



OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT

PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES



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Bulgaria opens visa centres in six Indian cities

NEW DELHI: Starting Nov1 Indian citizens can apply for Bulgaria's long-term visa (D-visa) and can submit their applications at the Bulgaria Visa Application Centre in New Delhi, managed by VFS Global. The initiative, launched by the embassy of Bulgaria in New Delhi and VFS Global, expands access across six major cities -- Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai and New Delhi.

Appointment slots for centres outside the capital will open around mid-Nov, allowing applicants to complete the process closer to home.

Applications can be booked at <https://visa.vfsglobal.com/ind/en/bgr>. What does the new partnership mean for Indian applicants? The new arrangement was formalised

through an addendum signed on Oct 24, 2025, between Nikolay Yankov, Ambassador of Bulgaria to India, and Yummi Talwar, COO -- South Asia, VFS Global, at the embassy of Bulgaria in New Delhi. "The launch of Bulgaria's long-term visa services across India marks an important step in strengthening the people-to-people and business ties between our two countries. This initiative will make the appli-

cation process simpler and more accessible for Indian citizens planning to travel to Bulgaria for study, work, or family reasons, further deepening the connections between our nations," said Yankov.

He added that VFS Global already manages Bulgaria's short-term visa (C visa) services and the expansion allows Indian applicants to access all visa categories through a single platform.

NRI cells being set up across country

NEW DELHI: Delina Khongdup, a member of National Commission for Women, said that NRI cells were being established across the country to assist women affected by fraudulent or problematic marriages by NRIs. She encouraged women-

to carefully examine legal documents before marriage and seek immediate help from the commission or legal authorities if they were encountered by any problem. "Cases related to NRI marriages are increasing across the country and the National Commis-



Riyadh Air plans flights to Indian cities

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's newest national carrier Riyadh Air (RX) is preparing to enter the competitive Indian aviation market with flights to five major cities planned for summer 2026. The airline has targeted Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru,

Hyderabad and Chennai as its initial Indian destinations.

This marks an ambitious expansion into one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets. The existing bilateral framework (Cont. on page - 2)

Akasa Air plans flight expansion; to hire more pilots in 2026

MUMBAI: Akasa Air will consider operating flights to Kenya, Ethiopia, Egypt and some other countries and the three-year-old airline now feels "very good" about the delivery schedule for its Boeing planes, according to its CEO Vinay Dube.

Stressing that Akasa Air's international expansion will continue on the right path, Dube, also the founder, said the airline will shortly announce flights to Sharjah.

The airline has a fleet of 30 Boeing 737 MAX planes and expects to add "more than one aircraft" this year. "Our aircraft are capable of hitting the shores of East



Africa, absolutely it can go to Mauritius and on the southern side, it can go to Kenya, Ethiopia, Egypt... We can (also) go into Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan... Boeing 737 MAX is also capable of going deep into South Asia... All will be considered," Dube told a TV channel.

Currently, the carrier flies to six international cities -- Doha (Qatar), Jeddah, Riyadh (Saudi), Abu Dhabi (UAE), Kuwait

City (Kuwait) and Phuket (Thailand) -- and 24 domestic destinations.

The airline, which has 750-775 pilots, expects to restart hiring of pilots in 2026, mainly first officers. "We will have a need for pilots in the second-half of next year. So, we will have to restart the (hiring) process well before that... We feel very good about our delivery schedule, we have more predictability," Dube.

Egypt opens its grand museum

CAIRO: "This is the dream that all of us imagined. We all dreamed that this museum project would be realised," Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly told a press conference in Cairo. As many as 79 delegations, including 39 heads of state and government participated in the ceremony.

Madbouly said that the "largest part of construc-

tion, finishing and bringing this global landmark to its current form occurred during the past seven to eight years". The undisputed star of the show, however, was King Tutankhamun's collection of more than 5,000 objects, many displayed together for the first time. Details of the boy pharaoh's gold mask display remain un-

(Cont. on page - 2)



Cairo's new meseum

Abu Dhabi plans major expansion of Zayed International Airport

ABU DHABI: Abu Dhabi is working on a detailed master plan to expand Zayed International Airport, with construction to start in two years, as home carrier Etihad Airways plans to double in size and the city targets higher inbound tourism.

