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## NRIs benefit from weak rupee at Rs 25.79 per dirham

**DUBAI:** Soft Asian currencies continue to give UAE expatriates more value for every dirham they send home, with the Indian rupee, Philippine peso and Pakistani rupee all trading near some of their weakest levels in recent years.

The Indian rupee recently touched a new low of Rs 25.79 against the dirham, opening up

one of the strongest transfer windows for Indian expats. Exchange houses say many families are splitting their transfers, sending part now and holding the rest in case rates move further.

The Philippine peso has been trading between 16 and 16.48 against the dirham. The move reflects a combination of global pressures that have pushed the

peso weaker against major currencies, particularly the US dollar, which indirectly influences the dirham because of its dollar peg. For now, favourable rates are prompting households to reassess strategy, deciding whether to lock in current levels or wait for another shift in the market.

Meanwhile, gold prices in Dubai edged slightly higher of-

fering a pause after the sharp declines seen through much of March. And 24K gold was trading at Dh563.50, up from Dh563 while 22K rose to Dh521.75 from Dh521.25 a day earlier. The modest gains reflect a market that is stabilising after weeks of volatility, with buyers and investors watching closely for signs of direction.

## Few changes in NRI tax rules

**NEW DELHI:** For NRIs, there have been few changes in the new IT rules. The basic test for residence under the Income Tax Act, 2025, remains unchanged, maintaining the fundamental rules. The new rules came into effect from April 1, 2026.

For the NRIs, not much has changed except for a few modifications. The basic test for determining residence for individuals under the Income Tax Act, 2025, has not been updated, and therefore, the fundamental conditions for determining individual res-

idency remain unchanged. Under section-6 of the Income-tax Act, 2025, an individual continues to be treated as a tax resident if he stays in India for 182 days or more in the relevant tax year or for 60 days or more in that year, coupled with 365 days or more in the preceding four years.

The rule for Indian citizens or Persons of Indian Origin visiting India has also not been modified. The rule remains the same under the Income-tax Act, 2025. A visiting Indian citizen or person of Indi-

an origin shall be treated as "resident" in a tax year if he is in India for a total period of more than 182 days in that tax year.

However, for persons earning more than Rs 15 lakh (other than the income from foreign sources) during the tax year, alternate condition u/s 6(2) (b) of the new Act also applies with modification that "60 days" in the said section is to be read as "120 days" along with 365 days or more in the four years preceding such tax year. His new 120-day rule will

( Cont. on page - 2 )



**PANAJI:** Goa-headquartered pure-play regional airline FLY91 has announced the launch of services to Rajahmundry, Vijayawada and Hubballi, along with five new sectors, as part of its measured network expansion. Operations will commence in a phased manner between April 10 and April 17, 2026.

The airline will operate:

- Double daily flights on Hyderabad-Rajahmundry and Hyderabad-Vijayawada.
- Daily flights between Hyderabad-Hubballi and Hubballi-Bengaluru.
- Five weekly flights on the Hyderabad-Solapur route.
- Increased frequency

( Cont. on page - 2 )

## Hilton group expanding luxury hotels in India

**MUMBAI:** Conrad Hotels and Resorts, a luxury hotel brand within the Hilton Group, celebrated its tenth anniversary in India. Hilton is actively expanding the Conrad brand's presence in the country and is also introducing other Hilton brands.

The first Conrad hotel was established in Pune, featuring 311 rooms and later expanded to 351 rooms. It has become popular among luxury business travellers and is a favoured staycation destination. Abhishek Sahai, General Manager of Conrad, stated that about 40 to 45pc of guests fall into this category, with Indian

families—including those travelling with children—seeking recreation, wellness and curated experiences during their stay. Guests typically book two-night, three-day stays, with some families visiting once or twice a month.

