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CIMS-MFA organize conclave on India-Saudi workforce mobility, focuses on strengthening safe migration

SECUNDERABAD: An interactive conclave on Workforce Mobility to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia brought together key stakeholders to deliberate on the evolving landscape of labour migration, ethical recruitment, and migrant welfare. The programme was jointly organised by the Centre for Indian Migrant Studies (CIMS) and Migrant Forum Asia (MFA), with the participation of government representatives, industry leaders, recruit-

ment professionals, researchers and migrant welfare experts. Representing IPEPCIL, VS Abdulkareem participated in the high-level interactive sessions, offering industry perspectives

on ethical recruitment practices, workforce mobilisation, and strengthening bilateral cooperation between India and Saudi Arabia.

The conclave examined

(Cont. on page - 2)



From left Hyderabad Protector of Emigrants Anand, Rafeek Ravuther, Executive Director of CIMS and Sister Lissy Joseph, National Workers Welfare Trust (NWWT), at the Interactive conclave on India --- Saudi workforce mobility on strengthening safe migration held in Secunderabad.



From right: Mandha Bheem Reddy, vice-chairman, NRI Advisory committee (right), Prakash, GM-NORKA, Anil Kumar Eravathri Garu, Ex MLA, Member, NRI Advisory Committee and VS Abdulkareem (extreme left) speaking at the conclave in Secunderabad.

IPEPCIL holds strategic meeting with Russian officials to strengthen India-Russia workforce mobility

NEW DELHI: As a part of its continued efforts to strengthen international workforce mobility and enhance bilateral co-operation, president of the Indian Personnel Export Promotion Council (IPEPCIL) VS Abdulkareem held a constructive meeting with Albert Safiullin, Head of the Interregional Relations, Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation, together with Dr Aleksan Kagarimanian, Head of Aviation and Railway Construction at Delhi.

The discussion focused on the forthcoming "TIME"-Russia-Indian Business Forum in Tatarstan-Kazan Province, where an IPEPCIL delegation is proposed to participate with the objective of promoting structured collaboration with the prospec-



(Left to right): Albert Safiullin, VS Abdulkareem and Dr Aleksan Kagarimanian

tive employers in the workforce mobility between India and the Russian Federation.

During the meeting, both sides emphasised the importance of establishing a transparent, ethical, legal and compliance-driven framework for workforce mobility that addresses the evolving manpower requirements of industries while safeguarding the interests and welfare of skilled professionals.

The deliberations also highlighted the significance of strengthening institutional co-operation, fostering industry partnerships and creating sustainable pathways for skilled workforce exchange.

IPEPCIL, reiterated its commitment to working closely with

Russian government authorities, industries, and stakeholders to ensure that its participation in the "TIME"-Russia-India Business Forum is meaningful, productive and result-oriented.

The Council believes that enhanced co-operation in workforce mobility will not only contribute to the industrial and economic development in both countries but also reinforce the longstanding strategic partnership between India and Russia.

The proposed participation at the Kazan Business Forum is expected to open new avenues for collaboration, encourage responsible international recruitment practices, and support the development of a mutually beneficial ecosystem for workforce mobility between the two nations.

29mn tourists visited Saudi Arabia in 2025

RIYADH: The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development announced its "Tourism Trends and Policies 2026" report, which reflected the rapid growth and notable achievements of the Saudi tourism sector, strengthening Saudi Arabia's position on the global tourism map and consolidating its presence as one of the fastest-growing tourism destinations in the world. The report highlighted that Saudi Arabia achieved

(Cont. on page - 6)

Over 20pc rise in domestic airfare in 15 months

NEW DELHI: The average domestic airfare in India has shot up by approximately 20.5 pc across 72 domestic sectors, the Rajya Sabha was informed.

Sharing data compiled and shared by the Directorate General of Civil Avi-

ation, Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol said this takes into account the period from March 2025 to June 2026.