The state-owned airport operator is also working

The airport's Terminal-A, which opened two years ago, has capacity for 45 million passengers with plans to increase to 65 million. Zayed International Airport handled 15.5 million passengers in first-half of 2025.

"We opened in Nov 2023 and at the first board meeting, I broke the news

sion ... we are planning to start digging literally in a couple of years."

Abu Dhabi Airports is forecasting that its airports will handle 32 million to 33 million passengers this year, Ms Sorlini said. That is up from 29.4 million in 2024 and 24 million in the first nine months of 2025.

Abu Dhabi Airports operates Zayed International, Al Ain International, Al Bateen Executive, Delma Island and Sir Bani Yas Island Airport.

The expansion comes as Etihad Airways plans to carry 38 million passengers by 2030, up from a previous goal of 33 million. Abu Dhabi Airports plans to expand its use of biometrics and also extend it to transit passengers. "Today, we have implemented a biometric solution based on face recognition in five out of the nine touchpoints of the customer journey," Sorlini said.



on plans to capture biometrics data for transit passengers to cut queuing time and will use artificial intelligence to further improve operational efficiency, Elena Sorlini, managing director at Abu Dhabi Airports.

to the board that we had to think about expansion," she told the Skift Global Forum East event. "By 2032, we need to have the expansion ready. And hence, we are already working on the detailed master plan of the expan-



Wedding season begins: 46 lakh marriages to boost economy

NEW DELHI: The country is about to plunge into the full "band, baa-ja, baraati" vibe. This busy stretch runs from Kartik Shukla Paksha Ekadashi all the way to Dec 14. People are talking about a whopping 46 lakh weddings happening in these few weeks, and the business generated? That's expected to hit around Rs 6.5- lakh- crore.

This year looks bigger than ever. More weddings, more spending—just more of everything. Every industry that's even remotely tied to weddings is getting ready for a boost. Think jewellery, clothing, cater-

ing, event planning, tourism, travel—you name it, they're in for a busy season.

Delhi, as always, is right at the centre of it all. Over 4.8 lakh weddings are on the calendar here, and the city alone is looking at about Rs 1.8 lakh crore in wedding expenses. Couples are making sure their big day is just right, and nobody wants to miss out.

This rush isn't just about glitz and fun. Weddings pump serious money into the economy. Every sector, whether it's jewellery or travel, gets a slice of the pie. Weddings drive

(Cont. on page - 6)

Egypt opens its grand museum

(Cont. from page - 1) der wraps. The museum opens to the public on Tuesday, showcasing thousands of funerary artefacts previously scattered across Egypt.

Egypt's tourism sector, a vital source of foreign currency and jobs, has been repeatedly shaken over the past decade-and-a-half, from the 2011 uprising to waves of unrest and sporadic

terrorist attacks in the aftermath.

In recent years, tourism has shown signs of recovery, with 15 million visitors travelling to Egypt in the first nine months of 2025 and generating \$12.5 billion, up 21pc from a year earlier. Egyptian tourism minister Sherif Fathy expected total tourist arrivals to stand at 18 million by the end of this year.

Riyadh Air plans flights to Indian cities

(Cont. from page - 1) may need renegotiation to accommodate a new entrant, particularly one planning to serve five major Indian cities simultaneously.

Riyadh Air Plans New Flights to Fastest Growing Aviation Market in the World. Riyadh Air's choice of destinations shows they understand the Indian market dynamics well. Delhi and Mumbai are obvious selections as India's

national and commercial capitals.

Plans to fly to cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai demonstrate broader thinking beyond just the traditional metros. Bengaluru makes perfect sense given its massive technology workforce, many of whom have business connections in the Middle East.

Hyderabad has emerged as another major IT hub, while Chennai serves as

the gateway to Tamil Nadu with significant industrial ties. This mix covers both traditional business centres and India's thriving southern economic zones.

Starting international operations in India involves securing traffic rights, airport slots at busy Indian airports and co-ordination with aviation authorities. Ground handling, catering and passenger services must be established across five different cities, requiring significant investment and local partnerships.

The India-Saudi Arabia corridor serves multiple passenger segments that create consistent demand. Religious tourism represents a major component, with thousands of Indians travelling for Umrah and Haj pilgrimages. The Indian expatriate community in Saudi Arabia, numbering in the millions, creates year-round demand for travel between the two countries.

