



# OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



MUMBAI: FRIDAY, 27 FEBRUARY, 2026 • VOL. NO. 3 • Issue No. 8 • DIV. OF FLYCREATIVE ONLINE LIMITED (A unit of Creative Group) • 7 PAGES

## Etihad to hire up to 3,000 a year as fleet grows by 20 aircraft annually

**ABU DHABI:** UAE's national airline Etihad Airways plans to continue large-scale recruitment as it expands its fleet, with the airline expecting to hire between 2,500 and 3,000 people per year over the next five years.

The guidance follows a year of significant hiring in 2025, when the Abu Dhabi carrier recruit-

ed more than 3,200 new employees and promoted around 2,200 staff across the organisation. Airline CEO Antonaldo Neves said the airline expects to maintain a similar pace of recruitment going forward. "We're going to keep that range, from 2,500 to 3,000 hires per year, and we're going to keep about 20 aircraft per



year, so that's more or less to be doing for the next five years," he explained.

At the same time, Etihad continued to promote talent internally, with around 1,500 cabin crew promotions and nearly 150 pilot promotions, strengthening leadership depth and operational stability.

The airline said its workforce now represents 152 nationalities, reflecting its global operations. It also ( **Cont. on page - 2** )

## India's tourism set for accelerated growth

**NEW DELHI:** India's tourism sector is poised to get a big push with the Union budget for 2026-27 proposing a series of targeted interventions to strengthen institutional

capacity, enhance service quality and improve destination competitiveness.

Tourism has a significant potential for employment generation, foreign exchange earnings and bal-

anced regional development. Owing to its strong multiplier effect and capacity to create livelihoods across hospitality, transport, handicrafts and allied services, tourism has

been identified as a strategic growth driver in the budget, according to an official factsheet.

Based on the "India Tourism Data Compendium 2025" by the Ministry of Tourism, the sector contributes 5.22pc to India's GDP (total impact), with a direct share of 2.72pc. It also supports 13.34pc of

total employment, with a direct employment share of 5.82pc reflecting its strong role in livelihood generation and inclusive development. Major initiatives that will be undertaken, following the presentation of the budget, which include destination development and of the modernisation ( **Cont. on page - 2** )

## India-GCC sign joint statement for FTA

**NEW DELHI:** India and the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) have formally launched negotiations for a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the signing of a Joint Statement here.

The Joint Statement was signed by Minister of Commerce Piyush Goyal



and GCC Secretary General Jasem Mohamed Al-

budaiwi.

Goyal said the joint statement, along with the Terms of Reference for the FTA signed earlier this month, marks a key step forward in India's economic engagement with GCC countries. He said the proposed agreement would build on ( **Cont. on page - 2** )

## IT sector to grow, Nasscom predicts 1.35 lakh net jobs

**MUMBAI:** The IT sector in India is in the eye of the storm, given the global rout on fears of AI-led disruption. Fears of job loss

is one of the cardinal concerns. However, the IT sector industry body Nasscom predicts that India's tech- ( **Cont. on page - 6** )

## FlyCreative strengthening B2B travel partnerships at SATTE with comprehensive solutions, advanced OTA-integration



FlyCreative Online Limited CMD VS Abdulkareem with Joint MD Adl Karim and FlyCreative team at the SATTE.

**NEW DELHI:** FlyCreative, at South Asia's Travel & Tourism Exchange (SATTE), exhibited, positioning themselves as a reliable and results driven B2B Travel Partner, delivering comprehensive Travel and Tourism solutions under one roof. With a strong blend of advanced

### Glimpses of SATTE on page-7

digital capabilities and established offline expertise, FlyCreative offers seamless end-to-end services tailored for Industry partners, said VS Abdulkareem, Founder and CMD, ( **Cont. on page - 2** )



## Swelling forex kitty

We never had it so good -- India's foreign exchange reserves jumped by \$8.66 billion in the week ended Feb 13, 2026, pushing the total reserves to a record \$725.7 billion. This is the first time India is having this much reserve which is nearly enough for a full year's imports. One shudders to think that there was a time when India's forex reserves were enough just to meet 21 days' imports—that too at a time when crude prices were galloping. India had to pledge its gold reserves to Bank of England to stave off a major financial crisis and now the country can depend on its soaring foreign exchange reserves to tackle any crisis on the economic front

