OVERSEAS JOBS ON PAGE 3
PUBLISHED ON TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS

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OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

MUMBAI: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2026 • VOL. NO. 3 • Issue No. 75 • DIV. OF FLYCREATIVE ONLINE LIMITED (A unit of Creative Group) • 7 PAGES

TOURISM MUST RISE AS A GLOBAL VOICE FOR PEACE:

A CALL FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION AGAINST WAR, GEOPOLITICAL HOSTILITY

By VS Abdulkareem
CMD, Flycreative Online Ltd.

MUMBAI: It is time for the global travel and tourism fraternity to unite and become a stronger voice for peace, dialogue, and humanity.

The world today stands at a critical crossroads. Multiple armed conflicts, escalating geopolitical rivalries, economic uncertainties and growing mistrust among nations are creating an atmosphere of fear and instability across continents. At a time when humanity has achieved extraordinary advancements in science, medicine, communication, artificial intelligence, transportation, and space exploration, it is deeply disturbing that war, hatred, territorial ambitions, and political confrontation continue to threaten the very foundations of human civilisation.

The international community has established institutions such as the United Nations and numerous multilateral organisations to preserve peace, prevent conflicts, uphold international law and promote co-operation among nations. Yet, the persistence of devastating conflicts raises serious questions about the effectiveness of existing mechanisms in preventing hostilities and securing lasting peace. The world urgently needs renewed commitment, stronger collective responsibility, and more effective diplomatic engagement to ensure that the interests of humanity prevail over the politics of confrontation.

(Cont. on page - 6)

69th TAAI convention in Kolkata celebrates 75 years of legacy, unity, global tourism collaboration

By Our Bureau

KOLKATA: The 69th Convention of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), marking 75 glorious years of its legacy, commenced in Kolkata amidst great enthusiasm, vibrant spirits and the convergence of diverse stakeholders from across the travel, tourism, aviation, hospitality and allied industries.





West Bengal Tourism Minister Dr Shankar Ghosh being welcomed at the TAAI convention in Kolkata.

The landmark celebration reflects the collective strength, resilience and progressive vision of the travel and tourism fraternity, reaffirming its commitment to collaboration, professional integrity and sustainable growth. Bringing together industry leaders and stakeholders on a common platform, the convention provides an opportunity to strengthen partnerships, explore emerging opportunities and chart a progressive course for the future of lobal travel.

GLIMPSES ON PAGE - 7

At a time when the world is navigating complex geopolitical uncertainties, regional conflicts and disruptions to international

(Cont. on page - 2)

India, Azerbaijan to improve diplomatic ties after Operation Sindoor fallout

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev in Baku for a standalone visit aimed at a diplomatic reset, following strained ties after Azerbaijan backed Pakistan and Türkiye during Operation Sindoor.

BAKU: A year after ties between India and Azerbaijan soured over Baku's alignment with Pakistan during Operation Sindoor, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar met with the country's top leadership in an attempt to reset bilateral relations.

Jaishankar, who arrived in Baku on a one-day visit, called his talks with Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov "very productive", noting they helped set a path forward for improving relations between the two countries.



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev during their meeting in Baku.



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met with Azerbaijan's Foreign Affairs Minister Jeyhun Bayramov in Baku.

"Our talks dwelt on further expanding our bilateral relations. We spoke about economic co-operation, including in trade, investment and energy which are central to our bilateral ties. Given our complementary economies, we believe that there is very good scope for further enhancement of our bilateral trade and investment," Jaishankar said.

(Cont. on page - 2)

Four Indian passport centres in UAE closed

DUBAI: Four Indian Consular Application Centres (ICACs) in the UAE are now closed for good and anyone still waiting to pick up a passport from them has to go elsewhere.

Alhind, the temporary outsourced service provider of the Indian embassy in Abu Dhabi and the Indian Consulate in Dubai, has issued a fresh service advisory confirming the change. Effective Sunday, October 25, 2026, all pending passport collections from the four non-operational centres redirected to two other locations. The embassy had announced that the four centres would cease operations from Oct 22. Consular, passport, visa and attestation services continue at 12 centres across the UAE. Alhind's latest notice lists all four as closed: DIP Centre in Dubai Investment Park, Al Majaz Centre in Sharjah and Musaffah Centre and Al Reem Centre in Abu Dhabi.

