



AS WEST ASIA TENSION INCREASES

Many Kerala-Saudi flights cancelled

KOCHI: Several flights connecting Kerala with Saudi Arabia and other destinations in West Asia have been cancelled amid the prevailing geopolitical tensions in the region, airport officials said.

Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL), in a statement, said some airlines operating services between Kochi and destinations in Saudi Arabia had reported cancellations for Oct 11 to 13 due to the prevailing geopolitical situation.

Cancellations were also



reported on some services connecting Kochi with Doha and Ras Al Khaimah, the statement said. On Sunday, Flynas flight XY 399/400 operating between Kochi and Riyadh, Air India Express flights IX 475 and IX 476 connecting Kochi and Doha, Akasa Air flights QP 523 to Riyadh and QP 550 to Jeddah and IndiGo flight 6E 1517 to Ras Al Khaimah were among the affected services. On Oct 12, Akasa Air

flights QP 551 from Jeddah to Kochi, QP 524 from Riyadh to Kochi and QP 523 from Kochi to Riyadh are listed as cancelled. Akasa Air flight QP 524 from Riyadh to Kochi is also listed as cancelled on October 13. A total of 10 flight services have been reported cancelled at Kochi airport during the three-day period, including five operated by Akasa Air, CIAL said. Passengers have been advised to check their flight status directly with the respective airlines before proceeding to the airport,

officials said. Meanwhile, three flights scheduled to operate from Calicut International Airport at Karpur were also cancelled on Sunday. The affected services were Saudi Arabian Airlines flight SV 713, scheduled to depart at 9.55 am, Flynas flight XY 328 to Riyadh, scheduled for 9.10 am and Air India Express flight IX 321, scheduled to depart at 8.15 pm.

Airport authorities said decisions on the departure of other flights would be taken after assessing the prevailing situation.

Qatar Airways Partners' Meet in Mumbai



MUMBAI: Qatar Airways brought together its top-performing partners in Mumbai for an engaging Partners' Meet, strengthening collaborative relationships and reaffirming its commitment to long-term industry partnerships. The airline's senior management shared its future plans, network expansion prospects and strategic vision, fostering confidence and encouraging continued co-operation and mutual growth.

The evening concluded with an elegant dinner, providing an excellent platform for networking, meaningful interactions and reinforcing the strong partnership between Qatar Airways and its valued travel trade associates.



Hubballi-Chennai IndiGo direct flights from Oct 27

CHENNAI: IndiGo will resume its Hubballi-Chennai direct flight service from Oct 27, with flights scheduled three days a week. Union Minister Pralhad Joshi shared the update on X, announcing the return of the air service. The resumption of the service will benefit travellers from Hubballi and other parts of North Karnataka heading to Chennai. It will also give passengers a direct alternative to longer

train and road journeys. IndiGo flight 6E 7368 will depart from Hubballi at 4:25 pm and arrive in Chennai at 6:05 pm. The return flight, 6E 7369, will leave Chennai at 6:35 pm and reach Hubballi at 8:20 pm. Both flights will operate on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from Oct 27. Passengers can check ticket availability and the latest timings through IndiGo's official booking channels.

Hiring slows in India, but manufacturing continue to create formal jobs

NEW DELHI: India's formal job market showed signs of moderation in the April-June quarter, but flexible staffing continued to expand, with technology, manufacturing and consumer-facing businesses emerging as key sources of employment.

The formal flexi workforce increased 2.6pc quarter-on-quarter during the first quarter of financial year 2026-27 and grew 7.5pc compared with the same period last year, according to the latest Flexi Staffing Employment Trends Report released by

the Indian Staffing Federation (ISF). Staffing companies have continued to add workers to their formal payrolls, helping expand employment opportunities across several sectors. Over the past 12 months, members of the ISF added

around 1.14 lakh new formal flexi jobs. This took the total formal contract workforce represented by the federation to approximately 1.95 million during the June quarter. With the formal flexi workforce reaching 1.95 million by June, the sec-

tor continues to represent a significant part of India's organised employment ecosystem. The addition of 1.14 lakh jobs over 12 months further indicates that demand for flexible workers remains resilient. The growth indicates that (Cont. on page - 2)

TCS adds 4,258 staff in Q2

NEW DELHI: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) added 4,258 employees on a net basis in the Sept quarter, taking its total workforce to 598,056. This is the third quarter in a row in which TCS has increased its headcount.

The company added around 9,279 employees in Q1, taking its net hiring for the first-half of FY27 to 13,537. The IT company's 12-month trailing attrition rate also improved, falling to 13.3pc from 13.6pc in

the previous quarter.

