



# OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

## PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



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### TAFI-WI organized successful FAM trip to Khao Lak-Phuket



**PHUKET/THAILAND:** Newly elected Managing Committee of TAFI-WI organized an educational FAM trip to its members promoting Phuket-Thailand hosted by JW Marriott, Le Meridian and Courtyard Marriott group. Leading travel and tour operators participated in the highly successful Familiarisation trip to Crabi, Khao Lak-Phuket Region, graciously hosted by the

JW Marriott Phuket Resorts & SPA, Le Meridian Khao Lak and Courtyard by Marriott, Khao Lak Phuket. The well designed itinerary programme of the FAM trip offered to potential travel and tour operators, extended an immersive experience of Khao Lak - Phuket's premier hospitality, showcasing the exceptional services , accommodations and amenities available

at each properties . The initiative of WI-TAFI and the hotel group aimed to strengthen business relationships and to promote the destination as a world class MICE events and leisure travel destination. All the participants enjoyed exclusive property tours, warmth of welcome hospitality, excursions and curated culinary experiences leaving them

with lasting impressions and valuable insights to better promote the destination to their clients. This collaborative efforts of TAFI and the Marriott Group highlights its continued commitments to supporting the travel trade industry and boosting tourism, said Mr ABDULKAREEM of Flycreative Online Ltd who participated in the FAM.

More Pics on page -8

### Saudi's skill-based work permit system reshapes expat employment scenario

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia's new skill-based work permit system marks a major shift in the Kingdom's labour market regulation, aligning directly with the goals of Vision-2030 to foster a knowledge-based economy, attract global talent and boost economic diversification. Under the new classification, expatriate workers are grouped

**We are proud of Indian diaspora, says Modi**

**MALE:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with the Indian community in the Maldives during his visit to the island nation. In a post on X following his interaction, Modi said: "Interacted with the Indian community in the Maldives. It is commendable how they are contributing to the Maldives' progress while remaining connected to their roots in India."

Cont on page-2

into three main categories — high-skill, skilled and basic — based on a detailed assessment of qualifications, work experience, technical ability, wages and age. The system, which came into effect for existing workers on June 18 and for new arrivals from July 1, is already prompting businesses across the Kingdom to adapt their workforce planning and recruitment strategies. Speaking to a TV channel, Haider Hussain, Partner at Fragomen, called the system as a "deliberate and sophisticated recalibration" of Saudi Arabia's human capital approach. "This ensures the inflow of specialised expertise critical for developing emerging sectors while reducing reliance on traditional industries," Hussain said.

**Workforce audit**

He noted that the measure enhances Saudi Arabia's position as a global business hub by introducing greater transparency and meritocracy in the labour

Cont on page-2



# OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

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# Saudi issues new law allowing foreigners to own property

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia has officially published the full details of its new law regulating real estate ownership by non-Saudis, following cabinet approval earlier this month.

The comprehensive law, released in the official gazette Umm Al-Qura, will take effect 180 days from publication and marks a major overhaul in the Kingdom's approach to foreign ownership of property.

The new system grants non-Saudis — including individuals, companies and non-profit entities — the right to own property or obtain other real rights over real estate within designated geographic zones to be determined by the cabinet.

These rights include usufruct (beneficial use), leaseholds and other real estate interests, but will be subject to a range of controls and restrictions based

on location, property type, and usage.

The law preserves all real estate rights that were legally established for non-Saudis prior to the new regulation taking effect. However, it clearly states that ownership remains prohibited in certain locations and regions, notably in Makkah and Madinah, except under conditions for individual Muslim

owners. A key provision in the law requires the council of ministers — upon a proposal by the Real Estate General Authority and with the approval of the Council of Economic and Development Affairs — to define the allowable zones for foreign ownership and set upper limits on ownership percentages and durations for usufruct rights.

Foreign individuals legally residing in Saudi Arabia may own one residential property outside restricted areas for personal housing purposes. This does not apply to Makkah and Madinah.