However, Alhind had issued a service advisory announcing a partial opening of three of those centres for delivering the processed passports. As per the new service advisory, applicants with pending passports at the Dubai Investment Park (DIP) centre in Dubai or the Al Majaz centre in Sharjah must now collect them from UW Mall, Bur Dubai. Those whose passports are at the Musaffah or Al Reem centres in Abu Dhabi should head to the Al Danah Centre instead.

Saudi NRIs advised against filming missile interceptions

RIYADH: India has advised its nationals in Saudi Arabia to abide by local rules and regulations and refrain from filming or publishing information related to missile and drone interceptions.

The advisory comes amid escalating tensions in the region due to a series of drone and missile attacks targeting civilian infrastructure by Yemen's Houthis.

"The Indian community residing in Saudi Arabia is requested to abide by local rules and regulations," the Indian embassy said on social media while reposting the notification issued by the Directorate of Saudi Civil Defence.

The Indian mission also shared an update about the suspension of flights from Air India and Air India Express to and from Riyadh and Dammam. "Air India and Air India Express flights to and from Riyadh and Dammam will remain suspended until Nov 7.



IndiGo extends cancellations to Saudi until Oct 31

MUMBAI: IndiGo has targeting Saudi Arabia's extended the suspension airports, energy installaof its flights to Saudi Ara- tions and other critical inbia, with services to Riyadh frastructure. Yemen's Iran-cancelled until Oct 31 and backed Houthis have been flights to three other cities involved in a prolonged halted until Oct 27, amid campaign against the security concerns in the country.

region, the Indian Embas- The latest extension fol-sy in Riyadh said. "IndiGo lows an attack on King flights to and from Riyadh Fahd International Airport will remain cancelled until in Dammam that killed an Oct 31, 2026 (inclusive), Indian national and injured while flights to and from two others. Another Indian Jeddah, Dammam and national was injured in a Madinah will remain can- separate attack at Saudi celled until Octo 27, " the Aramco's Shaybah oilfield mission said in a post on X. on the same day.

Saudi Arabia is home to Other Indian carriers approximately 2.74 mil- have also extended flight lion Indian nationals, who suspensions to and from work across various sectors Saudi Arabia. Air India and and form an important link Air India Express have sus-between the two countries. pended flights until Oct 24

The flight disruptions on all routes, while Akasa come amid escalating Air has suspended flights drone and missile strikes until Oct 27 on all routes.

Nearly 1.26 lakh hotel rooms to be ready by 2030 in Gulf

DUBAI: The Gulf region is set to add nearly 1.26 lakh hotel rooms by 2030, raising total room supply to about 6.16 lakh with Saudi Arabia leading the pipeline and the UAE contributing over 23,000 new rooms despite recent occupancy declines across the GCC.

Nearly 1.26 lakh new hotel rooms are set to open across the Gulf by 2030, lifting total supply in the six GCC countries to about 6.16 lakh rooms, according to new research from Cavendish Maxwell. The region currently has close to 4.9 lakh hotel rooms in operation, with the UAE accounting for around 43pc of the total. The Emirates had 2.12 lakh rooms as of Aug 2026, including around 1.51 lakh in Dubai.

69th TAAI convention in Kolkata...

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

connectivity, the convention carries a message that goes beyond business. Travel and tourism are not merely commercial enterprises; they are powerful instruments of global harmony, peace and people-to- people connectivity. They build bridges between nations, foster friendship among communities, encourage cultural exchange and create a deeper understanding of diverse societies.

The 75-year legacy of TAAI stands as a testament to the importance of unity, trust and collective endeavour in advancing the travel trade. The convention reinforces the need for all stakeholders to move forward with a collaborative spirit, mutual respect and integrity, transforming challenges into opportunities through innovation, partnership and shared responsibility.