Mohol had furnished his written response to a query from MP Ranjeet Rajan who sought details of fare

increase for flyers as well as the operational costs of airlines since March 2025 to date. This was in light of air space restrictions and route diversions effected since then. He also sought to know the measures tak-

(Cont. on page - 2)



Overdue exam reforms

Education sector needs urgent attention. The violent protests by some youth at the heart of New Delhi have brought long-overdue political attention to educational reform. These are symptoms of a far deeper malady. And the Union government has rightly appointed a panel of experts to study the issue. And it is heartening that the panel will be chaired by Nandan Nilekani, a taskmaster whose stewardship of Aadhaar and India's digital public infrastructure combined technological innovation on a large scale is known. His proven ability to bring together government, industry and civil society (and now students) around far-reaching reforms should stand the taskforce in good stead as it confronts one of the most consequential public policy challenges the country faces. The committee's composition — technology and education experts and former bureaucrats — suggests that the government is looking beyond immediate crisis management.

Editorial
By EL Vaidyanathan

per leak was only a trigger to the recent agitation. The agitation may have been triggered by repeated examination failures, but at its heart lay a larger question: Does the country's education system open doors at a time when the world of work is undergoing profound transformations — AI is reshaping white-collar employment, automation is altering the skill-related demands of employers, and India's IT and outsourcing industries are entering a period of technological disruption. Behind this violence is the uncertain future the youth is facing today. There is unemployment at different levels. Reservations at various stages gobble a huge chunk of plum jobs leaving very little opportunities for general class students. Today's youth face a twin uncertainty — an examination system whose credibility has repeatedly been questioned and a labour market whose outlook is rapidly changing. This is where Nilekani's presence on the panel assumes significance. He has maintained that investments in digital infrastructure, skilling and continuous learning can make AI a job multiplier. He has also argued that AI will reshape India's outsourcing industry, making it imperative for professionals to move towards higher-value expertise. Such insights can help the task force become a forum for sustained engagement with the changing knowledge economy.

The bill to make punishment more stringent for leaks in examination papers that was passed by parliament was part of the prime minister's promise to the agitating students for cleaning up the examination system. He has also promised the arrest of suspects in paper leaks, instituting fast-track courts to try them. A law with similar aims was passed in 2024; the new bill intensifies the penalties. But paper leaks in examinations, such as the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test — the immediate reason for the students' protest — or other national-level examinations, are symptoms of corruption. As numerous academics and experts have pointed out, hardening laws will help little unless there are structural reforms and systemic changes. But is it enough for the changes in the system that seemed to have been the larger goal of the protest?

The National Testing Agency that conducts these examinations is a registered society, not even a government entity. Its alleged connection with coaching institutions encourages corruption. The computer-based, multiple-choice questions it designs for admission into higher education institutions are not a gauge for diverse talents. Can the new bill address the issues that lie at the root of the current education system that is causing so much frustration and rage among students?

LIPSYNCH

"There is no greater harm than that of time wasted."

— Michelangelo

CIMS-MFA organize conclave on India-Saudi workforce...

(Cont. from page - 1)

the current trends, opportunities and challenges in the recruitment and mobilisation of Indian workers to Saudi Arabia. Participants deliberated on a wide range of issues affecting overseas employment, including ethical recruitment, worker protection, regulatory compliance, skills development, pre-departure orientation, and mechanisms to safeguard the rights and welfare of migrant workers throughout the migration cycle.

The workshop also explored practical measures to streamline recruitment processes, improve workforce mobility and enhance collaboration among governments, employers, recruitment agencies and civil society organisations. Participants emphasised the importance of adopting transparent, ethical, and worker-centric migration practices that would benefit both migrant workers and employers.

Following extensive deliberations, the conclave formulated a series of recommendations and resolutions aimed at strengthening safe, transparent and sustainable workforce mobility between India and Saudi Arabia. It was unan-



IPEPCIL president VS Abdulkareem with Protector of Emigrants (Hyderabad) Anand and other dignitaries.