The regulation also includes provisions for corporate ownership. Non-listed companies with foreign shareholders, as well as investment funds and li-

censed special-purpose entities, will be permitted to acquire real estate throughout the Kingdom, including in Makkah and Madinah, provided the ownership supports operational needs or employee housing.

Listed companies and investment vehicles may also acquire property in line with Saudi financial market regulations.

## India-Oman FTA almost ready

**NEW DELHI:** Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal revealed that India's Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Oman is "almost finalised," and negotiations with several other key global economies, including the EU, US, Peru and Chile, are progressing rapidly.

"We are in negotiations at an advanced stage with Oman. It is almost finalised," Goyal stated. He also

mentioned that the FTAs with the EU, US, Peru and Chile are also making "fast progress".

At the press conference, the minister also pointed to a series of successful FTAs concluded with developed nations in recent years, including Mauritius, Australia, and the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA) bloc, comprising Switzerland, Norway, Liech-

tenstein and Iceland.

"The Free Trade Agreement between India and the UK, the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement, clearly reflects the growing relevance and importance of India on the world stage," Goyal said. "The goods and services that India provides to the world have high quality and cost competitiveness."

The latest addition is the

Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the UK, which the Prime Minister Keir Starmer described as one of the most significant deals post-Brexit. Goyal noted that the agreement is "very comprehensive," covering 30 chapters.

## New Zealand woos Indian students

**WELLINGTON:** As traditional destinations for Indian immigration such as the US, Canada and Australia implement various curbs, New Zealand is rolling out the red carpet by fast-tracking student visas and also measures to woo wealthy immigrants. This is part of the island nation's rebranding efforts as a study, work, and leisure destination to revive growth post-pandemic.

On the education front, India was formally added to New Zealand's List of Qualifications Exempt from Assessment (LQEA) on June 23. The recognition applies to Level-7 qualifications and above, namely bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees, from top Indian institutions such as IITs, IISERs, IIMs and central universities that appear on NZQA's approved list.

New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon's visit to India this March, during which edu-

(Cont. on page - 7)

## Saudi's skill-based work permit system reshapes expat employment scenario

**(Cont. from page - 1)** market, ultimately improving governance and supporting foreign direct investment. With reclassification already underway for the current expatriate workforce, Hussain urged employers to conduct immediate and thorough workforce audits. "Every expatriate must now be assessed against the new criteria—academic credentials, certifications,

experience, wages, and age," he said, warning that delays could risk compliance and operational disruption. The second phase of implementation, beginning Aug 3, applies to new foreign hires. According to Hussain, HR departments must ensure all applicant documentation, including employment contracts and qualifications, meet the new requirements.

"Recruitment strategies

must now integrate these classifications from the outset," he said. Looking ahead, Hussain predicted long-term operational and financial shifts for businesses. He expects reduced reliance on low-skilled labour, with companies re-evaluating workforce structures and potentially increasing investment in automation and the upskilling of local talent.

### Specialised talent

"The focus will shift from hiring in volume to sourcing specialised talent with a strategic fit," he said, adding that a more skilled workforce is likely to deliver stronger productivity and innovation. Over time, he noted, the new system will simplify immigration processes and speed up permit approvals for qualified applicants. However, Hussain warned that compliance may pres-

ent challenges. Vague interpretations of terms like "technical ability" or appropriate "wage level" could lead to classification errors. He advised companies to establish internal mechanisms for regular assessment and reclassification to stay aligned with evolving roles and job market standards. He also stressed the importance of proactive internal communication. "Employers must explain the rationale behind the new system to their employees, reassure them of the company's support and address any concerns about job security or residency status," he said. The system reflects a broader vision to build a future-ready labour market in Saudi Arabia—one that prioritises expertise, encourages innovation, and strengthens the Kingdom's competitiveness on the global stage.