The larger vision is to position travel and tourism as a catalyst for international co-operation, enabling nations to grow together through tourism, trade, employment generation and cultural engagement. A stronger, more connected global tourism ecosystem can create a win-win environment for all participating nations, benefiting businesses, travellers, local communities and economies alike. As the fraternity celebrates this significant milestone in Kolkata, the message resonates across borders: the future of travel and tourism depends not only on connectivity and commercial growth, but also on the collective commitment to peace, friendship and understanding among people.

Celebrating 75 years of legacy, the 69th TAAI convention reaffirms a shared aspiration—to connect the world through travel, strengthen the industry through collaboration and bring people and nations closer through peace, harmony and mutual prosperity.

India, Azerbaijan to improve...

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

The interaction marks another step in India's diplomatic outreach as it seeks to maintain constructive dialogue and strengthen partnerships with countries across the region.

Political ties between the two countries had been affected by geopolitical reasons for a while, mainly Azerbaijan's ties with Pakistan - as evident from its support for Islamabad after Operation Sindoor last year and India's defence ties with Armenia.

While Bayramov spoke about taking the relationship to a higher level, setting aside past differences, Jaishankar underlined the significance of trade and energy co-operation.

"We spoke about economic co-operation, including trade, investment and energy, which are central to our bilateral ties...we believe there is very good scope for further enhancement of bilateral trade and investment. We also discussed various activities and exchanges," said Jaishankar. "We spoke about connectivity because it is so important in a globalised economy," he said, adding that they agreed to co-ordinate closer on the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). The minister also called on Aliyev in Baku. "Discussed strengthening the relationship between our two countries. Appreciate his positive sentiments for this shared endeavour," he said.

Pleased to call on President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan in Baku. Conveyed the greetings of President of India and PM Modi. Discussed strengthening the relationship between our two countries. Appreciate his positive sentiments for this shared endeavour, said Jaishankar.

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Currency	Bill Buy	Bill Sell
US Dollar	94.57	95.8
British Pound	126.43	128.2
Euro	105.72	107.95
Japanese Yen	60.19	61.15
Swiss Franc (CHF)	114.27	116.74
Canadian Dollar	67.18	68.68
Australian Dollar	66.22	67.65
Norwegian Krone	10.03	10.32
Swedish Krona	9.42	9.69
New Zealand Dollar	53.6	54.81
Hong Kong Dollar	11.9	12.27
Kuwaiti Dinar	313.8454	300.5454
Singapore Dollar	73.63	75.3
Saudi Arabian Riyal	24.86	25.66
U A E Dirham	25.48	26.21

IndiGo, Air India ready for partial shifting to Navi Mumbai airport

MUMBAI: IndiGo and Air India announced plans to shift about one-third of their international flights from Mumbai airport to Navi Mumbai between Jan and the summer of next year. This is in contrast to foreign carriers who have opposed the proposed relocation.

IndiGo currently operates 233 international departures a week from Mumbai airport, according to aviation analytics firm Cirium's data. India's largest airline has announced plans to transfer 12 daily departures or 84 a week, to Navi Mumbai. This accounts for 36.1pc of its current international departures.

Air India Group — which includes Air India and its subsidiary Air India Express — currently operates 134 weekly international departures from Mumbai, according to Cirium's data. On Sunday, it named six destinations whose services it plans to shift to the new airport. These destinations account for 46 weekly departures in the current schedule or 34.3pc of the group's total.

Therefore, both the major Indian carriers have effectively agreed to Mumbai International Airport Limited's (MIAL) long-standing demand to shift about one-third of their international flights to the new airport. Both airport operators — MIAL as well as Navi Mumbai International Airport Limited (NMIAL) — are controlled by the Adani Group. Over the past several weeks, airlines had presented a united front against MIAL's plan to shift one-third of each airline's international flights to Navi Mumbai. This was to make way for the demolition and reconstruction of Terminal 1 at Mumbai airport.

