



# OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



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## Air India to start direct flights from Guwahati to Dubai and Abu Dhabi from August 4

**MUMBAI:** North-East's offer passengers a faster and more convenient way to travel, reducing the need for multiple stopovers in other cities. It will make long-distance journeys simpler and more comfortable for flyers from North-east India. The direct flights between Guwahati and Dubai will operate every Tuesday. The



flight from Guwahati will depart at 12:25 PM local time and arrive in Dubai at 4:10 PM local time. The return flight will leave Dubai at 5:10 PM local time and

reach Guwahati at 12:25 AM. Guwahati to Abu Dhabi Flight: Details and Timings: The direct flights between Guwahati and Abu Dhabi will operate every Wednesday. The outbound flight will depart Guwahati at 3:05 PM local time and arrive in Abu Dhabi at 6:50 PM local time. On the return journey, the flight will leave Abu Dhabi at 7:50 PM local time and land in Guwahati at 3:05 AM.

The launch of direct flights to Dubai and Abu Dhabi is expected to bring several benefits for Assam and the wider North-east (Cont. on page - 2)

## Kolkata's second airport coming up at Kalyani

**KOLKATA:** After Delhi and Mumbai, Kolkata will have a second airport. The West Bengal government has announced plans to develop an airport in Kalyani as part of its budget

2026 proposals. The announcement was made by West Bengal Finance Minister Swapan Dasgupta. The project is designed to ease pressure on the exist-

ing Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport and improve overall air connectivity in the region. The plan involves develop- (Cont. on page - 2)

## Akasa Air to expand capacity by 30pc

**MUMBAI:** Akasa Air plans to expand capacity by 30pc this fiscal year and maintain strong long-term

ing 737 MAX fleet, remains focused on capital strength and steady expansion across domestic and

grow its operational capacity by around 30pc in the current financial year, even as geopolitical tensions and rising fuel prices create challenges for the aviation sector. The airline's Chief Financial Officer Ankur Goel said that the long-term growth outlook remains intact and has not been reconsidered despite external uncertainties. The airline, which has been in operation for nearly four years, currently operates a fleet of 39 Boeing 737 MAX aircraft. Around 25pc of its total capacity is allocated to international routes, reflecting its gradual push into overseas markets alongside domestic expansion.



growth despite geopolitical uncertainty and rising fuel costs. The airline, operating a 39-aircraft Boe-

## Kerala to market Onam as tourism experience

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** Kerala is set to take its most popular cultural festival beyond state borders with the tourism department planning an aggressive campaign to market Onam as a unique experiential tourism product in neighbouring states. Tourism Minister PC Vishnunadh said that the focus would be on positioning Onam not just as a festival but as an immersive cultural (Cont. on page - 6)

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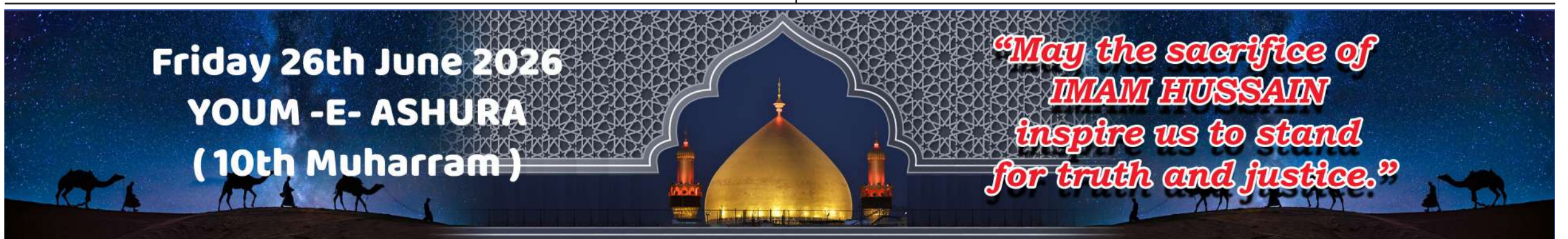
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**“May the sacrifice of  
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## Boost to Kerala tourism

Kerala's tourism sector is all set for a spectacular uplift with a Rs 325.36 crore budget allocation. What's more, the state government plans to grant industry status to tourism as well as cinema, boost hospitality, heritage, eco and medical tourism and develop new circuits. Key projects include enhancing Alappuzha's tourism infrastructure, expanding the Muziris heritage project and introducing "Green Marshals" for responsible tourism.