Visitors from Mumbai often come for weekend getaways, while Pune families enjoy a break at the hotel to experience the city's pleasant weather and reconnect with friends and family. Additionally, the Pune Conrad property has gained recognition as a wedding destination, hosting four to five weddings per month and in-

( Cont. on page - 2 )

## Bangladesh's Independence and National Day celebrated in Mumbai

**MUMBAI:** Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Mumbai celebrated the 56th Independence and National Day of Bangladesh with due dignity and enthusiasm. To mark the occasion, a diplomatic reception was hosted at the Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai.

Rajesh Gawande, Secretary (Protocol, FDI, Diaspora & Outreach) and Chief of Protocol of the Government of Maharashtra, graced the occasion as the chief guest. The programme

commenced with the playing of the national anthems of both countries, followed by remarks from the chief guest and the Deputy High

Commissioner. Thereafter, the chief guest, the Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Mumbai

( Cont. on page - 2 )



Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Mumbai HE Farhana Ahmed Chowdhury welcoming the guests at the 56th Independence and National Day of Bangladesh in Mumbai.



Rajesh Gawande, Secretary (Protocol, FDI, Diaspora & Outreach) and Chief of Protocol of the Government of Maharashtra speaking at the function.

## Bangladesh's Independence & National Day celebrated...

( Cont. from page - 1 ) HE Farhana Ahmed Chowdhury and her spouse participated in the ceremonial cake-cutting.

In his address, the chief guest highlighted that the bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh is deeply rooted in shared social, political and cultural bonds. In this context, he referred to the great poet Rabindranath Tagore, who composed the national anthems of both countries. He expressed optimism that the fraternal ties between the two nations would continue to grow stronger in the years ahead.

In her welcome remarks, the Deputy High Commissioner HE Farhana Ahmed Chowdhury, paid profound tribute to the martyrs, "Biranganas" and valiant freedom fighters of the Liberation War of Bangladesh. She also recalled with

deep respect the former President of Bangladesh and freedom fighter Ziaur Rahman who declared the independence of Bangladesh on March 26, 1971 from Kalurghat Radio Station, Chittagong. She expressed gratitude for the support extended by the government and people of India during Bangladesh's Liberation War.

Referring to recent developments, she described the visit of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to Bangladesh to attend the funeral of former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, as well as the participation of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha Om Birla and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri at the swearing-in ceremony of the newly elected government in Bangladesh, as new milestones in bilateral relations.

## FLY91 expands air services in...

( Cont. from page - 1 ) on the Goa-Solapur sector to six flights per week.

This expansion will add close to 30,000 seats per month to FLY91's regional network.

Bookings are now open across all channels, including the airline's website and travel partners.

Commenting on the expansion, Manoj Chacko, Managing Director and CEO of FLY91, said: "Tier-2 and tier-3 cities are emerging as powerful drivers of India's economic growth, entrepreneurship and domestic travel demand. Our expansion is aligned with this momentum and our vision of "Connecting Bharat". We are delighted to expand our network to 12 cities with the addition of Rajahmundry, Vijayawada and Hubballi."

To coincide with this expansion, FLY91 has introduced Smartbag91, a pre-book excess baggage offering. "Smartbag91 has

been designed for international connecting travelers, offering pre-booked excess baggage aligned with global airline norms—without the hassle of cumbersome documentation. With strong connectivity to international hubs like Hyderabad and Bengaluru, customers can access this at highly attractive rates, making their journey simpler and more seamless," he added.

The addition of Rajahmundry, Vijayawada, and Hubballi is expected to further stimulate regional economic activity by

## Few changes in NRI tax rules

( Cont. from page - 1 ) apply to high-income NRIs earning more than Rs 15 lakh in India. Also, NRIs who put their properties on rent in India need to be aware of certain new HRA exemption rules. Preeti Gupta, Director, Deloitte India, says there are certain enhanced reporting requirements, one of them

## Indian origin Rini Sampath in race for Washington mayor

**WASHINGTON :**

A 31-year-old Indian-American from Theni in Tamil Nadu is running for mayor of Washington DC as a Democratic candidate. She is a government contractor and the first South Asian to appear on the city's mayoral primary ballot.