MIAL had proposed shifting 265 of 770 weekly international departures from Mumbai to Navi Mumbai. The Airline Operators Committee (AOC), representing airlines at Mumbai airport, had been rejecting these changes till now. Foreign carriers have raised strong objections. Air France-KLM said on Sept 30 that splitting its passenger operations between the two airports did not make operational sense, while Emirates said on Oct 14 that Navi Mumbai needed more supporting facilities before it could handle large-scale international operations.

IndiGo on Sunday said it plans to begin international operations from Navi Mumbai in Feb 2027 and progressively transfer 12 daily international departures from Mumbai airport between Feb and July. The services cover 11 destinations, including Bahrain, Riyadh, Dammam, Jeddah, Madinah, Kuwait, Ras Al Khaimah, Fujairah, Muscat, Dhaka and Jakarta. Air India Group on Sunday said it plans to progressively shift services to six destinations — Jeddah, Riyadh, Dammam, Doha, Muscat and Sharjah — to Navi Mumbai.



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GULF FAQs

Moving to a new home in Dubai? What are additional costs?

I have found a dream apartment in Dubai. Before I sign the tenancy contract and collect the keys, what are the additional costs?

Moving into a new home comes with several upfront expenses, including security deposits, utility connections, agent commissions and moving fees. Some are refundable, while others are one-off charges or recurring monthly expenses. Whether you are renting for the first time or relocating to another neighbourhood, here are additional costs to consider before moving in.

*Ejari registration fees: Before moving in, your tenancy contract must be registered through Ejari, Dubai's official rental contract registration system managed by the Dubai Land Department (DLD). An Ejari certificate is essential for accessing services such as DEWA connections and certain residency-related procedures.

*How much does Ejari cost? Online registration: Approximately Dh177.75 through Dubai REST or DLD's digital channels.

*Real Estate Services Trustee Centres: Approximately Dh220, including service fees: Typically, the tenant pays the Ejari registration fee, unless the tenancy contract states otherwise. However the the responsibility for Ejari registration sits with the landlord. Ejari is Dubai's official online registration system used to record and regulate all residential and commercial tenancy contracts.

*Refundable security deposit: Landlords typically require a security deposit to cover potential property damage or outstanding payments.

The usual amounts are: Unfurnished property: five per cent of annual rent. Furnished property: 10pc of annual rent.

*Renting in Dubai: How to get your security deposit back and what to do if your landlord refuses.

3. Dewa connection and deposit: Once your Ejari is registered, you can activate electricity and water services through Dubai Electricity and Water Authority's (Dewa) Move In service.

*Expected costs: Apartment security deposit: Dh 2,000.

*Villa security deposit: Dh 4,000.

*Activation charges: Approximately Dh130 for smaller connections, with higher charges possible depending on the connection. DEWA security deposits are refundable when you close your account, after outstanding bills are settled.

*Dubai Municipality housing fee: Unlike one-off moving expenses, the Dubai Municipality housing fee is a recurring charge. For residential tenants, it is generally calculated at five per cent of annual rent and collected in 12 monthly instalments through your Dewa bill. Remember to include this charge when calculating your monthly household expenses.

*Air conditioning and chiller charges: Not all Dubai properties have the same cooling arrangements and this can significantly affect your monthly bills.

*Chiller-free: Cooling costs are generally covered by the landlord or building management under the property's arrangement.



*District cooling: You may need to register separately with a provider such as Empower, Emicool or Tabreed, pay a deposit and receive separate cooling bills. Before signing your lease, confirm whether cooling is included in the rent and whether additional connection or consumption charges apply. District cooling is a centralised air conditioning system that supplies chilled water to cool buildings, with residents typically paying a separate cooling bill.

* Real estate agent commission: If you rent through a property agent, you will usually pay a brokerage commission when the deal is finalised. Commission rates are negotiable and should be confirmed before signing.

*Typical commission: Around five per cent of annual rent, often subject to a minimum fee of Dh 5,000, depending on the agency and property.

*Professional moving company fees: Hiring movers and shakers can save time and effort, particularly if you have bulky furniture or several rooms to pack.

*Estimated moving costs: One-bedroom apartment: Dh 1,000 to Dh 1,500. Two-bedroom apartment or villa: Dh 2,000 to Dh 3,000 or more.