Festival digital transactions hit Rs 18.8-lakh-cr

MUMBAI: The combined, transactions through UPI, debit and credit cards during the Diwali festival reached Rs 18.8-lakh-crore, reflecting robust festival-led consumption and signalling a likely rebound in household demand this quarter.

A report said the UPI merchant data for Sept 2025 revealed sharp spending growth across several con-

sumer-oriented categories. These included men's and women's clothing at +68.5pc YoY, online marketplaces: +64pc, liquor shops: +98.8pc, beauty and barber shops: +30.6p and electronics outlets: +20.8pc.

Average spending per transaction stood at Rs 1,052 for UPI, Rs 8,084 for debit cards and Rs 1,932 for credit cards, indicating

greater traction in small to mid-ticket transactions, a BoB analysis said. The report highlighted signs of frontloading of spending, where households make purchases earlier than usual, especially across apparel, electronics and online retail platforms. The GST rate cut, which took effect in Oct, is expected to further amplify spending patterns in coming weeks.

"October 2025 data will provide clearer evidence of the GST benefit, but early signals point to a strong consumption revival," said Dipanwita Mazumdar, Economist at Bank of Baroda. BoB expects private consumption demand to remain buoyant through Q2 and Q3 FY26, driven by the GST stimulus, improved consumer sentiment and strong digital adoption.

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As on 6th October 2025 (In rupees)		
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US Dollar	88.21	89.37
British Pound	115.89	117.52
Euro	101.42	103.57
Japanese Yen	57.26	58.19
Swiss Franc (CHF)	109.16	111.54
Canadian Dollar	62.65	64.08
Australian Dollar	57.59	58.84
Norwegian Krone	8.62	8.87
Swedish Krona	9.19	9.46
New Zealand Dollar	50.2	51.31
Hong Kong Dollar	11.21	11.55
Kuwaiti Dinar	295.87	286.49
Singapore Dollar	67.47	68.98
Saudi Arabian Riyal	23.22	23.95
U A E Dirham	23.76	24.45

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GOLD (ADULT)	RS.25,000	RS.10800	RS.35,800
GOLD (CHILD)	RS.25,000	RS.7,000	RS.32,000

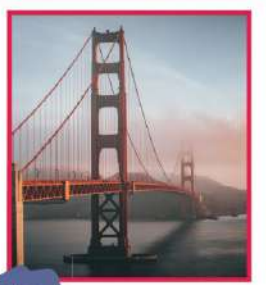
VOYAGE DATES	
02 Oct	06 Oct 2025 (Advanced schedule)
11 Oct	15 Oct 2025
17 Oct	21 Oct 2025
23 Oct	27 Oct 2025
29 Oct	02 Oct 2025
04 Nov	08 Nov 2025
10 Nov	14 Nov 2025

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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.



Day 5 Bangaram – Water Sports & Optional Island Tour

Indulge in water sports. Optional day trip to Thinnakara & Parali Islands (INR 1200 extra).



Day 6 Departure

Transfer to Agatti by boat (45 mins) and board flight to Cochin.

GULF FAQs

New e-passports for Indian expats

Indian expats who are planning to apply for a new Indian passport or renew their old ones will now have to follow new procedures, according to authorities. Starting Oct 28, the Indian mission in the UAE rolled out a new Passport Seva Programme (GPSP 2.0) for all passport-related services.

Applicants will henceforth only be issued an e-passport — a combined paper and electronic passport with a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) chip and an antenna embedded as an inlay of the passport that contains the personal particulars. Here are 10 things you need to know about the new procedure and e-passports:

1. Application: Those wanting to apply for a new passport or renew an existing one, must visit the online portal <https://mportal.passportindia.gov.in/gpsp/AuthNavigation/Login>. The upgraded GPSP 2.0 platform will

make it easy for applicants to fill in the forms and upload the required documents from the comfort of their own homes.

2. Auto-fill option: The new portal comes with a handy auto-fill option. Applicants who are renewing their document can enter their old passport number and all their existing details will be retrieved by the system. According to authorities, it is estimated



to take two minutes to fill in the fields.

3. ICAO-approved photograph: One major change in the new passport application system is the requirement of an ICAO (International Civil

Aviation Organization) approved photograph. This specifies a plain white background, a neutral expression with eyes open, direct frontal view with even lighting, and a face size taking up 70-80pc of the photo. Photos must be high resolution, sharp, and unaltered by software, with no shadows, red-eye or glasses that obscure the eyes.