Her campaign focuses on "Fix the Basics," promising better infrastructure, lower costs and improved public services, while positioning herself as a political outsider. Born in Theni, she moved to the US at the age of seven.



She is 31 years old and has lived in Washington DC for over a decade. Professionally, she works as a government contractor and cyber security professional.

Rini studied at the University of Southern Cali-

fornia (USC), where she gained national attention as student body president in 2015. During her time at USC, she advocated for campus safety, diversity and student rights and spoke out against racism and harassment.

Washington DC is dominated overwhelmingly by Democrats and the city never has had a Republican mayor since the elections to the post began in 1975. Before that, the city was administered by a Board of Commissioners appointed by the US president.

## H-1B visa program undergoes changes

**NEW YORK:** The pathway to building a career in the US for many highly educated and skilled foreign workers was once clear: Earn a degree from an American university or

college, then be recruited by a company willing to sponsor one of the 85,000 H-1B visas awarded annually to fill specialised roles and grant work status for up to six years.

Now that reliable route is shifting as the Trump administration has made fundamental changes to the way the visas are granted.

The New York Times spoke to three international workers caught in the middle: an Indian woman who, after receiving her master's degree in biotech-

nology from Northwestern University, struggled to find a company that would sponsor her for temporary employment; a Chinese Mongolian marketing analyst in New York who was laid off and is now hustling to find an employer to sponsor her visa and a Taiwanese software engineer in Seattle who dealt with anxiety because of shifting immigration policies amid widespread tech layoffs. The H-1B program allows US companies in major ( Cont. on page - 6 )

## Hilton group expanding...

( Cont. from page - 1 ) creasing to seven or eight during peak season. "Current market conditions offer opportunities to make outsized returns", says Avinash Satwalekar, president, Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund .

Over the past three years, the property has experienced double-digit growth and ranks first in Pune for average room rates, occupancy and contributions from food and beverage services, Sahai said. Occupancy has risen from 50pc earlier to 75pc though Sahai noted that it could have been higher if the city had better air connectivity. The lack of good

connectivity is restricting the city's ability to attract large events that could drive up room demand.

A year ago, Hilton had announced plans to double its brand presence in India within five years and introduce more Hilton brands to the market. Chris Nassetta, President and CEO of Hilton, had highlighted the importance of India in Hilton's global growth strategy during an announcement made in May 2025, stating: "As one of the world's largest and most dynamic markets, it represents a major opportunity across brand segments— from luxury to premium economy."

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Australian Dollar	63.47	64.89
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Swedish Krona	9.64	9.93
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# Canada ends postal OCI applications

**TORONTO:** Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) applicants in Canada will no longer be able to apply by post. From April 5, 2026, all OCI applications in Canada should be submitted in person at designated BLS International Centres to provide mandatory biometrics (fingerprints and photograph). Postal applications will no longer be accepted for OCI processing from this date due to the requirement for physical biometric capture, according to a notice issued by the Indian embassy in Canada.

Until now, applicants in Canada could complete the OCI process by filling out forms online, uploading documents, and sending physical copies via courier to BLS International Centres. This hybrid

system has now been replaced with a fully in-person requirement.

"From 5th April, 2026 onwards, all OCI applications must be submitted in person at BLS Centres as Biometrics have to be provided. OCI applications by post will not be accepted," the official application read.

What is an OCI card?The OCI (Overseas Citizenship of India) card functions as a lifelong visa for people of Indian origin. Those holding an OCI card have the freedom to live and work in the country without any time restrictions. OCI holders can stay in India for years and take up private-sector jobs without time limits.

However, there are a few limitations.

- OCI cardholders are

not allowed to vote in Indian elections

- They cannot work in government jobs or as journalists

- They are not permitted to purchase agricultural land

- Certain restricted or protected areas require prior permission before visiting

Who is eligible? OCI registration is open to foreign nationals of Indian origin, including:

- Citizen of India at the time of or at any time after the commencement of the Constitution of India on January 26, 1950

- Individuals eligible for Indian citizenship at the time of the Constitution's commencement in 1950
- Individuals belonging to a territory that became part of India after August 15, 1947
- Children, grand-

children or great-grandchildren of such individuals

- Minor children of Indian citizens
- Spouses of Indian citizens or OCI cardholders, subject to

conditions under Section 7A of the Citizenship Act, 1955, where the marriage has continued for the required period.