Presenting his maiden budget, Chief Minister VD Satheesan said steps would be taken to make tourism a priority sector in the state. "Necessary amendments to existing laws will be introduced to allow more land in plantation areas to be used for tourism purposes," he remarked. Satheesan said tourism amenity centres and houseboat terminals constructed under the Mega Tourism Circuit Project in Alappuzha district with central assistance during the UPA government's tenure would be renovated and put to effective use. A waste treatment plant would be established in Alappuzha to treat houseboat waste and other waste generated by tourism activities.

*Editorial*  
By EL Vaidyanathan

Pilgrim tourism is another sector to be developed. The CM announced a Pilgrimage Tourism Circuit Project in Alappuzha connecting destinations such as Arthunkal Basilica, Ambalappuzha Sree Krishna Temple, Kakkazham Mosque, Mannarasala Sree Nagaraja Temple, Krishnapuram Palace, Mata Amritanandamayi Math and Ochira Parabrahma Temple. On the eco-tourism front, a master plan-based project will be implemented for the comprehensive development of the Pathiramanal Island Centre. A ropeway connecting Muhamma Jetty and the island will also be introduced. Heritage tourism will not be left behind. The government has allocated Rs 19 crore for the Muziris Tourism Project. The Muziris Tourism Project will be expanded and transformed into India's foremost heritage tourism destination by promoting environmentally sustainable tourism while preserving the ancient monuments in the project area. It will include a live museum, heritage museums and boat journeys through traditional waterways.

The government also plans to develop, biodiversity tourism, mangrove tourism, farm tourism, agri-tourism, dam tourism and rural experiential tourism. In addition, community-based tourism hubs and cultural tourism hubs will be established to generate employment while preserving Kerala's unique heritage, food culture and cultural traditions.

A "Brand Wayanad" initiative will be launched. Ashtamudi tourism will be developed. Women-led tourism enterprises, homestays and responsible tourism projects will be expanded across the state. Smart tourism applications, including AI-enabled advanced digital tourism platforms, will be developed. The budget announced schemes to promote academic tourism by attracting international students to Kerala. An International Maritime Museum, envisioned as a flagship project for Kerala's maritime tourism sector, will be established with an allocation of Rs 50 crore. The budget proposed measures to promote farm tourism and dam tourism initiatives across the state.

Singapore's impressive economic growth is a model that the chief minister wants to emulate. In 1965, a small country with no natural resources or infrastructure started work to become the world's prosperous country. Singapore today is an economic powerhouse. At its core, the budget can be considered as the first towards creating a new era in Kerala through urbanisation.

A high-speed rail project, to be completed in four phases, has been announced in the budget to improve transport facilities in the state. A light metro project will be implemented in Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode.

### LIPSYNCH

*"We can't become what we need to be by remaining what we are."*

--- Oprah Winfrey

# Baku: where ancient heritage meets modern ambition

By Prince Manjalil

Perched on the western shores of the Caspian Sea, Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, is a city where centuries old history blends seamlessly with futuristic architecture. As the country's political, cultural and commercial centre, Baku has emerged as one of the most fascinating destinations in the Caucasus region, attracting tourists, investors and history enthusiasts alike.

The heart of the city lies within the ancient walls of Icherisheher (Old City), a UNESCO World Heritage Site that offers visitors a glimpse into Azerbaijan's rich past. Narrow cobbled streets wind through historic neighborhoods, leading to architectural treasures such as the Palace of the Shirvanshahs, a magnificent 15th-century royal complex that once served as the residence of the Shirvan rulers.

Towering above the Old City is the mysterious Maiden Tower, one of Baku's most recognisable landmarks. Built from stone and steeped in legends, the tower has stood for centuries as a symbol of the city's enduring heritage and resilience.

Yet Baku is equally known for embracing the future. The city's skyline is dominated by the striking Flame Towers, three

( Cont. on page - 6 )

## Air India to start direct flight...

( Cont. from page - 1 )

region. Better international connectivity can help attract investment, boost trade and create new opportunities for local businesses. The new routes are also likely to encourage tourism by making it easier for international visitors to travel to Assam. For residents of the North-east, the flights will provide more convenient access to major global destinations, reducing travel time and the need for multiple stopovers.