4. Visit service provid-

er: Once the application is completed online, the applicant can visit the service provider — which in the UAE is BLS International. They must carry with them certain original documents, like passport,

Emirates ID and address proof if required. The full list of documentation required will be available on the GPSP2.0 platform.

5. No charges for edits: Another significant change in the new system is that no fees will be charged for minor edits henceforth. Earlier, even a small typo would require the service provider to redo the entire application — a process for which they charged a fee. However, now minor edits can be completed without having to redo the application and hence will be free of charge.

6. No biometrics required: As of now, biometric details of those applying for passport services from the UAE will not be collected. Those applying from India will have to provide their biometrics. According to Embassy and Consulate officials, the Indian government plans to enable biometric collection overseas in the future.

7. No change in charges: Officials have confirmed that there will be no changes in the service fees for the new e-passport. They added that the aim is to keep turnaround time the same as well.

8. New format of passport: The new RFID-embedded passports will have a new look and serial number. According to officials, current passport numbers have one alphabet followed by numbers whereas the new passports will have two alphabets followed by a serial number. There will be a small golden-colored RFID symbol on the new e-passports.

9. No rush for existing passports: Existing Indian passport holders need not rush to renew their passports as the document will be valid till its expiry date. Those who have an existing passport application and have already filled out their forms can also opt for a regular passport. However, henceforth every applicant will get an e-passport.

10. Be patient: The Indian mission in the UAE have requested applicants to be patient in the first few weeks of the system being rolled out as they are expecting teething troubles. According to officials, they have been trialing the system for a while and have smoothed out much of the operation but they are still expecting some delays as more people begin using the platform.

Family given Dh2.5 lakh after worker's death due to employer negligence

The worker's death was the result of the company's failure to implement proper safety measures; authority overseeing the investigation revealed the employer neglected its duty. The Abu Dhabi Family, Civil, and Administrative Appeals Court has raised the compensation awarded to the heirs of a construction worker who tragically fell from scaffolding and died instantly, increasing the amount from Dh1 lakh to Dh2.5 lakh.

The worker's death was the result of the company's failure to implement proper safety measures. The concerned authority overseeing the investi-

gation revealed that the employer neglected its duty to protect employees, leaving workers exposed to avoidable risks. This fatal lapse in safety protocols prompted the family to seek justice through the courts.

The heirs had filed a lawsuit against the company and its manager, demanding Dh10 million in compensation, in addition to 12pc legal interest, court fees and attorney charges. They argued that the employer's negligence directly caused the worker's death and that the company failed to provide the precautions required under occupational safety laws. The court em-

phasised that entitlement to Islamic blood money (diya) does not prevent the family from claiming additional material and moral compensation. While diya compensates part of the loss, it does not cover the full financial, emotional and moral damages suffered by the family due to the worker's sudden death. In light of the findings, the court increased the compensation to Dh2.5 lakh and ordered the defendants to pay all legal and court-related fees.

The ruling highlights the legal obligation of employers to maintain strict safety protocols in high-risk environments, in-

cluding construction sites, where negligence can lead to fatal accidents.

This decision sends a strong warning to companies across the UAE to ensure worker safety or face severe legal and financial consequences. It also affirms the right of families to pursue full compensation for preventable workplace deaths, holding employers accountable for negligence that costs lives.

The case underlines the critical importance of adhering to occupational safety standards and ensuring the well-being of workers, stressing that tragedies caused by avoidable negligence cannot be fully rectified by diya

which have already begun being issued — ushers in a new era for Indian travellers. According to officials, the chip can be read and verified globally at e-gates and immigration systems, reducing waiting times and making travel smooth.

India's golf tourism momentum accelerates at GIA Golf & Turf Summit, Hyderabad

HYDERABAD: The Golf Industry Association (GIA) successfully hosted a high-impact panel discussion on "Golf Tourism in India" during the Golf & Turf Summit in Hyderabad, held on Oct 29 to Oct 31, 2025 at the prestigious Boulder hills golf club, bringing together leading voices from the golf and travel ecosystem to chart the future of India's golf tourism landscape.

With India emerging as one of the world's fastest-growing golf destinations, the session explored strategies to position the country as an international hub for golf travel, tournaments and premium

lifestyle experiences.