## We are proud of Indian diaspora...

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

"The Indian diaspora continues to be one of the strongest bridges between India and the world. We are very proud of our diaspora," the prime minister said in another post. Modi also met with beneficiaries of the Indian Technical and Economic Co-operation (ITEC) Programme. In another post on X, Modi wrote: "It was a delight to

interact with beneficiaries of the Indian Technical and Economic Co-operation (ITEC) Programme. This initiative focuses on capacity building. The group included police officials, government officers, paramedics and nurses. They truly embody the spirit of India-Maldives friendship and the deep-rooted ties that unite our two nations."



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Euro	100.69	102.82
Japanese Yen	58.16	59.07
Swiss Franc (CHF)	107.59	109.98
Canadian Dollar	62.45	63.86
Australian Dollar	56.27	57.49
Norwegian Krone	8.37	8.62
Swedish Krona	8.94	9.2
New Zealand Dollar	51.41	52.56
Hong Kong Dollar	10.81	11.14
Kuwaiti Dinar	289.326	278.3511
Singapore Dollar	66.83	68.3
Saudi Arabian Riyal	22.61	23.32
United Arab Emirates	23.15	23.81

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**IMPORTANT UPDATE**

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### Day 2 Agatti – Water Sports & Sightseeing

Enjoy water activities followed by island sightseeing – visit the jetty, desalination plant, Lagoon Beach, and Archaeological Museum.



### Day 3 Kalpitti Island Excursion

Morning boat trip to Kalpitti Island and return. Overnight at Agatti.



### Day 4 Agatti to Bangaram

After breakfast, transfer to Bangaram by speedboat (1 hour). Welcome drink and check-in at resort.



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# GULF FAQs

## Over 40pc of UAE employees' skills will change in five years, says study

**Can you please explain the highlight of "the Future Jobs Report 2025" relevant to UAE?**

The UAE job market will see one of the highest disruptions, with two in five core skills of employees changing over the next five years.

According to The Future of Jobs Report 2025, published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), the UAE has been ranked 11th among countries that will see the largest disruption in the job market, with 41pc of workers' core skills changing between 2025 and 2030.

The study said firms in the UAE expect increased digitalisation and efforts to adapt to and mitigate

climate change to significantly impact their business models by 2030.

"Focus on technological shifts is reflected in increasing adoption of technology in day-to-day operations, with the proportion of total work tasks predominantly delivered by autonomous technologies projected to reach 43pc over the next five years, above an expected rate of 34pc globally," WEF said. UAE companies expect rising demand for technological literacy, with 87pc of respondents

emphasising increased need for this skill. Other growing skills include artificial intelligence (AI) and big data, networks and cybersecurity as well as leadership and social influence.

The WEF's survey found that 91pc of UAE firms believe that artificial intelligence (AI) and information

processing technologies (big data, AR and VR) and 66pc identified robots and autonomous systems will drive business transformation in the coming years. Other technology trends that will make an impact are energy generation, storage and distribution; new materials and composites; sensing, laser and

optical; semiconductor and computing; satellite and space technologies; quantum and encryption; and biotechnology and gene.

It found that 28pc

of employees would be upskilled in their current role and 18pc would be upskilled and redeployed by 2030. Nearly 72pc of UAE firms surveyed expect the skills gap in the labour market to hinder their organisation's transformation followed by organisation culture and resistance to change, inability to attract talent to the industry and insufficient understanding of opportunities. The WEF's report found that firms in the Middle East and Northern Africa region are more positive about talent availability by 2030 than their global peers, with 46pc of employers expecting the hiring outlook to improve.

Employers in the region, notably in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, are also planning on accelerating automation. With 46pc of on-the-job skills projected to change, compared with 39pc worldwide, the region's rate of skill disruption is most pronounced in countries such as Egypt and Bahrain, highlighting the need for reskilling and upskilling at a time of multi-dimensional change.

Only five per cent of firms operating in Bahrain identify ageing and declining working-age populations as a transformative trend by 2030, compared with 40pc of respondents globally. Talent availability is expected to remain stable, with only eight per cent of employers anticipating a deterioration, which is far below the global average.