A section of the participants.



Former Ambassador Dr BM Vinod Kumar (IFS-rtd), chairman of NRI Advisory Committee, Govt of Telangana.

imously agreed that these recommendations would be compiled and submitted to the appropriate authorities in both countries for consideration and further action.

The recommendations

seek to strengthen the existing migration framework, facilitate smoother workforce mobility, promote ethical recruitment and ensure greater protection, dignity, and welfare for Indian migrant workers seeking employment opportunities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The conclave concluded by reaffirming the shared commitment of all stakeholders towards promoting fair recruitment, safeguarding migrant rights and fostering a resilient, responsible, and sustainable migration ecosystem that contributes to the socio-economic development of both India and Saudi Arabia.

Over 20pc rise in domestic airfare in 15 months

(Cont. from page - 1)

en by the government to reduce Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) rates for the last five years.

Elaborating on the reasons for the 20.5pc increase in fare based on data shared by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the minister said: "Airlines operating costs are dynamic in nature and the individual component varies due to multiple factors such as the cost of ATF in international markets, foreign exchange rates, excise duties, lease

rentals and Value Added Tax.

"ATF alone accounts for 35pc to 40pc of total operating expenses of airlines," the minister said.

Mohol said that the Centre was taking proactive steps to make air travel more affordable. The enactment of the Protection of Interests in Aircraft Objects 2025 to lower interest rates and lease route rentals was among the key steps taken, he said.

"The rationalisation of the Central Excise Duty & GST on maintenance, re-

pair and overhaul components and contracts, and the reduction of high VAT on ATF by requesting States/UTs are among other measures," he said.

Among the measures taken by the government to support the aviation sector was a one-time budgetary support of a maximum of Rs 10,000 crores to oil marketing companies to provide ATF stabilisation support to scheduled Indian airlines due to exceptional fuel price volatility on account of the West Asia crisis.

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As on 29th July 2026 (In rupees)

Currency	Bill Buy	Bill Sell
US Dollar	95.14	96.37
British Pound	126.51	128.26
Euro	108.12	110.38
Japanese Yen	58.15	59.06
Swiss Franc (CHF)	115.89	118.38
Canadian Dollar	67.21	68.7
Australian Dollar	65.9	67.36
Norwegian Krone	9.73	10.01
Swedish Krona	9.72	10
New Zealand Dollar	54.75	55.97
Hong Kong Dollar	11.98	12.35
Kuwaiti Dinar	314.2208	294.2846
Singapore Dollar	73.34	74.96
Saudi Arabian Riyal	25.02	25.8
U A E Dirham	25.57	26.37



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Andhra notification for 3,168 jobs issued

VIJAYAWADA: Minister for HRD and IT Nara Lokesh has directed officials to ensure that job notifications are issued in a foolproof manner to avoid legal or procedural disputes during the recruitment process.

Lokesh chaired a meeting of the Ministers' Committee on employment

generation at his residence to review the implementation of Job Calendar-2026. The ministers attended the meeting virtually, while senior officials made a power point presentation on the number of vacancies to be filled across various government departments.

The State government plans to fill 10,060 vacancies as part of Job Calendar-2026 in four phases. In the first phase, a notification for recruiting 1,523 faculty members in various universities was issued on May 15.

The officials informed that 2,225 of the total

2,388 posts in the third phase will be filled in the Home Department. The Ministers' Committee suggested increase in the number of Group-I posts.

The notification of second phase, which covers 3,168 posts, was originally scheduled for August 15. However, the release was

postponed due to technical issues related to implementation of Presidential Order and requests from employee unions.

"Vacancies should be filled based on the functional requirements of individual departments, in line with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's growth vision," he said.

Recruitment should be held smoothly: Minister

The officials informed that 2,225 of the total 2,388 posts in the third phase will be filled in the Home Department. The Ministers' Committee suggested increase in the number of Group-I posts.

The complete details of vacancies of Job Calendar-2026 will be placed before the State Cabinet meeting scheduled for August 6.