Those scary days are over long back and our forex reserve today is just behind that of Russia while China continues to lead this chart ahead of Japan. "Overall, India's external sector remains resilient. We are confident of meeting our external financing requirements comfortably," says RBI governor Sanjay Malhotra. The NRIs and PIOs continue to pump in remittances, the rise was led by an increase in foreign currency assets (FCAs), which surged by \$6.94 billion during the week. FCAs, the largest component of the reserves, reached \$650.8 billion, thus showing underlying strength in external liquidity. Gold reserves also contributed to the uptick, rising by \$1.26 billion to reach hit \$45.0 billion. Special drawing rights (SDRs) with IMF edged up by \$237 million and India's reserve position in IMF rose by about \$225 million. The annualised rise in India's foreign exchange reserves comes amid a context of stable capital flows, currency stability and proactive reserve management by the central bank. FCAs, which include the US dollar, euro, yen and other currencies, made up the bulk of the overall reserves. At \$650.8 billion, FCAs accounted for roughly 89.7pc of the total reserve stock.

*Editorial*  
By El. Vaidyanathan

Gold holdings, maintained for diversification and valuation support, stood at about 6.2pc of the total while SDRs and IMF reserve positions combined contributed the remaining share. The rise in reserve levels can help India manage external challenges, including volatile capital flows, import bills and currency pressures. According to latest data, the forex kitty had increased by about \$56 billion in 2025. In 2024, reserves rose by just over \$20 billion. In 2023, India added around \$58 billion to its foreign exchange reserves, in contrast to a cumulative decline of \$71 billion in 2022.

Foreign exchange reserves, or forex reserves, are assets held by a nation's central bank or monetary authority, primarily in reserve currencies such as the US dollar, with smaller portions in the Euro, Japanese yen and Pound Sterling. RBI often intervenes by managing liquidity, including selling dollars, to prevent a steep depreciation of the rupee. RBI strategically buys dollars when the rupee is strong and ideally sells when it weakens.

Meanwhile, RBI has proposed changes to foreign exchange rules that seek to offer authorised market participants greater flexibility to trade. A Reserve Bank notification shows the proposed rules allow banks to trade on electronic trading platforms outside India. They would also allow banks to utilise surplus foreign currency balances for investments in long-term overseas debt instruments issued by a foreign state. The authorised dealers may undertake transactions on electronic trading platforms outside India. So far, so good.

### LIPSYNCH

*"Wealth is the ability to fully experience life."*  
-- Henry David Thoreau

## FlyCreative strengthening B2B travel partnerships at SATTE with...

( Cont. from page - 1 ) Flycreative Online Ltd. "Our integrated and technologically advanced OTA platform empowers travel agents and corporate partners with real-time access to global inventory- including flights, hotels, holiday packages, visa assistance, travel insurance, transfers and customised itineraries, backed by a dedicated offline operations team.", he said. "We ensure per-

sonalised service, prompt support and operational excellence, by combining innovation with experience, we bridge digital efficiency with human expertise, creating scalable, transparent and reliable travel solutions.", he observed. Our participation at SATTE reflects our commitment to strengthening B2B partnerships, expanding global collaborations and driving sustainable growth in the

travel and tourism ecosystem. FlyCreative aims to strengthen its engagement with industry stakeholders through meaningful dialogue, collaborative initiatives and sustained partnership efforts.

And its focus is on building long-term strategic alliances that will not only enhance mutual growth but also redefine service standards with the travel and tourism industry.

## India's tourism set for accelerated...

( Cont. from page - 1 ) tourist sector through proposals for heritage and experiential site development, creation of digital knowledge grids for tourism assets, and promotion of nature-based and wildlife tourism.

The focus will be on preserving temples and monasteries, creating pilgrimage centres and improving connectivity and amenities in Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura. Five major tourism destinations will be developed across

Purvodaya States with 4,000 e-buses for connectivity as part of the proposals. Besides, five regional medical hubs will be established, to promote India as a hub for medical tourism services.

The proposals also include the development of 15 archaeological sites including Lothal, Dholavira, Rakhigarhi, Adichanallur, Sarnath, Hastinapur and Leh Palace with the aim of converting them into developed vibrant, experiential cultural destinations.

As part of the package,

India plans to host the first Global Big Cat Summit, bringing together leaders and ministers from 95 countries, reinforcing India's leadership in eco-tourism diplomacy. Other proposals to accelerate the development of tourism are the establishment of a National Institute of Hospitality to address skill gaps and align academic training with industry requirements, as well as a pilot programme to upskill 10,000 tourist guides at iconic destinations through partnerships with premier institutions.