## Indian executives to visit China to explore partnership opportunities

**MUMBAI:** Several Indian corporate executives will visit China next week as diplomatic ties between the two countries have eased in the last few months. A group of business leaders across automobile, electronics and renewable energy companies will be visiting China for a three-day trip to evaluate partnership opportunities

A group of business leaders across automobile, electronics and renewable energy companies will be visiting China for a three-

day trip to evaluate partnership opportunities. The India Inc delegation could include 16-17 top executives from companies like contract manufacturer Dixon Technologies, automobile major JBM and new energy player Hero Future Energies.

They would visit Chinese factories to examine plant operations and evaluate possibilities of increasing localisation of components. This would also include a visit to the plant of BYD, the Chinese electric car giant.




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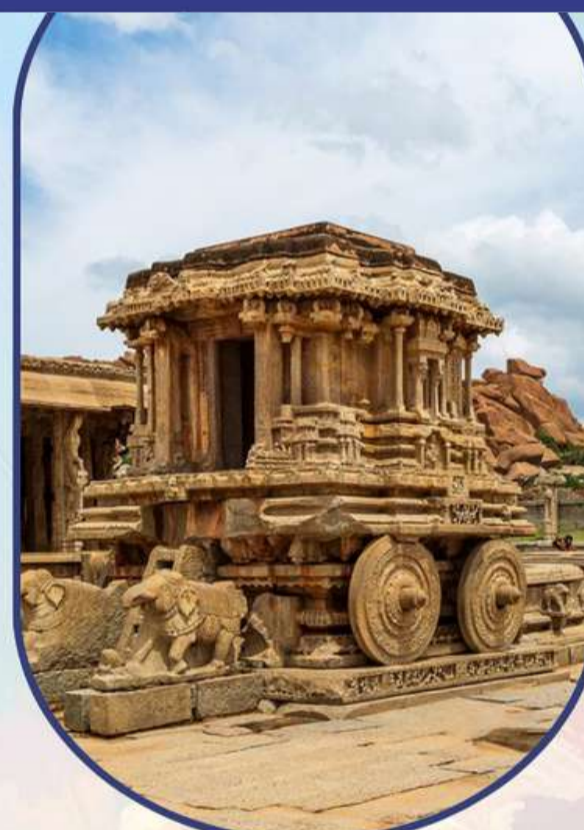