The Future of Jobs Report 2025 revealed that job disruption will equate to 22 pc of jobs by 2030, with 170 million new roles set to be created and 92 million displaced, resulting in a net increase of 78 million jobs.



## Is marriage by video call legally valid for Muslims?

**I am a Muslim planning to get married soon with my fiancée, who is currently outside the UAE. Due to a recent job change, I am unable to travel to complete the marriage formalities in person. Is it legally permissible under the UAE law to conduct the wedding via video conference? If the marriage is recognised and legally registered, will I be able to apply for a visa to bring my wife to the UAE?**

The Federal Decree Law No. 41 of 2024 on the Issuance of the Personal Status Law, which governs Muslim personal matters in the UAE, clearly structures the legal process of marriage and requires specific conditions to be fulfilled for a marriage to be registered by the UAE courts.

According to Article 16 of the UAE Personal Status Law, a marriage is a civil contract between a man and a woman, which grants each party legally enforceable rights and obligations by Article 16, which reads as "Marriage is a contract concluded by the provisions of this law with elements and conditions between a man and a woman to perpetuate the marital relationship between them. It establishes rights and duties among spouses, aiming at chastity and purity, and the establishment of a stable family that spouses care for with affection and mercy."

Furthermore, Articles 18 and 19 of the UAE Personal Status Law provide for the elements of marriage and the eligibility for marriage.

A marriage should be registered with a compe-

tent UAE authority (such as the Dubai Personal Status Court in the Emirate of Dubai). This is by Article 41(1) of the UAE Personal Status Law, "The marriage contract shall be documented in the court by the legislation in force."

A mandatory premarital medical test conducted at a UAE government hospital is required, as prescribed by court practice. The couple must meet all legal conditions and submit the necessary documents and medical examination reports. This is by Article 41 (3) of the UAE Personal Status Law, "The marriage contract should fulfil the requirements and submit the documents and medical reports stipulated by the legislation in force in this regard." Under certain circumstances, a marriage performed via video conference may be consid-

ered valid, subject to the approval of the relevant authority. You may contact Dubai Courts for further advice. However, you may get married outside the UAE. However, for such a marriage to be recognised within the UAE, the following is required: The marriage must be valid and legally registered in accordance with the law of the country where it is held.

The marriage certificate must be: Attested by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of that country. Authenticated by the UAE Embassy in that country.

Further attested by the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Translated into Arabic by a certified legal translator and attested by the UAE Ministry of Justice. Upon completion of the aforementioned, you may be able to obtain a residence visa for your wife.



# Kuwait's new airport rule: declare gold, cash over KWD 3,000 or pay fines

**KUWAIT CITY:** Kuwait's General Administration of Customs now requires travellers to declare gold, cash and valuables exceeding KWD 3,000 (around \$9,800) at the airport.

The rule aims to improve transparency, prevent smuggling and speed up customs checks. Failure to declare may lead to confiscation and penalties. Travellers should carry proper documentation and declare all applicable items.

**KUWAIT'S NEW AIR-**

## PORT RULE:

\*Declare gold and cash over KWD 3,000 or face penalties.

\*Travellers must now declare gold, valuables, and cash over 3,000 Kuwaiti Dinars at Kuwait International Airport.

\*The law applies both when entering and leaving the country.

\*The rule is enforced by the General Administration of Customs in Kuwait to fight smuggling and illegal financial activity.

The General Administration of Customs in

Kuwait has introduced new rules at Kuwait International Airport that require all travellers to declare certain items if they exceed a set value. If you're carrying cash, gold, jewellery or luxury goods worth more than 3,000 KWD (about \$9,820), you now need to report them at customs. The updated policy applies to everyone, Kuwaitis, expats and visitors alike,



whether you're arriving or departing. Customs officers will ask to see proof of purchase or ownership, and undeclared items could be seized on the spot. The new measures are part of a wider plan to increase transparency

at borders, reduce illegal trade, and bring Kuwait's customs operations in line with international standards, including those set by the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

## Parliament seeks govt response on Indian students affected by strict US visa rules

**NEW DELHI:** In the ongoing monsoon session of parliament 2025, the government is being asked what it is doing to engage in diplomatic dialogue to address concerns of affected Indian students and steps being taken to safeguard their interests.