## India-GCC sign joint statement for FTA

( Cont. from page - 1 ) the deep-rooted historical, cultural, and commercial ties between the two sides. The minister said that at a time of global economic uncertainty, the decision to begin negotiations for a robust and mutually beneficial trade arrangement was timely and would help harness complementarities between India and the GCC economies.

GCC Secretary General Jasem Mohamed Alburdaiwi said the FTA would

## Etihad to hire up to...

( Cont. from page - 1 ) maintained a focus on developing UAE National talent through cadet pilot programmes and leadership initiatives.

Etihad added 29 aircraft in 2025, bringing its fleet to 127, the largest in its history. The airline expects to receive around 20

play an important role in strengthening trade and investment ties by providing greater predictability and certainty to businesses on both sides.

The agreement holds strong potential to unlock and expand trade between India and the GCC region. The GCC is India's largest trading partner bloc, with bilateral trade reaching \$178.56 billion in FY 2024-25. India's exports to the region stood at \$56.87 billion, while imports were

valued at \$121.68 billion. The bloc accounts for over 15pc of India's total global trade.

Over the past five years, India's trade with GCC countries has registered an average annual growth rate of 15.3pc. India's key exports to the region include engineering goods, rice, textiles, machinery and gems and jewellery. Major imports from GCC countries comprise crude oil, LNG, petrochem and precious metals such as gold. Collectively, the GCC represents a market of around 61.5 million people and a combined GDP of about \$2.3 trillion, ranking among the top ten global economic groupings. The region is also a major source of foreign direct investment for India, with cumulative investments exceeding \$31.14 billion as of Sept 2025.

EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF DIGITALISED ADVERTISEMENTS WITH ONE E-NEWSPAPER

TAP ON THE YELLOW BANNER BELOW THE REQUIREMENT ADVT TO CONNECT WITH THE RECRUITMENT AGENCY

**FOREX RATES**  
As on 26th February 2026 (In rupees)

Currency	Bill Buy	Bill Sell
US Dollar	91.47	90.27
British Pound	124.16	122.36
Euro	108.63	106.34
Japanese Yen	58.84	57.91
Swiss Franc (CHF)	118.99	116.45
Canadian Dollar	67.23	65.74
Australian Dollar	65.54	64.11
Norwegian Krone	9.63	9.35
Swedish Krona	10.19	9.9
New Zealand Dollar	55.12	53.93
Hong Kong Dollar	11.75	11.4
Kuwaiti Dinar	303.85	293.21
Singapore Dollar	72.78	71.19
Saudi Arabian Riyal	24.51	23.75
U A E Dirham	25.02	24.32



• Hubli • Gadag • Lakkundi • Hampi  
• Pattadakal • Aihole • Badami • Vijayapura

DAY 1 – HUBLI  
DAY 2 – HUBLI → GADAG → LAKKUNDI → HAMP  
DAY 3 – HAMP  
DAY 4 – HAMP  
DAY 5 – BADAMI → MAHAKUTA → BANASHANKARI → VIJAYAPURA  
DAY 6 – VIJAYAPURA TOUR  
DAY 7 – VIJAYAPURA → HUBLI

**WHY THIS TOUR IS IDEAL :**

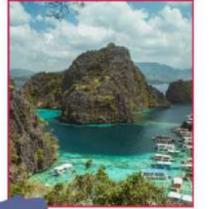
Hampi • Pattadakal • Aihole • Gadag • Mahakuta  
Includes UNESCO heritage temple sites  
Balanced : temples + heritage + history  
Senior-friendly with smooth road routes  
Showcases Chalukya, Vijayanagara & Badami architecture

CONTACT : 8828800804 | 9152110170 | 9207740605 | 8828800805  
022-22077955/56/57 | SOUTH@FLYCREATIVE.IN | WWW.FLYCREATIVE.IN

www.flycreative.in



“Your Gateway to the World – Hassle-Free E-Visa



**Why Choose Us?**

- Quick Processing – Get your visa on time
- Expert Guidance – Step-by-step assistance
- Secure & Reliable – Trusted service provider
- 24/7 Support – Always here for you

8657743449 | 8657931714 | visa@flycreative.in | junaid.shaikh@flycreative.in | www.flycreative.in

www.flycreative.in



# Canada’s PM Mark Carney to visit India

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Mark Carney of Canada will arrive in India on Feb 27 for a four-day state

visit aimed at expanding bilateral ties and forging new partnerships across key sectors.

According to a statement from the Canadian Prime Minister’s Office, Carney will begin his trip in Mum-

bai before travelling to New Delhi on March 1, where he is scheduled to hold talks with PM Narendra Modi.