Actual prices depend on the distance, volume of belongings and services such as packing, furniture dismantling and unpacking. Compare quotations and check what is included before booking. Hiring professional movers can save time and effort, with costs depending on the property size, distance and services required.

*Cleaning, painting and minor repairs: You may want to arrange professional cleaning before moving into your new home, particularly if the property has been vacant.

Estimated expenses: Deep cleaning for a one-bedroom apartment: Dh200 to Dh600.Painting and minor repairs: Varies according to the property's size and condition. Check which maintenance and preparation costs are the landlord's responsibility before paying for any work yourself. You may need professional cleaning, painting or minor repairs before moving in, but check which costs are the landlord's responsibility before arranging any work.

* Building move-in permits and access cards: Some residential towers and gated communities require tenants to obtain a move-in permit from building management before movers can enter. You may also need to arrange lift bookings, security clearance or additional access cards .Depending on the building, these services may be free or involve administrative charges or refundable deposits.

*Tip: Ask building management about move-in procedures and restrictions before confirming your moving date.

*Internet, TV and telecom setup: Moving homes also means arranging your internet connection through providers such as etisalat or du.If your existing provider services the new property, you may be able to transfer your connection. Otherwise, you might need to cancel your existing plan and open a new account. Depending on your contract, charges may include installation, activation, equipment or early termination fees. Contact your provider ahead of the move to avoid delays or unexpected charges.

*Gas connection charges: If your property uses gas for cooking or heating, you may need to arrange a separate connection.

*Apartments: Buildings with central gas systems may require account registration and a refundable deposit.

*Villas and older properties: Some use gas cylinders supplied by licensed providers. A new connection or transfer can cost about Dh600 to Dh800, depending on the supplier and installation requirements. Cylinder-based arrangements may cost differently.

TOURISM MUST RISE AS A GLOBAL VOICE FOR PEACE:...

(Cont. from page - 1)

Is it not time for the world to move beyond the language of conflict and embrace the language of coexistence?

Tourism: A Bridge Between Nations and Civilisations: Among the many global sectors capable of bringing people together, travel and tourism occupy a unique position. Tourism is not merely about holidays, hospitality, aviation, destinations or economic growth. It is a powerful bridge between cultures, communities, religions, traditions and nationalities.

It enables people to experience the world beyond political boundaries, understand different perspectives, appreciate diversity, and discover the shared aspirations that unite humanity.

Every international traveller, airline passenger, tourist, hospitality professional and tourism entrepreneur contributes, in some measure, to a global network of human interaction. Tourism creates livelihoods, supports millions of families, encourages cross-cultural understanding and builds relationships that can transcend political disagreements.

Where political rhetoric can divide, human interaction can unite. Where mistrust can deepen differences, cultural exchange can create understanding. And where isolation can nurture prejudice, travel can open doors to friendship and mutual respect.

The tourism industry, therefore, has a responsibility that extends beyond commercial interests. It has the collective strength and moral opportunity to champion a world where peace is valued above hostility and co-operation above confrontation.

A Collective Call to Global Travel and Tourism Organisations: It is high time that international tourism organisations, airline associations, travel and tourism councils, hospitality bodies, tour operators, destination management companies, cruise operators, airports and other stakeholders come together on a common global platform to raise a unified voice for peace.

Organisations such as UN Tourism, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and national and regional tourism associations can help mobilise the immense reach of the global travel ecosystem.

Through constructive engagement with the United Nations, its relevant agencies, NATO, regional organisations, national governments, and other international institutions, the tourism fraternity should advocate for stronger diplomatic initiatives, sustained dialogue, humanitarian protection, respect for international law and effective mechanisms for de-escalating conflicts.

This initiative should not be about taking sides in geopolitical rivalries or interfering in the legitimate responsibilities of governments. Rather, it should be a principled, independent, and humanitarian appeal for peace—one that recognises the value of every human life and the devastating consequences of prolonged conflict.

