurance has been extended to private-sector employees and domestic workers across these emirates as well. Employers are responsible for purchasing the required policy at the time of issuing or renewing an employee's residency visa.

Your employer pays for your individual health insurance — this cost cannot be passed on to you. Coverage for family members or dependents depends on the emirate and whether your employer's plan already includes them; if not, the sponsor is responsible for arranging it separately. While the core principle is consistent nationwide, always check your specific emirate's rules, as coverage levels and requirements can differ.

## What to do if your employee stops showing up to work?

**I am a company owner. An employee has been absent for 11 days without reporting to work. We have tried to contact him several times, but he has not responded. I heard that I need to report this to the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MOHRE). What procedures should I follow in such a case?**

To answer this question, I would advise the questioner as follows: According to Article (28) of the Cabinet Resolution No. (1) of 2022 on the Implementation of Federal Decree-Law No. (33) of 2021, and subject to the provisions of Article (50) of the Decree-Law: The employer must notify the ministry if a worker unexpectedly abandons work, in accordance with the following rules and procedures:

a) The worker's absence from work must exceed seven consecutive days, without the employer knowing the

worker's whereabouts or being able to contact them.

The absence from work form must be completed in accordance with the procedures set by the ministry. If a foreign worker leaves work for an illegitimate reason before the end of their contract term, they will not be issued another work permit for a period of one year from the date of absence, except in the following cases:

- The worker holds a family-sponsored residency visa.
- The worker applies for a new work permit at the same establishment.
- The worker possesses professional qualifications, skills, or knowledge that are in demand in the UAE.
- The worker is a Golden Visa holder.
- The worker belongs to professional categories determined by a resolution of the minister based on labour market needs.

# India's gig internet workforce may triple to 17-21 million by 2030

**NEW DELHI:** India's monthly active gig internet workforce is expected to grow from more than six million at present to between 17 million and 21 million by 2030, according to a report by Bengaluru-based Redseer Strategy Consultants.

The report "Gig Internet workforce in India: bridge to around 20 million livelihoods" said platform-enabled gig work is emerging as a major source of livelihood and is set to become an important part of India's non-farm workforce over the next decade.

The report also highlighted that gig work is proving to be financially rewarding for many. Across delivery, ride-hailing and home services, full-time gig workers earn, on average, up to 2.5 times the monthly net income of workers in comparable formal and informal occupations. The findings suggest that the gig economy is no longer just about flexible work, but is steadily becoming an important employment option for millions. According to Redseer, digital platforms have evolved beyond offering flexible work arrangements and are now serving as an accessible entry point into

the labour market. They are also becoming a source of supplementary income for employed individuals and a stepping stone for those pursuing higher education, entrepreneurship or career transitions. The report found that 54pc of surveyed gig workers were not in paid employment before joining digital platforms. This indicates that the sector is helping expand workforce participation by lowering entry

barriers through flexible work schedules, digital onboarding and faster access to income. Redseer estimates that more than 30pc of gig workers by 2030 will be first-time entrants into the workforce. Nearly 70pc of surveyed workers also said their experience on gig platforms had improved their future earning prospects by helping them acquire transferable skills, build verifiable work experience.

## Alhind case: SC dismisses govt's plea to quash MEA tender process

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court has dismissed the Centre's challenge to the Delhi High Court's decision to quash the Ministry of External Affairs' (MEA) tender process for outsourcing passport, visa and consular services at Indian missions in the UAE to Alhind Tours.

The apex court also ensured there would be no disruption to services by allowing the MEA to make temporary arrangements until a fresh tender process is completed.

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant refused to interfere with the

Delhi High Court's ruling and directed the Centre to comply with its directions within three months.

To ensure uninterrupted passport and consular services, the Supreme Court modified the High Court's order. It allowed the MEA to continue with the existing service providers or temporarily engage the lowest (L-1) bidders whose contracts had earlier been set aside. The court also permitted the ministry to adopt any other suitable arrangement to keep services running at the four Indian missions.

The interim arrangement, the court clarified, will not create any special rights for any party and will remain in place only until a fresh tender process is completed. According to Live Law, a bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, Justice

Joymalya Bagchi and Justice V Mohana passed the order after hearing Solicitor General Tushar Mehta for the Union Government and Senior Advocates Kapil Sibal, AM Singhvi and Shyam Divan for the private parties (E Trav Tech Limited and Verasys Limited).

The government had challenged the Delhi High Court's July 15 judgment, which found serious flaws in the way bids submitted by private companies were evaluated for the outsourcing contracts.

The High Court had ruled that the technical evaluation process was unfair and lacked transparency, holding that it violated Article 14 of the Constitution, which guarantees equality before the law. During this morning's hearing, however, Chief Justice Surya Kant questioned the gov-

ernment's position, observing: "But you invited the High Court order by not giving grounds."

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta argued that the tender's marking system had to be interpreted practically across multiple bids and warned that a literal reading of the conditions could produce arbitrary outcomes. Justice Joymalya Bagchi responded that this was precisely the concern identified by the Delhi High Court.

"The High Court says that the terms governing the assessment of bids were not clearly reflected and that they created an unworkable situation. If that is so, then as per the law declared by this court, you cannot change the terms of a tender document after the tender process has commenced," Justice Bagchi observed.

## ITC acquires Ahmedabad's...

( Cont. from page - 2 ) ownership will help ITC to unlock greater value from the asset. "Ahmedabad continues to be one of India's most dynamic commercial and industrial centres, supported by significant infrastructure investments, strong long term demand fundamentals and a diversified demand base," said Anil Chadha, managing director of the company.

In May, ITC acquired a 72-key resort hotel at Kumarakom in Kerala's backwaters, entering the high-end leisure destination. The Zuri Kumarakom,

Kerala Resort & Spa was acquired at an enterprise value of Rs 205 crore. The hotel will be relaunched after refurbishment in the third quarter as ITC Hotels.

In addition to the inorganic growth, ITC Hotels is also building three properties in Puri, Vishakhapatnam and New Delhi, apart from expanding in Bhuvaneshwar.

The company has 5,700 keys under owned assets and is projected to ramp up to 7,500 by 2031. In comparison, the managed portfolio will grow to 15,000 by 2031, up from 8,600 in FY26.

## Pak airspace closure remains a concern...

( Cont. from page - 2 ) resolved soon. So that will provide a lot of relief. Pak airspace closure is an issue where we have no visibility right now. We are trying to rebalance what we can do. But beyond that, we have to live with it. If the issue remains for a long time, then it will remain an issue. But we are hoping

that, like in the past, this will not be an issue in the long run," he said.

"Airfares are market-driven, they move up and down with the demand and supply, and oil prices. So as the flights come back and the oil prices cool down, airfares will naturally come down as well. We don't fix the airfare. We

fix the price points, while the market determines at which price point the ticket is sold," said Agarwal on the sidelines of the FAITH Tourism Conclave in New Delhi. According to Agarwal, demand remains strong in domestic and short-haul routes, but in the long haul, demand has been impacted

## India world's 11th largest outbound spender

**NEW DELHI:** India has emerged as the world's 11th largest outbound travel spender, reflecting the growing spending power and global influence of Indian travellers, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC).

Speaking at the FAITH Conclave 2026, Gloria Guevara, President & CEO, WTTC, said India's expanding outbound market presents a significant opportunity for destinations worldwide. She noted that while Indians are travelling and spending more overseas, India must also focus on attracting high-value international visitors. Guevara urged greater investment in global marketing, seamless connectivity and visa facilitation to help the country convert its tourism potential into stronger inbound growth.