G20 Summit, where they agreed to formally launch negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). In 2024, India was Canada’s seventh-largest trading partner in goods and services, with two-way trade valued at \$30.8 billion. The CEPA aims to more than double trade to \$70 billion by 2030.

## Air ticket: DGCA offers 48-hour penalty-free exit

**MUMBAI:** In a significant move aimed at strengthening passenger rights and making air travel more consumer-friendly, India’s civil aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, has revised ticket refund norms to introduce a 48-hour “look-in” period after an airline ticket is booked. Under the newly amended rules, travellers will be able to cancel or amend their flight bookings within two days of purchase without being charged additional fees, provided certain conditions are met.

when a ticket is booked directly through an airline’s website and the journey date is sufficiently ahead — at least seven days away for domestic flights and at least 15 days for international journeys. Within this window, passengers can opt to cancel their tickets or make changes without incurring any extra penalty beyond the possible difference in fare if they choose a different flight. Once 48 hours have passed since the booking, standard airline cancellation and modification charges will apply as usual.

fit, the regulator has also laid down rules to prevent airlines from levying extra charges for simple errors such as misspellings in passenger names. If such mistakes are pointed out within 24 hours of booking on an airline’s website, carriers must correct the name without charging a fee. The DGCA has emphasised that airlines must complete refund processes within a defined timeframe — typically within 14 working days — even when tickets are booked through travel agents, with the responsibility for refunds resting with the airline rather than the agent involved.

“The leaders will focus on elevating and expanding the Canada-India relationship, with ambitious new partnerships in trade, energy, technology and artificial intelligence (AI), talent and culture, and defence,” the statement said.

Carney will also engage with business leaders during the visit. The meetings are intended to identify fresh investment opportunities and encourage closer collaboration between companies in both countries. In addition, the two countries may initiate formal negotiations on a trade deal.

The trip comes after Carney and Modi met in Nov 2025 in Johannesburg on the margins of the

PM Modi had also travelled to Canada to attend the G7 Summit in June 2025, which marked the “reset” in ties between the two countries after bilateral relations plummeted during the tenure of then Canadian PM Justin Trudeau in 2024. Trudeau had alleged a potential Indian link in the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a claim that New Delhi rejected as “absurd”.



**flyCreative** Global Holidays  
Your Trusted Travel Company Since 1978

**Incredible India**  
B2B Portal : www.flycreative.in  
Email : support@flycreative.in

IATA Accredited Agent

X in f o



A Destination Management Division of FlyCreative Online Limited.

# TIMELESS MOROCCO | DISCOVER MARRAKECH & CASABLANCA **6N - 7D**



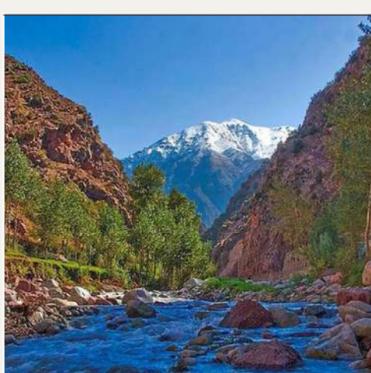
## TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

**CASABLANCA | TANGIER | FES | RABAT |  
MARRAKECH | OURIKA VALLEY**



(6 Pax) PP\*

**Euro 870**



98333 96453  
93230 27987



tours@flycreative.in  
ankita.chauhan@flycreative.in



www.flycreativeglobal.com

# GULF FAQs

## Employee guilty of misusing power of attorney, says Cassation court

**Can you please shed light on the recent court judgment on power of attorney?**

The Abu Dhabi Court of Cassation has ruled in favour of an employer, upholding a previous ruling that found a former employee guilty of misusing the power of attorney and financial misconduct.

The case began when the employer filed a lawsuit against a former employee and another individual, claiming the misappropriation of two cheques. In his filing, the employer alleged that the former employee had misused the power of attorney granted to him to issue two cheques totalling Dh1,049,600 in favour of the other individual. The sum was withdrawn from the company's bank account without any justification.

The company's owner asked for the repayment of Dh1,049,600 plus a compensation of Dh500,000. Abu Dhabi's Court of First Instance has partly ruled in his favour, ordering the former employee and the other individual to jointly repay the amount of money in full plus Dh2 lakh in compensation for material and moral damages.