LEADERSHIP INSIGHT & VISION: In his keynote address, Anirudha Seolekar, President — Golf Industry Association (GIA), emphasized the enormous growth potential of golf tourism in India. He highlighted the need for unified industry efforts, enhanced global promotion and world-class infrastructure to elevate India's visibility as a premier golf destination.

The distinguished panel featured: Arunlyer, Managing Director — My Golf Tours, Hon. Secretary-- TA-FI-WI & Committee member GIA, Lokesh Bettiah, Managing Director — Triway Travels & Vice Presi-



dent TAAI and Nikhil Jeet, Managing Director — Buzz Travel Marketing Pvt. Ltd. & DDP Group Moderated by Hari Natarajan, CEO & Co-Founder — Teetime Ventures, the interactive session delivered valuable insights on growth frameworks, tourism synergies

and investment potential.

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*Annual Fam Tours for Golf Tour operators for at least five years.

*Country based road shows for golf tourism supported by the ministry of tourism.Allow marketing development assistance for golf tourism promotion.Simplified faceless Time Bound MDA approvals.

*Holding Global Golf Tourism B2B Expo in India which opens up cross-border tourism partnerships.

*Public-private collaboration with the ministry of tourism and state tourism bodies allocating budgets and five year plans.

*Grassroots development and domestic participation expansion with state govt organizing golf festivals.

*Appoint celebrity and professional golfers as Global Golf Tourism Ambassadors promoting India as a golfing destination.

*Hold periodic stakeholders meeting across states not limited to Delhi.

GLOBAL SHOWCASE AND TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION

THE SUMMIT: The Summit also featured international exhibitors displaying state-of-the-art solutions for golf course development including modern turf equipment, irrigation technology, smart maintenance systems, and advanced golf gear — reinforcing India's readiness to adopt global standards.

A UNIFIED VISION FOR THE FUTURE: With world-class courses, hospitality excellence, growing domestic talent and strategic collaboration across stakeholders, India is strongly positioned to become one of the world's leading golf tourism markets.

The future of golf tourism in India is bright — and already underway.

Goa's tourist arrivals register six per cent rise in 2025

PANAJI: The overall tourist footfalls went up by 6.23pc from Jan to Sept this year compared with the corresponding period in 2024, state Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte said.

He said that while domestic tourist arrivals grew by 5.36pc -- up from 69.24 lakh in 2024 to 72.96 lakh this year -- the international arrivals saw a steep rise of 29.33pc -- up from 2.59 lakh to 3.36 lakh visitors.

Tourism continues to contribute about 16.43pc to the state GDP and provides 40 to 45pc of direct and indirect employment, he said."For the first time, Goa has seen growth during the monsoon months, showing the success of our efforts to promote year-round tourism," Khaunte added.

According to him, the state has expanded its international reach to new destinations, such as Yekaterinburg Novosibirsk

and Moscow (all in Russia) and Kazakhstan, with 34 charter flights from Russia and central Asia arriving in Oct alone.TUI Airways from the UK will soon start direct flights from Manchester and Gatwick, expected to bring in 30,000-40,000 tourists.

Highlighting the state's focus on responsible tourism, the minister said the government had taken strict action against sub-letting by shack operators, cancelling six licences this year. He said permissions for shacks and watersports activities were granted on time to ensure smooth operations at the start of the season. The government will soon notify the Aero-sports Policy and Wellness Tourism Policy under the "Goa Beyond Beaches" initiative to promote adventure, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions), wedding, and eco-tourism, Khaunte said.He added that these initiatives also aim to support women-led and community-based enterprises.

Wedding season begins: 46 lakh marriages to boost economy

(Cont. from page - 2) a huge chunk of consumer spending in India, and this season is no exception. Gold and diamond jewellery are set to fly off the shelves—they always grab the biggest share of wedding budgets. Designer outfits, ethnic wear and gift shops will see heavy footfall. Families are spending on electronics, sweets and catering, making sure every cer-

emony goes off without a hitch. Event managers have their hands full with decorations, lighting, DJs and all kinds of entertainment. Travel and hospitality businesses are bracing for a wave of hotel bookings and destination weddings. Honestly, it's a ripple effect—these few weeks mean big business for everyone, from the smallest shop to the largest company.

SPICEJET AGENTS' MEET



SpiceJet management organized agents' meet on winter network expansion schedule at Trident on October 30.