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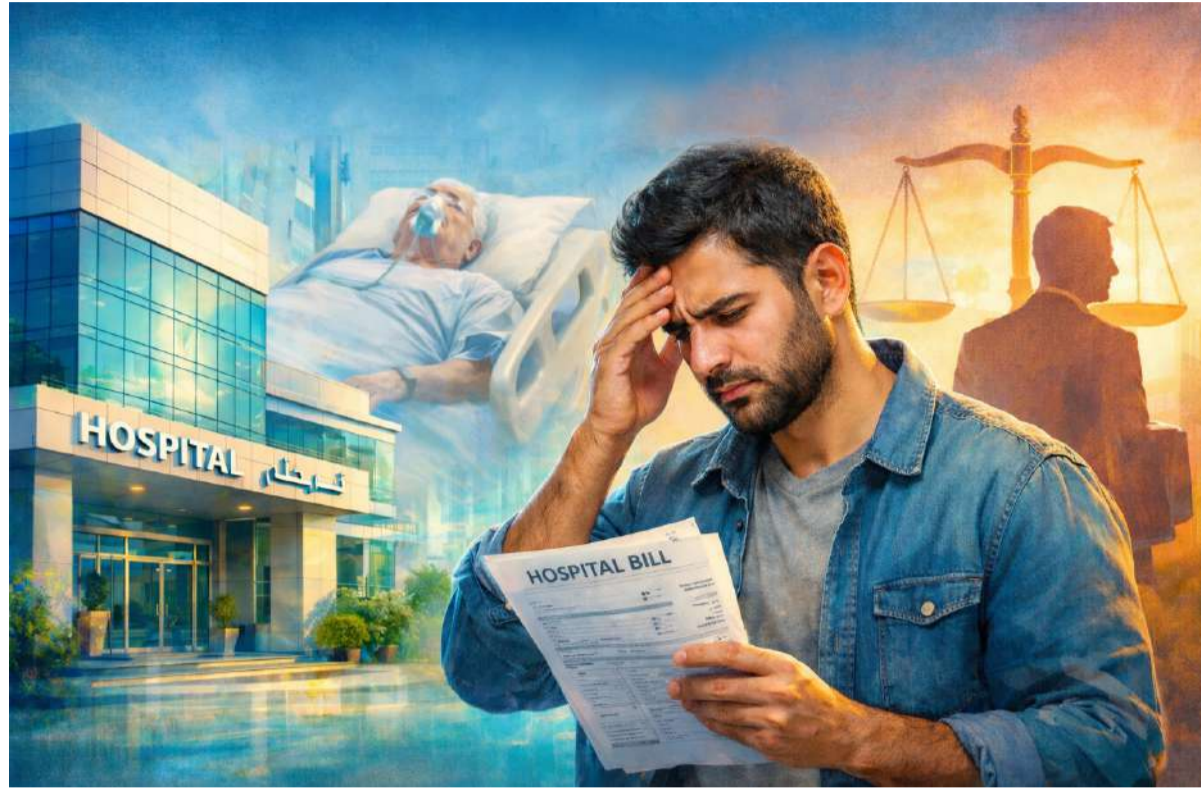
# GULF FAQs

## Can a Dubai hospital sue son for father's pending bill?

**I brought my father to Dubai to visit me on my sponsorship. During his visit, my father had a heart attack and had to be admitted to a hospital. He didn't have health insurance. The treatment cost around Dh100,000. We only paid half the bill and couldn't pay the full amount. The hospital filed a lawsuit against me demanding the full amount because I was my father's sponsor. Does the hospital have the right to file a lawsuit against me based on my sponsorship?**

The hospital has the right to do this because the employer or sponsor is responsible for payments if the patient cannot pay or is not insured.

Law No. 11 of 2013 regarding health insurance in Dubai guarantees health and treatment care for citizens, residents and visitors alike. It instructs hospitals not to leave anyone without treatment in emergencies that require immediate medical intervention



to save a life or eliminate danger. The hospital may recover treatment expenses from the employer or sponsor.

Articles 9, 10 and 11 of the law stipulate the responsibility of the employer and sponsor to insure employees and sponsored

persons residing or visiting in the emirate. They must bear the cost of subscribing to health insurance, cannot charge insured beneficiaries, and face criminal penalties for violations.

Articles 10 and 11 further oblige the employer and sponsor in emergency cases to bear the cost of medical services and intervention for workers or sponsored persons who are neglected or not covered by health insurance.

## How can I get a legal guardian in UAE?

**Can you please explain the process of choosing a legal guardian in UAE?**

Every parent works tirelessly to provide a life of security, stability and love for their children. But true protection goes beyond the present; it includes preparing for the unexpected and making decisions today that can safeguard your child's tomorrow. One of the most meaningful ways expat parents in the UAE can do this is by appointing legal guardians for their minor children through a registered will. This decision ensures that, should anything happen, your child's care and upbringing will be entrusted to the people you choose, not left to chance.

Why appointing a legal guardian is so important? In the UAE, many parents don't realise that if something happens to the father, the mother is not automatically considered the legal guardian of minor children. Without a registered will, this can lead to court involvement and decisions that may not reflect your wishes. Stating a clear guardian in your UAE will helps avoid confusion and ensures a smooth transition of care.