"We continue to build a future-ready workforce through upskilling our employees and hiring top talent. Investments in learning and critical skills drove a 17pc sequential increase in learning hours to 17.1 million. This quarter, our employee base reached over 598,000, while attrition remained stable at 13.3pc," chief HR officer Sudeep Kunnumal said.

For fresher hiring, TCS made 25,000 offers at the

start of FY27. By the end of Q1, around 14,000 freshers had joined the company, and in Q2 the company said 10,000 more had joined. Kunnumal said the company is now in the last leg of the campus hiring process for FY27.

TCS also increased its use of sub-contractors in the quarter to meet demand and address supply-demand mismatches. Chief financial officer Sameer Saxena said the increase was seen "across India as well as overseas", and was not entirely linked to higher visa costs.

New airport planned in Malda, W Bangal

MALDA (W. Bengal): The Malda district administration in north Bengal has identified a proposed site to set up an airport between Malda and Gazole Assembly segments in Uttar Malda parliamentary constituency.

Uttar Malda MP Khagen Murmu said the proposed site was inspected in the presence of district administration officials. The proposal will be sent to the concerned higher authorities for further consideration, paving the way for a possible visit by officials of the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

Murmu has been pursuing the demand for a new airport in his constituency for a long time. He has also taken up the matter

with the Union Civil Aviation Minister in New Delhi.

Explaining the need for a new airport, Murmu said the existing airport in Malda required further expansion, including an extension of its runway. The presence of several high-rise buildings around the existing airport could also pose technical challenges to aircraft operations and landing. He further pointed out that encroachment in some areas around the existing airport had added to the difficulties.

According to Murmu, the proposed location between the Malda and Gazole Assembly constituencies could offer better regional connectivity. The airport, if approved and constructed,

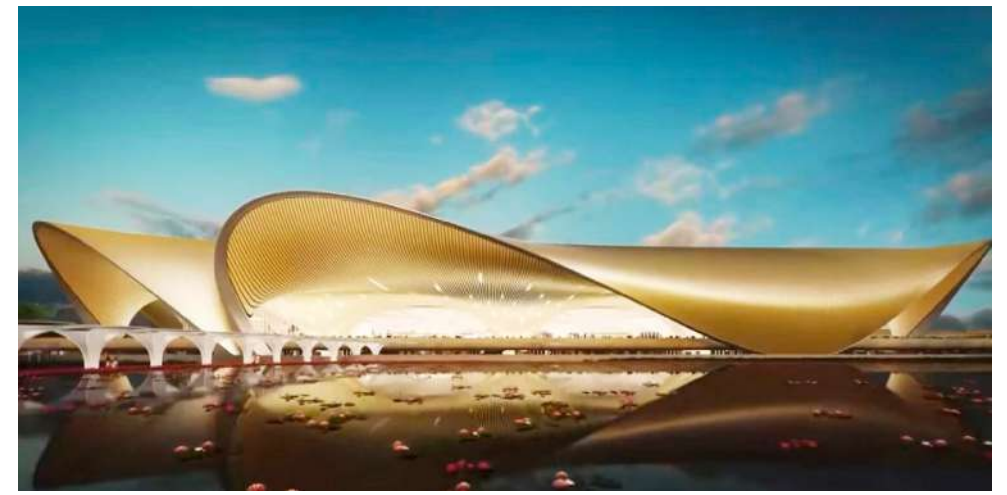
(Cont. on page - 6)

Air India launches global roaming SIM with plans starting at Rs 241

MUMBAI: Air India has launched EasyRoam, an airline-branded travel SIM that will allow passengers to access mobile data and voice services while travelling abroad, without having to arrange for a local SIM after arrival.

The service, developed in partnership with Tata Communications, is initially available across 30 countries in North America, Europe, including the UK, Australia, Asia Pacific and the Middle East. Roaming plans start at Rs 241, excluding taxes, with prices varying depending on the destination and plan selected.

Air India customers opting for the SIM can retain



Navi Mumbai shift on hold, more time for airlines

MUMBAI: Domestic airlines will not be required to shift their operations from Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) to Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) immediately, with the government agreeing to give carriers

more time to negotiate the terms of the proposed transition.

The decision came after airlines told the Ministry of Civil Aviation that shifting operations to NMIA within the proposed timeframe would be an expensive move. (Cont. on page - 6)

their number for up to one year for a nominal charge. The EasyRoam SIM is being offered free of cost during the initial phase, although customers will have to pay for the roaming packs. Customers purchasing a data plan will also get up to 1GB of additional complimentary data, except when travelling to Maldives and Mauritius. Tata Communications, which provides the connectivity infrastructure for EasyRoam, has partnerships with more than 600 mobile network operators globally, allowing the service to provide connectivity across international destinations. EasyRoam is currently available for purchase through the Air

India website and will subsequently be made available through the airline's mobile app.