An appeal in the case was filed, but the Court of Appeal dismissed it and upheld the ruling, so the appellant referred the case to the Court of Cassation, arguing that the judgment was flawed because: The court relied on a police report, which is not conclusive evidence. A report filed by an expert in the case was



incomplete and contradictory. There are invoices proving partial payment, but the court ignored them. The Public Prosecution had not even charged him.

**COURT OF CASSATION RULING:** After reviewing the documents, the Court of Cassation issued its ruling on Sept 3, saying:

Courts have discretion to evaluate evidence and are not required to appoint a new expert if the exist-

ing report is sufficient. The expert report in this case showed that the cheques were issued without any valid contract, agreement or purchase order. The invoices presented by the appellant did not match and even had handwritten changes without signatures from both parties. The appellant's statements were contradictory: at one point, he denied receiving the cheques, at another he

admitted there were transactions leading to them.

Therefore, the court rejected the appeal, saying that his defence was unconvincing and his objections were merely arguments about how evidence was weighed, which is outside the Court of Cassation's scope.

The rejection of the appeal means that the court confirmed that both the appellant and the employee who breached trust are jointly liable to pay the amounts owed to the plaintiff, rejecting the appellant's attempts to escape responsibility. The appellant was also ordered to pay court fees and expenses plus Dh1,000 in legal fees.

## Court grants man compensation of Dh1.4 lakh for severe injuries

**How much a victim claim compensation for road mishap?**

The Abu Dhabi Court of Cassation has upheld a previous ruling ordering an insurance firm and a company to jointly pay Dh140,000 in compensation to an employee who sustained serious injuries and permanent disabilities in a traffic accident involving the company's vehicle.

The incident occurred on Dec 27, 2024, when the company-owned vehicle was involved in a collision. The driver crashed into the rear of a heavy freight trailer, causing severe injuries to the claimant, who was onboard, and resulting in the death of the driver and

other injuries.

Court documents show that the passenger was left with skull fractures and permanent disabilities in the brain and nose. These injuries, which varied in severity, collectively resulted in significant physical damage and facial scarring. Doctors estimated his permanent disability at 25pc. The victim originally sought Dh650,000 in compensation, citing his inability to work and the mental trauma of the crash. However, the insurance company fought to cap the payout at just Dh50,000, arguing that under standard policy rules for the company's employees, they were only liable for a percentage of

the "Blood Money" (Diyya) based on his physical disability. The court rejected

the insurance company's attempt to limit the compensation, and the judges

pointed to a specific "Personal Accident" add-on in the company's insurance policy that extended coverage for passengers up to Dh200,000. In its final ruling, the Court of Cassation upheld an earlier Appeals Court decision to set the compensation at Dh140,000. The judges ruled that this amount was a "fair and sufficient" balance to cover both the physical damage to the man's body and the emotional distress he has endured since the accident. The court also dismissed appeals from both sides—the insurance company's attempt to pay less, and the victim's attempt to get more.



# Kerala to Keralam divides UAE Malayali expats

**DUBAI:** A proposal to rename Kerala as "Keralam" has sparked debate among the UAE's large Malayali community, with many welcoming the cultural assertion while others question its timing, practicality and global recognition.

The discussion follows Union Cabinet approval of

the Kerala government's move to align the state's official English name with its Malayalam form, "Keralam", citing cultural heritage and linguistic au-

thenticity. Home to more than a million Keralites, the UAE has long been a second home for Malayalis whose identity is deeply tied to their birthplace. The proposed change has prompted reflection on language, identity and global branding among expatriates. Dubai-based RJ and Malayalam actor, Mithun Ramesh, said the move to change the Anglicised spelling may have symbolic value but is unlikely to alter how people speak or refer to the state in daily life for many years.

"For decades, many have called us Malabar because Kerala is on the Malabar coast and we have had to correct them. People are often confused between Malayalam and Malayali, and we constantly have to clarify this. Keeping our state's name in our own language in official records is fine, but it doesn't dictate how people will refer to it in everyday life."

Award-winning Malayali journalist and author in Dubai, Sadiq Kavil, urged people to look beyond nomenclature and focus on the secular values the state has long been known for.

"It is not without reason that the world-famous writer William Shakespeare asked, 'What's in a name?' A name alone does not give full meaning to anything. In today's times, when people are divided even on the basis of names, it is frightening to see situations where 'stories' Ambujam Sathesh, chairperson of the Expert Committee, Dubai Chapter of the Malayalam Mission, believes adopting the Malayalam form universally could strengthen cultural identity.

"I feel our homeland should be known by a name in our own language. Our official language is Malayalam in which the state is written as Keralam. Unifying it everywhere will bring greater clarity.