Choosing a legal guardian is not just a legal box to tick. It's a

deeply personal act that reflects your values, beliefs, and hopes for your child's future. Without a registered will in place, guardianship decisions may default to complex court proceedings, potentially resulting in unexpected delays or decisions that don't align with your wishes. But with a legally recognised will, your intentions are clearly documented and enforceable under the UAE law. "It's not just paperwork, it's protection. Appointing a guardian secures your child's future, exactly the way you intended," says Muhammad Tariq, managing partner at Legal Inz.

How the UAE law supports guardianship planning: In the UAE, parents can formally appoint legal guardians for their minor children through registered wills under both the DIFC Wills Service Centre and the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department (ADJD). These frameworks allow for the appointment of permanent guardians, who will assume long-term responsibility, as well as temporary guardians based in the UAE, who can step in immediately to provide care until the permanent guardians are able to take over.

Many also name alternate guardians to cover unforeseen

changes in circumstances. Parents can also structure their will to include layered guardianship appointing multiple guardians in a defined order of priority. This ensures there is always a trusted caregiver available to step in for the child.

This structure ensures a smooth and uninterrupted transition of care, offering legal clarity, emotional stability and the reassurance that a child will always be looked after by trusted individual(s) from the very beginning.

Along with guardianship instructions, a will also allow parents to outline how their assets should be distributed, including naming their minor children as beneficiaries. This ensures not just care, but financial security, is preserved according to their wishes. Take action today, to secure their tomorrow: Your will isn't just a legal formality, it's a powerful commitment to your children's care, stability, and future. By appointing legal guardians through a UAE-registered will, you're making sure your children are protected by the people you trust, even in the most unforeseen circumstances.

"A registered will helps turn uncertainty into certainty, so par-

ents can rest easy knowing their children are always protected," adds Tariq.

For over a decade, Legal Inz has helped thousands of UAE families secure their children's future with confidence. Whether through DIFC or ADJD, our expert legal team ensures your will is fully compliant, clearly structured, and tailored to your family's needs. From appointing guardians to naming beneficiaries, every step is handled with care.

Best of all, the entire will registration process can be completed 100 per cent remotely, with our trusted guidance, allowing parents to take this essential step with ease, flexibility and complete peace of mind. Now is the time to take control and secure your children's future, clearly, confidently and on your terms.

Take action now, give your children the certainty they deserve, no matter what tomorrow brings. Because when it comes to your child's future, certainty isn't a luxury, it's a responsibility. Secure your will today for their tomorrow. Speak to the experts at Legal Inz and get started on your will.

# US-Indians worried over denaturalisation

**WASHINGTON:** The US Department of Justice (DOJ) on March 26 said it revoked the naturalisation of a convicted gun trafficker and a healthcare fraud conspirator.

The move comes as the administration of Trump steps up efforts to strip citizenship from some naturalised Americans.

This has raised concerns for Indians in the US who could face serious legal and residency consequences if such action is taken against them.

The Justice Department, under current guidance, has made denaturalisation a priority and immigration agencies have reassigned staff to identify more potential cases, according to reports from NBC News.

Former US Attorney General Pamela Bondi, who was relieved of her duties on Friday, said in a release: "American citizenship is a sacred privilege, not a cheap status that can be obtained dishonestly."

Naturalisation is the process by which US cit-

izenship is granted to a lawful permanent resident after meeting the requirements established by Congress in the Immigration and Nationality Act. What happens when citizenship is revoked?

According to the immigrant advocacy non-profit National Immigration Forum, the federal government may revoke US citizenship through denaturalisation on two primary grounds:

- Fraud or misrepresentation during the naturalisation process, where an individual deliberately lied or concealed a material fact that influenced the decision to grant citizenship

- Illegal procurement of naturalisation, where the individual was not legally eligible at the time, including failure to meet requirements such as lawful permanent residence, physical presence, good moral character or attachment to constitutional principles

"Denaturalization is an extraordinary process

and, in the past, has been very rare. There are criminal and civil procedures for denaturalisation, but each of these involve the federal court system and not the immigration law system, which is a critical difference. The constitutional protections against stripping a naturalised citizen of his citizenship are high, naturally, because taking someone's citizenship away is a solemn and serious event," Russell A Stamets, partner at Circle of Counsels said.