Icherisheher walls, Baku



Maiden tower, Baku



Flame Towers of Baku



Heydar Aliyev Cultural Center in Baku

## Kolkata's second airport...

( Cont. from page - 1 )

2026, the airport recorded more than 55,000 passengers in a single day. This included over 23,000 domestic arrivals and more than 24,000 domestic departures, along with several international movements across multiple flights. The new airport will help ease this growing burden by improving overall capacity and reducing congestion at Kolkata airport.

The proposal comes at a time when Kolkata airport is experiencing significant congestion due to rising passenger numbers. The airport, which spans around 2,460 acres, has been handling increasing daily traffic that is putting strain on its existing infrastructure. On June 21,

the airport recorded more than 55,000 passengers in a single day. This included over 23,000 domestic arrivals and more than 24,000 domestic departures, along with several international movements across multiple flights. The new airport will help ease this growing burden by improving overall capacity and reducing congestion at Kolkata airport.

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# TAFI Western India Chapter and Louisiana Office of Tourism host business networking lunch

The Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) – Western India Chapter, in collaboration with the Louisiana Office of Tourism, US, recently hosted an exclusive Business Net-

working Lunch, bringing together leading travel professionals, tourism stakeholders, and key industry decision-makers.

The event served as a platform to strengthen tourism ties between India and Louisiana while offering valuable insights into the destination's diverse tourism experiences. Attendees were treated to an engaging presentation highlighting Louisiana's unique attractions and its growing appeal for the Indian outbound travel market.

The destination showcase focused on Louisiana's world-renowned festivals, rich music heritage, distinctive culinary scene, iconic attractions and recent tourism developments.



Known as the birthplace of Jazz, Louisiana offers visitors an immersive blend of culture, history, gastronomy, vibrant celebrations and outdoor adventures.

Industry partners also explored opportunities to promote Louisiana as a

preferred destination for Indian travellers seeking authentic and experiential holidays.

The networking lunch facilitated meaningful discussions and fostered stronger collaboration between tourism stakeholders from

both markets.

With its unique cultural tapestry and diverse travel experiences, Louisiana continues to position itself as an attractive destination for Indian tourists looking to discover a different side of the US.

**FOREX RATES**  
As on 25th June 2026 (In rupees)

Currency	Bill Buy	Bill Sell
US Dollar	93.88	95.13
British Pound	123.69	125.46
Euro	106.34	108.61
Japanese Yen	58.04	58.97
Swiss Franc (CHF)	115.19	117.72
Canadian Dollar	65.63	67.14
Australian Dollar	64.52	65.93
Norwegian Krone	9.41	9.69
Swedish Krona	9.53	9.8
New Zealand Dollar	52.68	53.89
Hong Kong Dollar	11.82	12.19
Kuwaiti Dinar	311.9408	294.98
Singapore Dollar	72.09	73.71
Saudi Arabian Riyal	24.68	25.47
U A E Dirham	25.29	26.02



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### TOP ATTRACTIONS

- ★ Old City | ★ Flame Towers | ★ Heydar Aliyev Center | ★ Baku Boulevard |
- ★ Gobustan NP | ★ Ateshgah Temple | ★ Yanar Dag

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# GULF FAQs

## Who is exempt from UAE Wage Protection System?

**I am an employer and I need to know what should I do regarding wage payment if I have an employee who is in an unpaid vacation. Who are the employees that are excluded from Wage Protection System?**

According to Article (4) of Ministerial Resolution No. (0340) of 2026 Concerning the Wage Protection System, you should inform the MOHRE about the employee with the unpaid leave and submit the related documents. The mentioned Article exclud-



ed from the Wage Protection System: "A worker who is on unpaid leave during the period of the approved leave, provided that the ministry is notified and the

required documents are submitted in accordance with the approved rules."

The employees excluded from wage system according to the above-men-

tioned Article are:

1. Workers with labour claims related to wages that has been referred to the competent court or for which an executive instrument has been issued.

2. Workers against whom an absconding report has been filed,

3. Workers whose liberty is restricted in implementation of an order or judgment, provided that the ministry is notified and supporting documents are submitted.

4. Seafarers working on ships, based on a request submitted by the establish-

ment.

5. Foreign workers employed by foreign establishments or their branches within the UAE, who receive their wages outside the UAE, based on a request submitted by the establishment.