## Srinagar airport's capacity set to be tripled

**SRINAGAR:** The Srinagar airport is set to get a makeover with the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approving a major expansion project at an estimated cost of Rs 1,677 crore.

The redevelopment is expected to more than triple the airport's passenger-handling capacity, to 10 million passengers per year from the current three million, and is expected to be completed in four years. The project will be funded fully by equity from the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

The Srinagar airport is a military airport — housed in the Indian Air Force's Budgam airbase — with the AAI operating the civil enclave. The airport handled almost 4.5 million passengers in 2024-25, significantly higher than its three million-per-annum capacity. "The new Civil Enclave project, spread over

73.18 acres, will feature a state-of-the-art terminal building spanning 71,500 square metres (including 20,659 square metres of existing structure), designed to serve 2,900 passengers during peak hours (up from 950 at present) and an annual capacity of 10 million passengers per annum," the government said in a release. The expanded apron will equip the airport with 15 aircraft parking bays from nine bays at present.

The project will also include the construction of a multi-level car parking facility for 1,000 cars, barracks for 1,344 security personnel of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), and accommodation for AAI staff.

"Beyond infrastructure enhancement, the project is expected to significantly boost tourism and economic growth by improving connectivity to

iconic attractions, including Dal Lake, Shankaracharya Temple and the Mughal Gardens, thereby generating employment opportunities, stimulating investment, and reinforcing Srinagar's position as a premier tourist and economic destination. The development of the civil enclave thus represents a transformative step toward delivering world-class infrastructure, offering better facilities for passengers and enhanced connectivity, while showcasing the cultural and natural splendour of Kashmir to the world," the government said.

## IT sector to grow, Nasscom predicts 1.35 lakh net jobs

( Cont. from page - 1 )  
nology sector is expected to grow 6.1pc to \$315 billion revenue in FY26 and remain around that level in FY27.

Nasscom said that the growth will be driven by artificial intelligence-led services as well as business at global capacity centres. Nasscom expects tech workforce to reach 5.95 million in FY26.

Nasscom President Rajesh Nambiar said the IT industry continues to be a net job generator. Nambiar expects the tech sector to add 1.35 lakh jobs on a

net basis, taking the total headcount to 5.95 million in FY26. Earlier in FY25, the total workforce rose to 5.8 million from 5.67 million in FY24. "There is no question that the overall hiring from the campus has come down significantly from where it used to be," said Nambiar.

IT stocks slid nearly five per cent intraday on AI concerns. The tech sector also declined, falling nearly five per cent intraday. One of the reasons was updates to Claude Code announced by leading AI firm Anthropic.

## India's e-commerce to double by 2030 to \$300bn: Report

**NEW DELHI:** India's e-commerce market, currently at \$120-140 billion, is projected to reach \$280-300 billion by 2030, even as it remains eight per cent of total consumer spending.

The report from Boston Consulting Group said that even amidst rapid growth of e-commerce offline retail remains resilient, having grown at an annual rate of 14pc over the past four years. Market is entering a phase of coexistence between online and offline retail, with multi-channel becoming a norm for shoppers and five of 10 offline shoppers using online channels to research purchases, the report said.

India currently has nearly 300 million online shoppers, projected to reach 440 million by 2030, with

around 30pc of online shoppers from rural India. e-commerce comprises e-retail and e-services, estimated at \$75-85 billion and \$45-55 billion respectively, and growth will be driven by e-services with a forward CAGR of 20-22pc versus 16-18 per cent for e-retail. "Shoppers today move seamlessly between screens and stores, researching online, purchasing offline and vice versa, based on convenience, trust, and need," the report said based on a survey of over 12,000 consumers across geographies. Nearly two-thirds of women shoppers say they feel safer shopping online, citing privacy, ease of access, and the ability to shop independently and at any time.

"India's shoppers are

becoming more diverse, with consumers using different formats depending on their needs and maturity. As the demographic mix of online shoppers becomes more democratic, platforms and brands must design simpler, safer, and more seamless experiences across touchpoints," said Kanika Sanghi, Partner and Director, BCG.

Quick commerce has grown at over 100pc CAGR, making immediate and top-up shopping missions mainstream and boosting purchase frequency, while social and chat commerce, grew at 40-45pc CAGR. "The time required for online brands to reach Rs 100 crore in annual revenue has fallen from around 11 years to around seven years," the report noted.

# GLIMPSES OF SATTE EXHIBITION AT DELHI