## Hiring demand push pay higher in MidEast

**DUBAI:** Private capital activity is accelerating across the Middle East and Asia Pacific, with the Gulf moving firmly into focus for global investors and senior dealmakers.

Fresh data from Heidrick & Struggles shows 73pc of professionals expect market opportunities to improve over the next 18 months, up from 60pc a year earlier, pointing to a clear shift in sentiment as deal pipelines rebuild.

That momentum is translating into hiring demand. Global funds are

expanding their presence in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, turning both cities into key centres for senior leadership roles, while Dubai continues to anchor regional operations.

The competition for experienced investment professionals is intensifying, particularly among firms with active capital deployment strategies. Riyadh and Abu Dhabi are now attracting a growing share of senior hires, reflecting stronger fundraising activity and a push to deepen on-the-ground leadership.

## Akasa Air sustains Jeddah services despite Middle East disruptions

**MUMBAI:** Indian carrier Akasa Air has confirmed the continuation of its flight services to Jeddah, even as operational uncertainties persist across parts of the Middle East. The airline has also announced an extension of its waiver policy, offering passengers greater flexibility in rescheduling or cancelling their travel plans.

The decision comes in response to evolving regional conditions that have affected air travel patterns and prompted caution among international carriers. Despite the challenges, Akasa Air stated that it remains committed to maintaining connectivity on the high-demand India-Saudi Arabia route, particularly for business

and pilgrimage travelers.

Passengers booked on affected routes will continue to benefit from relaxed change and cancellation terms, with the airline urging travellers to stay updated through official channels. Industry observers note that such proactive measures are becoming essential as airlines navigate an increasingly volatile geopolitical landscape.

Akasa Air reiterated that passenger safety and operational reliability remain its top priorities while it closely monitors the situation in co-ordination with relevant authorities.



## H-1B visa program...

( Cont. from page - 2 ) industries like technology and medicine to submit visa applications for foreign candidates, who are then entered into a lottery system. Although the visa program has been around since 1990, US Citizenship and Immigration Services began using a random selection process in 2013 to handle the surplus of applications. Since then, demand has continued to soar.

Last Sept, the Trump administration imposed a \$100,000 fee on new H-1B applicants, stirring confusion around the program. Then in late Feb, another hurdle was introduced: The Department of Homeland Security turned this game of

chance into one that prioritises higher salaries. Now, are more H-1B applicants than spots available, USCIS will conduct a weighted lottery system based on new criteria: wage levels that are calculated with government employment and wage data, which include factors like job title and location. This new process gives applications tied to higher wages an advantage in the lottery system.

The DHS says the new rule is meant to better protect job opportunities for Americans and to deter companies from filing H-1B petitions for low-skilled, low-paid positions, a practice the Trump administration says has led to the abuse of the program.

## Arabian Travel Market in Aug, 2026

**DUBAI:** The 2026 edition of Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2026, originally scheduled to take place from May 4-7 at Dubai World Trade Centre, will now take place from August 17-20, 2026, with the venue remaining unchanged.

The decision to reschedule the event has been made to prioritise the safety and well-being of customers, partners and colleagues and to give the global travel and tourism community greater confidence and flexibility to

attend. Now in its 33rd edition, Arabian Travel Market serves as a key global platform connecting destinations, travel suppliers, hospitality brands, airlines, technology providers and industry professionals from across the travel ecosystem.

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market, said: "Arabian Travel Market has long served as a vital platform for bringing the global travel and tourism community together in Dubai, enabling desti-

nations, suppliers and industry leaders to connect, collaborate and shape the future of the sector.

"The safety and well-being of our customers, partners, and colleagues remains our highest priority, and the decision to reschedule ATM 2026 to August reflects our commitment to ensuring that everyone can participate at this important industry gathering. We look forward to welcoming the international travel community back to Dubai later this year."