6. Workers holding mission work permits for a duration not exceeding three months.

7. Fishing boats owned by individual citizens.

8. Public taxis owned by individual citizens.

9. Banks and financial institutions.

10. Places of worship.

## What basic salary means in the UAE?

**Can you please explain the significance of basic salary in the UAE?**

Signing a UAE job offer? Check this specific clause before you agree. Your contract may show a high total package, but the basic wage is what determines key financial entitlements. When you receive a job offer in the UAE's private sector, your contract will usually show a "total salary". But a closer look often reveals that this amount is split into different components --- a basic salary and several allowances such as housing or transport.

Understanding your basic salary, referred to as the "basic wage" in UAE Labour Law, is important because many of your employment benefits are calculated using this figure, not your total pay.

Under UAE Labour Law (Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021), the basic wage or basic salary is the amount specified in your employment contract that is paid in return for your work. It forms only one part of your overall salary package. Many employers provide additional allowances, such as housing, transport or other incentives.

Your total salary there-

fore includes: Basic salary (basic wage),

Allowances and benefits. According to the law, allowances may be provided to help cover living costs or may be linked to performance, such as a percentage of sales or profits. If you are working in the UAE's private sector, your basic salary will be listed in your employment contract. The document typically includes a breakdown showing: Basic salary, housing allowance, transport allowance, Any other benefits or incentives, If you do not have a copy of your contract check your company's HR portal, if available. Download a digital version of your employment contract through the official MOHRE website or mobile app.

The four benefits tied to your UAE basic salary: Your basic salary plays a key role in calculating several employment benefits in the UAE. These include: 1. End-of-service gratuity, gratuity, also known as severance pay, is the amount you receive when your employment ends, provided you have completed at least one year of continuous service.

Under Article 51 of the

UAE Labour Law, gratuity for foreign full-time employees is calculated based on the basic wage: 21 days' basic pay for each year during the first five years of service, 30 days' basic pay for each additional year after that any partial year worked is also taken into account in the final calculation.

The Involuntary Loss of Employment (ILOE) scheme provides financial support if you lose your job due to reasons beyond your control and meet eligibility

criteria. If approved, you may receive compensation equivalent to 60pc of your basic salary for up to three months.

3. Overtime pay: If your role qualifies for overtime pay, the additional payment is calculated using your basic salary, not your total salary including allowances. It is important to note that not all employees are eligible for overtime, depending on their job category and contract. 4. Annual leave encashment: If you leave your job and

still have unused annual leave, you may be entitled to receive payment for those days. Under Cabinet Resolution No. 1 of 2022, Article 19(2), this payment is calculated based on your basic wage. Why understanding your basic salary is important: Your total salary may give you a sense of your monthly income, but your basic salary determines several key financial entitlements, including gratuity, overtime, job loss insurance payouts and annual leave encashment.

## Can employer force you to travel after termination?

**My employer refused to pay me the sick leave salary after termination and he booked a ticket to me on a specific date and wants me to leave the country or else he will report of absconding to the Ministry of Labor. Should I travel the same date he booked? And how many days of sick leave he should pay?**

1) Regarding sick leave and according to Article (31) of the Labor Law, it should not exceed more than 90 continuous or in-

termittent days per year, provided that it is calculated as follows:

a. The first 15 days with full pay;

b. The following 30 days with half pay;

c. The following period unpaid.

The employer may terminate the worker's service after finishing his sick leave mentioned above, if he is unable to return to his work, provided that the worker receives all his financial entitlements in accordance with the labour law including but

not limited to: his end of service, annual leave, salaries and ticket.

2) Regarding travelling, the employer does not have the right to force you to travel outside the country once your work finishes with him and he has no bases to report of absconding for such reason.

According to Article (13)/2 of the labour law, "The employer shall comply with the following: Not withholding the official documents of the worker or forcing him to leave the state at the end of the employment relationship."

## Adani to invest Rs 1 lakh-cr in airports

**MUNDRA:** The Adani Group is planning to invest around Rs 1 lakh crore across its airport portfolio over the next five years, Adani Airport Holdings Director Jeet Adani stated during the launch of scheduled commercial flight operations at Adani Mundra Airport in Gujarat.

The announcement coincided with the inauguration of the airport's new terminal and the commencement of Star Air's commercial services connecting the region to key domestic destinations.

"Our five-year investment plan across all airports is about Rs 90,000 crore to Rs 1 lakh-crore and that continues to be the case," Jeet Adani told media persons.