Aadhaar, PAN and Voter ID not conclusive proof of citizenship: Calcutta High Court

KOLKOTA: The Calcutta High Court has observed that documents such as Aadhaar card, Permanent Account Number (PAN) card and voter identity card cannot be treated as conclusive proof of Indian citizenship.

The observation was made while hearing a habeas corpus petition filed by SumanMolla, who al-

leged that his nephew, Nasir, had been lodged in a detention camp after his name was removed from the electoral rolls during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise in West Bengal.

According to the petitioner, the detention occurred despite an appeal against the deletion of Nasir's name from the voters'

list still being pending.

To support his claim that Nasir was an Indian citizen, the petitioner submitted several documents, including a voter identity card, Aadhaar card, PAN card issued by the Income Tax Department and a bank passbook.

However, a division bench comprising Justices DebansuBasak and Ajay

Kumar Gupta held that while such documents may serve as forms of identification, they do not constitute conclusive proof of Indian citizenship.

The court's observations came in the course of hearing the petition and underscore the distinction between identity documents and legal proof of citizenship.





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GULF FAQs

I lost money in fraudulent transactions; will my bank help?

I recently discovered several unauthorised transactions on my UAE bank account. Although I reported the issue to the bank immediately, the investigation is taking longer than expected. What legal protections do consumers have in such situations, and can the bank be held liable for any financial losses?

Pursuant to your queries, the provisions of consumer protection law issued by Central Bank of UAE pertaining to the financial institution and the cyber crime laws of UAE are applicable. In the UAE, it is a crime if anyone hacks the e-payment clones' electronic online payment instruments, transactions, applications or websites and such crimes may lead to imprisonment and/or payment of huge fines to an individual or group of individuals who are committing such a crime.

This is in accordance with Article 15 of the Federal Decree Law No. 34 of 2021 on Countering Rumours and Cyber crimes (the "UAE Cyber crime Law") related to hacking e-payment instruments, which states: "Whoever forges,

clones or copies any credit card, debit card or any e-payment or captures its data or information using any of the ITE ISs shall be punished with imprisonment and/or a fine of not less than (Dh200,000) or more than (Dh 2,000,000).

The same penalties shall be imposed on whoever: 1. Makes or designs any ITE

utilise the services made available to third parties by these cards or instruments.

* Accepts using these forged, fake or copied cards or e-payment instruments or data seized or obtained illegally despite being aware of their illegality.

Further, financial institutions in the UAE are obligated to create awareness

stitutions"), which states: "Licensed Financial institutions must demonstrate they have carried out sufficient consumer awareness activities related to educating consumers of the need to protect themselves from financial crime."

Financial institutions, in accordance with clause 6.2.2.5 of Consumer Protection Regulations of Financial Institutions, must maintain up-to-date security systems and must be prepared to implement new cyber security strategies as needed. This ensures they can effectively protect against evolving threats. "Licensed financial institutions

institutions are not liable to pay compensation for financial loss arising out of financial crimes if it is due to the gross negligence or fraudulent behaviour of their customers.

This is in accordance with Clause 6.2.2.4 of the Consumer Protection Regulations of Financial Institutions, which states: "Licensed Financial Institutions must compensate consumers in a timely manner for financial losses and expenses resulting from financial crimes, misappropriation, cyber-attacks and misuse of assets and information unless it can be proven that the loss was due to the gross negligence or fraudulent behaviour of the consumers."

Based on the aforementioned provisions of law, the bank may be held liable to compensate its consumers for losses and expenses caused by financial crimes, cyber-attacks or misuse of assets and information, unless the loss is due to the consumer's own gross negligence or fraud.

If you are sure about the fact that you have not interacted with any fraudulent site and can also provide proof that the said loss of money was not due to your negligent behaviour, then the bank may be liable to compensate you for the loss. You may file a formal complaint with your bank.