The global travel industry can encourage international conferences for peace, facilitate dialogue among stakeholders, promote people-to-people diplomacy, support humanitarian tourism initiatives where appropriate, and use its collective influence to remind world leaders that the cost of conflict is borne not only by combatants, but also by innocent civilians, children, families, workers, businesses, and future generations.

The Human and Economic Cost of Conflict: War does not remain confined to battlefields. Its consequences spread across the global economy and disrupt the lives of ordinary people. Aviation routes are affected, travel advisories multiply, tourism destinations suffer, hospitality businesses struggle, international mobility is restricted, and millions of livelihoods become vulnerable.

The consequences extend to energy prices, food security, trade, investment, employment, migration, and the stability of communities far removed from the actual conflict zones. For developing economies and countries dependent on tourism, these disruptions can be particularly severe.

Behind every cancelled flight, closed hotel, suspended travel programme, and abandoned investment are people whose livelihoods and aspirations are affected.

At a time when technology has made the world more connected than ever before, allowing geopolitical tensions to repeatedly disrupt global cooperation is a setback to the collective progress of civilisation.

Humanity cannot afford to let the achievements of modern civilisation be overshadowed by the destructive consequences of endless confrontation.

A New Global Movement: Travel for Peace, Tourism for Humanity: The time has come to consider a sustained international initiative under an inspiring principle: "Tourism for Peace, Travel for Humanity." Such an initiative could bring together global travel and tourism organisations, airlines, tourism ministries, international chambers of commerce, hospitality groups, civil society, educational institutions and humanitarian organisations to advocate for peace and constructive international engagement.

Its objectives should include:

- Encouraging world leaders and international institutions to prioritise dialogue, diplomacy, and peaceful conflict resolution.
- Establishing a global tourism industry declaration calling for peace, humanitarian protection, and respect for international law.
- Promoting cultural exchanges and people-to-people engagement as instruments of mutual understanding.
- Encouraging the protection of civilian lives, cultural heritage, tourism infrastructure and essential transport connectivity during conflicts, consistent with international law.
- Supporting humanitarian assistance and the responsible restoration of travel links wherever conditions permit.
- Organising international tourism summits and campaigns that unite industry leaders around the shared cause of peace and human dignity.

The tourism fraternity may not possess the political or military authority to end wars, but it has a global platform, economic significance and human reach that should not be underestimated. Its influence can help create public awareness, strengthen the voice of civil society, and encourage decision-makers to recognise that peace is not simply a political objective—it is a prerequisite for sustainable prosperity.

A Message to the World: The world does not lack scientific knowledge, technological capability, financial resources, or institutions. What it urgently needs is the collective wisdom and political will to use these achievements for the benefit of humanity.

Our children deserve a world in which their future is shaped by education, innovation, opportunity, cultural understanding, and peaceful coexistence—not by the fear of war and the uncertainty of geopolitical confrontation.

The people of the world aspire to travel freely and safely, explore new destinations, conduct business, exchange knowledge, celebrate their cultures, and live with dignity. These are not privileges belonging to a few nations; they reflect universal human aspirations.

Let the global tourism fraternity rise above commercial competition and national divisions to champion this common cause. Let airlines connect people not only through routes, but also through understanding. Let tourism connect nations not only through destinations, but also through friendship. And let international organisations rediscover their shared responsibility to protect peace, human dignity, and the future of our planet.

The United Nations, NATO, regional alliances, national governments and all relevant global institutions must be encouraged to strengthen diplomatic engagement and pursue practical, sustained efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts. The travel and tourism industry can stand alongside these efforts as a constructive voice for international cooperation.

The time has come for the world to choose dialogue over destruction, co-operation over confrontation, and humanity over hostility. Let us work towards a world where borders connect rather than divide, where travel inspires rather than intimidates and where the extraordinary achievements of modern civilisation are enjoyed by all people in an atmosphere of peace, security, freedom, and harmony. Tourism is an industry of connections. Let it now become a stronger connection to peace.Tourism for Peace. Travel for Humanity. A Better World for Generations to Come.

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GLIMPSES OF 69TH TAAI CONVENTION IN KOLKATA





