Currently, there are about four lakh Indian students pursuing studies in the US and each year, about a lakh students get F-1 study visas. Questions are raised on the number of Indian students pursuing education in the US and the number of Indian students who left for the US on student visas in the last five years.

The question was also raised whether the government is aware of the recent restrictions imposed by US authorities on issuing student visas and restrictions on institutes like Harvard to take in foreign students.

The government's reply to the unstarred question raised in Lok Sabha was: As per the June 2025 SEVIS Mapping Pool Data brought out by the US Department of Homeland Security, a total number

of 372,424 Indian nationals are pursuing various educational programmes (primary, secondary, other vocational, high school,

language training, flight school, associate, bachelors, masters, doctorate and others) of different time durations in the US.

## UAE expats get fee cuts as currencies drop

**DUBAI:** Expats sending monthly remittances should not just be looking at how their currencies are faring against the dirham – keep an eye on whether there are any deals available on remittances fees.

Because towards the end of each month, UAE currency exchange houses, banks and remittance platforms are offering discounts on fees, and in some cases even allowing for zero fee transfer.

Which is why UAE expats sending funds overseas are increasingly looking to a handful of choices each time rather than sticking with any one service provider.

India rupee falls: Here's why UAE NRIs should not delay sending money. This weekend, for instance, with the Indian rupee dropping to 23.56 to a dirham, some online remit-

tance platforms were offering 23.54/23.56 while banks had their exchange rates at 23.36-23.4. Other popular remittance service providers slashed fees to get new customers or retain them.

## Over one million Indians give up citizenship since 2019

**NEW DELHI:** Indians are increasingly showing interest in giving up citizenship and settling abroad. According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), 10,40,860 or 1.04 million Indians voluntarily renounced their passports between 2019-2024.

In the ongoing monsoon session of Parliament 2025, in a reply to a question whether Government is aware of the fact that number of Indian who relinquished their Indian

## New Zealand woos Indian...

(Cont. from page-2) cation was a key agenda, helped formalise the decision, said Piyush Kumar, regional director, South Asia at IDP Education. "This reflects a growing recognition of the quality and credibility of Indian higher education."

Additionally, a 12-month extended application window has been introduced and a PGDip + Master's combination is now available. "This offers students time to find meaningful

employment and addresses both emotional and practical friction points," said Rajneesh Pathak, founder, Global North Residency and Citizenship, an investment immigration company. Further, employment advantages are also on offer. "This inclusion is relevant for visa pathways such as the Skilled Migrant Category, Green List roles, Sector Agreement pathways, and the Accredited Employer Work Visa," said Kumar at IDP Education.

Citizenship is increasing since 2019, the MEA replied, the number of Indians who gave up their Indian citizenship was 1,44,017 in 2019; 85,256 in 2020; 1,63,370 in 2021; 2,25,620 in 2022; 2,16,219 in 2023 and 2,06,378 in 2024.

According to the MEA data shared earlier, 1.75 million (10,75,000) Indians voluntarily renounced their passports between 2011 and June 2023. Indians have given up citizen-

ship to immigrate to approximately 135 countries around the world, including Antigua and Barbuda, Brazil, Iceland and the Vatican, as well as the US, UK, France and Germany.

The data shows that in 2019, as many as 1,44,017 Indians renounced their citizenship, while the number grew to a record high of 2,25,620 in 2022. Since then, the number of Indians surrendering their Indian passport has remained above two lakh.



# GLIMPSES OF TAFI-WI FAM TRIP TO LAK-PHUKET

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