The bank, based on your complaint, may undertake relevant investigations on the financial crime. Further, you may have to file a police complaint and submit details of the transaction along with evidence.

In the event you feel that your complaint is not resolved by your bank to your satisfaction, you may escalate your complaint to Central Bank of UAE to report the matter to them for investigation and resolution.



or software with the intention of facilitating any of the acts stipulated.

*Uses without authorisation any credit, electronic or debit card or any other e-payment instrument or any of its data or information, with the intention of obtaining for himself or for third parties any funds or properties of others or to

for their customers and the public related to the financial crimes. This is in accordance with Clause 6.2.2.6 of Consumer Protection Regulation issued by Central Bank of UAE through its Circular No. 8 of 2020 to all licensed financial institutions in the UAE (the "Consumer Protection Regulations of Financial In-

stitutions") must ensure their security and protection systems are updated and have the capacity to develop and adopt new approaches to cyber security as required."

Further, financial institutions may have to compensate their customers in case of any financial loss to them due to financial crimes. However, financial

Am I entitled to my full salary, including allowances, during annual leave?

According to the UAE Labour Law, what salary and benefits is an employee entitled to receive during his/her annual leave? My company pays only my basic salary and housing allowance (HRA) while I am on leave and excludes my other regular allowances. Is this compliant with UAE Labour Law or should employees receive his/her full salary, including all applicable allowances, during annual leave?

Taking your annual leave shouldn't mean taking a pay cut but many employees in the UAE aren't sure exactly what their paycheck

should look like while they're off work. If employer trims your monthly pay down to just your basic salary and housing allowance during leave, is that within their rights or are you owed more? The answer lies in how UAE Labour Law actually defines "salary" and it may not match what many companies are practicing.

According to UAE Labour Law, what salary and benefits is an employee entitled to receive during annual leave? My company pays only my basic salary and housing allowance (HRA) while I am on leave and excludes my other regular allowances. Is this compliant with UAE Labour Law or

should employees receive their full salary, including all applicable allowances, during annual leave.

"A common misconception among employees in the UAE is that annual leave pay consists only of the basic salary or basic salary plus housing allowance. Under UAE Labour Law, this practice is non-compliant," says Salam Pappinissery, CEO of YAB Legal Services.

Under Article 29 of Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021 (the UAE Labour Law), an employee taking annual leave is entitled to receive his full salary (full wage) during the leave period. According to the law:

"wage" is defined as the basic wage plus all allowances (such as housing, transport and other regular allowances) and contractual benefits.

"Therefore, while an employee is actively taking his/her statutory annual leave (30 calendar days per year), the employer must pay the employee their full salary, including all regular allowances that they normally receive during a regular working month.

Paying only the basic salary and housing allowance (HRA) while excluding other regular allowances during leave violates statutory requirements," Pappinissery said.

46pc of NRI property owners want to sell now

NEW DELHI: Nearly 46pc of NRI property owners surveyed are looking to sell their properties immediately, while another 26pc plan to exit within six months, signalling a major shift in how overseas Indians manage their wealth. At the same time, more than half intend to transfer the sale proceeds abroad instead of reinvesting in Indian real estate, according to the Remittor Annual NRI Wealth Report 2026.

The report by the Vancouver-based wealth tech startup Remittor suggests that properties purchased during India's biggest NRI buying cycle between 2010 and 2019 are entering what it calls a "liquidity phase", with owners increasingly viewing them as financial assets rather than emotional anchors.

More than 60pc of the properties entering the resale market were acquired during that decade, while 89pc are residential homes, indicating that apartments bought during India's urban expansion years are now being mon-

etised. For decades, buying a house in India served multiple purposes for overseas Indians—a retirement plan, a home for ageing parents and a fallback option if they returned.

"Properties acquired during India's major NRI investment wave between 2010 and 2022 are now entering a liquidity phase, as owners evaluate them against mortgages abroad, retirement planning needs, education spends, portfolio diversification goals, and

evolving tax obligations," said Sanu Nair, Founder and CEO of Remittor.