He stated that the conglomerate also plans to expand its aviation footprint further by participating in the government's forth-

coming airport privatisation programme. Adani told media persons that the Adani Group intends to participate aggressively after the government invites bids for 11 new airports.

The announcement came during the launch of scheduled flight services from Adani Mundra Airport through regional carrier Star Air, which will connect Mundra with Mumbai and Goa, while additional routes have been launched to Hindon, Surat, Belagavi, Bengaluru, Kolhapur and Nanded. According to Adani Airport Holdings, the airport's new terminal was completed in record time and will initially focus on regional connectivity, with Ahmedabad expected to be added to the network soon. The new services would significantly improve connectivity for residents, businesses and tourists in the Kutch region.

## India's exports rise 15pc

**MUMBAI:** India's merchandise exports grew by around 15pc during the April-June 14 period this year despite global economic challenges, Union Minister for Commerce Piyush Goyal said.

Speaking at an interaction with chartered accountants in Mumbai, Goyal said India's exports maintained strong momentum despite a 50pc tariff imposed by the US. "Even now, if we see April, May and 14 days of June, I have data until June 14. It (exports growth) is 15pc cent," Goyal said.

India's merchandise exports had recorded an 18pc year-on-year rise in May, reaching a six-month high of \$45.2 billion. However, the trade deficit widened to \$28.21 billion during the month. During April-May 2026-27, exports increased 16.09pc to \$88.91 billion, while imports rose 15.14pc to \$145.35 billion.

## Baku: where ancient heritage meets modern ambition

(Cont. from page - 2) soaring skyscrapers whose renowned architect Zaha Hadid. With its flowing curves and innovative design, the building has earned international acclaim and serves as a venue for exhibitions, cultural events and conferences.

Oil, gas resources Baku's rapid transformation has been fuelled by Azerbaijan's energy sector,

particularly its vast oil and gas resources. Once known as one of the world's earliest oil-producing regions, the city continues to play a vital role in regional commerce and international trade. Beyond its landmarks, Baku offers visitors a vibrant blend of culture and hospitality. Traditional tea houses, bustling markets, modern shopping

## Kerala to market Onam as tourism...

(Cont. from page - 1) experience to woo domestic tourists.

The campaign will highlight signature Onam experiences such as the Aranmula Vallasadya, traditional art forms and cultural programmes associated with the harvest festival targeting visitors from neighbouring states such as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra. The aim is to position Onam not just as a festival but as an experience that travellers must witness and participate in. The tourism minister said that modern tourists are increasingly looking for immersive experiences rather than conventional sightseeing. "Tourists today do not simply want to see destinations. They want to experience them. Our plan is to offer visitors the opportunity to become part of the festivities through traditions, cuisine, art forms and community celebrations associated with Onam," he said.

The authorities are planning to feature Aranmula Vallasadya, traditional cultural performances, village festivities and the famed Aranmula Uthratthathi Valamkali, scheduled for Aug 22 among the flagship attractions promoted as part of the initiative.

The official said that the campaign is also expected to help address the lean domestic tourism season between July and Sept. "Visitors have traditionally experienced Onam during their stay in the state, but



Onasadhya



Onam flower Rangoli

we have never systematically branded the festival as a tourism product in the way West Bengal markets Durga Puja. The idea now is to make Onam itself a

reason to travel to Kerala," said the official. In 2025, over 2.5 crore domestic tourists visited the state, a 12.46pc increase from the previous year.

## Airline ticket prices may stay high

**CHICAGO/LONDON:** Airlines stand to save billions of dollars on jet fuel after an interim US-Iran peace deal sent oil prices lower, but passengers are unlikely to see immediate relief as tight capacity may allow carriers to keep fares well above pre-war levels.

The US market offers the clearest example. Fare increases still lag this year's run-up in fuel costs, while domestic seat growth remains limited. That gives airlines leeway to use lower fuel bills to rebuild margins rather than reverse

recent price increases. US jet fuel spot prices stood at \$2.85 a gallon on June 17, down sharply from an early April high of \$4.88. A decline of that size would cut the US airline industry's annual fuel bill by more than \$40 billion if sustained, according to a Reuters calculation based on industry fuel consumption. As jet fuel prices surged, US airlines raised ticket prices and bag fees, and cut schedules, but those steps have offset only part of the rise in fuel costs.