Among properties entering the resale market, Maharashtra accounts for 26.8pc, followed by Delhi-NCR (23.4pc), Kerala (15pc), Gujarat (12.9pc) and Karnataka (8.2pc).

These regions had attracted significant overseas investment over the past decade because of strong infrastructure growth and expectations of long-term capital appreciation.

L&T bags contract worth Rs 10,000cr from Kuwait

MUMBAI: Larsen & Toubro (L&T) said its Energy Hydrocarbon Onshore business has won a major engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contract worth in the range of Rs 5,000 to Rs 10,000 crore from Kuwait Oil Company (KOC). L&T said in its regulatory filing that the order is to develop key export infrastructure for the Jurassic Light Oil (JLO) project in Kuwait. Under the contract, L&T will build

six new crude oil storage tanks, each with an operating capacity of 618,000 barrels, along with associated facilities on a lump sum turnkey basis. The project also includes the installation of new pipelines and the upgrade of Kuwait's existing crude oil loading and export network. These improvements will help the country handle higher crude production and strengthen its export infrastructure.

29mn tourists visited Saudi Arabia in 2025

(**Cont. from page - 1**) the highest growth rate in the number of inbound international tourists between 2019 and 2025 compared with the OECD member countries and partner economies included in the study, recording 67pc growth, confirming the success of efforts aimed at developing the tourism sector and enhancing its competitiveness globally, Arriyadiyah reported.

The report showed that the number of tourists arriving from abroad rose from 17.5 million in 2019 to 29.3 million in 2025, an increase of about 11.7 million tourists, exceeding pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels and reflecting the

acceleration of the sector's growth and the recovery of its momentum at a pace exceeding that of many global markets.

It also indicated that inbound tourism continued to strengthen its economic contribution, as total spending by tourists arriving from abroad reached SR176.6 billion in 2025, recording five per cent

growth compared with 2024, reflecting the sector's rising economic value and its increased contribution to supporting economic growth and diversifying sources of income.

For domestic tourism, the report confirmed that the domestic market continued to play its role as a fundamental pillar of the sector's sustainability and



Air India starts 'Easy Connect' flights Linking from Amritsar with 27 global destinations

AMRISTAR: Air India has launched its Easy Connect flights from Amritsar, allowing passengers to complete check-in and immigration in Amritsar itself before connecting to international flights via Delhi.

Air India has selected two daily flights, AI1113 and AI1115, operating between Amritsar and Delhi for the new facility. Air India says travellers can connect to 27 international destinations within four hours of reaching Delhi.

International travel from Punjab just got easier. Air India has introduced its Easy Connect service in Amritsar, streamlining connecting flights through Delhi for passengers heading abroad. As part of the Easy Connect programme, passengers travelling from

Amritsar can complete check-in and immigration formalities at Amritsar Airport before flying to Delhi. They can then continue their international journey from Delhi without re-checking their baggage or changing terminals.

This means passengers can travel through Delhi as international transit passengers, making the connecting journey easier and reducing the need to navigate a foreign airport during transit.

Air India has selected two daily flights between Amritsar and Delhi for the new facility.

*AI1113: Departs Amritsar at 9:10 AM and reaches Delhi at 10:40 AM.

*AI1115: Departs Amritsar at 10:00 PM and reaches Delhi at 11:20 PM.



resilience, as the number of domestic tourists reached 93.3 million in 2025, an increase of eight per cent, while their spending rose by 10 pc to SR127.1 billion (\$33.91 billion), reflecting growing domestic demand and the expansion of tourism options and products across Saudi Arabia's various regions.

The report highlighted the growing economic and

social impact of the tourism sector in Saudi, as tourism's direct contribution to gross domestic product reached 5.2pc, according to preliminary estimates for 2026, while the number of direct jobs in the sector exceeded one million and women's participation reached 47pc reflecting the sector's role in supporting economic development and empowering national talent.