The geographical coverage of EasyRoam will progressively expand to up to 190 countries, Air India said. Travellers will be able to choose between destination-specific and worldwide plans, with options for data-only or voice-and-data connectivity.

The service is available as both a physical SIM and an eSIM through a dedicated Air India-branded webpage. Travellers can purchase and activate their plans before departure, allowing them to access connectivity after reaching their destination.

Hiring slows in India, but manufacturing continue to create formal jobs

(Cont. from page - 1) flexible staffing is continuing to play an important role in India's changing employment landscape. Businesses are increasingly using staffing companies to meet workforce requirements while retaining the ability to adjust hiring according to demand.

The technology sector remained one of the areas supporting the expansion. The IT flexi staffing segment grew two per cent sequentially and seven per

cent year-on-year in the first quarter of FY27, according to the report.

Manufacturing and consumer-facing businesses also contributed to employment growth, reflecting demand for workers across industries despite broader signs of moderation in hiring.

The continued expansion of formal staffing is significant because it provides workers with employment arrangements that are more structured

than traditional informal work. Organised staffing can provide greater transparency around employment and help companies meet compliance requirements. Industry experts have highlighted the role of organised staffing in helping bridge the gap between India's large informal workforce and the formal employment sector. The model can allow businesses to access workers while providing a more regulated framework for

employment.

The latest figures suggest that companies remain cautious about permanent hiring but continue to rely on flexible workforce models to meet operational requirements. This could make staffing firms an important part of the labour market as businesses respond to changing economic conditions.

The increase in flexi employment also points to a broader shift in how companies manage their

workforce. Instead of relying exclusively on permanent employees, businesses in sectors such as technology, manufacturing and consumer services are increasingly turning to flexible staffing arrangements. However, the pace of growth remains moderate compared with periods of stronger hiring activity. The quarter-on-quarter increase of 2.6pc shows that the sector is expanding, but not at an exceptionally rapid rate.

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GULF FAQs

What salary do you need to sponsor your family in Dubai?

I am an NRI based in Dubai and can you please explain what salary I should draw to take my family with me?

If you are planning to sponsor your spouse, children or parents for a UAE residence visa, your monthly salary is one of the main requirements you will need to meet. But the minimum salary is not necessarily the same for every family member. While the general threshold starts at Dh3,000 with accommodation, Dubai has separate requirements for residents sponsoring their parents.

Here is a breakdown of the salary and key eligibility requirements Dubai residents should know:

Sponsoring your spouse or children – what salary do you need?

According to the UAE's Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security (ICP), the general financial requirement for sponsoring eligible family members is -- Dh3,000 per month plus accommodation pro-

vided by the employer or Dh4,000 per month without employer-provided accommodation. The sponsor must also have a valid UAE residence permit and suitable accommodation.

Can a woman sponsor her husband or children? "The same salary thresh-

guardianship if the parents are divorced," Firose Khan, CEO and Managing Partner of Arabian Business Centre – Amer, clarifies.

Sponsoring your parents in Dubai? The salary is higher

If you want to sponsor your parents, Dubai has a

valid Ejari and the home must have at least two bedrooms," Khan, said.

What documents do you need to sponsor your family?

The documents required will depend on who you are sponsoring and your individual circumstances.

You may be asked to provide: Sponsor's passport, sponsor's Emirates ID, valid UAE residence details, passport of the family member being sponsored, recent passport photograph, attested marriage certificate when sponsoring a spouse, attested birth certificate when sponsoring children, salary certificate or employment con-

ship may need to be attested in the country of origin and by the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA).

What documents are required to sponsor parents in Dubai?

GDRFA Dubai lists additional documentation for parent sponsorship, including: Copy of the sponsored parent's passport, salary certificate or employment contract showing the required income, attested tenancy contract suitable for the number of family members, recent bank statement. Other documents may be requested depending on the application.

Is a medical fitness test required?

Sponsored family members over the age of 18 generally need to undergo an approved medical fitness examination as part of the residence process.

(Note: UAE visa and residency rules can be updated and requirements may vary depending on the applicant's individual circumstances. Dubai residents should check the latest requirements directly with GDRFA Dubai before applying. Residents of other emirates should check with ICP UAE for the rules applicable to their case. GDRFA toll free number - Toll free number 8005111 and ICP - 600522222.).



old of Dh3,000 with accommodation or Dh4,000 without accommodation applies to women sponsoring family members. If a mother wants to sponsor her children, additional documentation may be required depending on her circumstances. This can include -- NOC from the father or proof of custody or

higher salary requirement. "In Dubai, the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA), currently lists a minimum monthly salary of Dh10,000 for parent sponsorship. The sponsor must provide either a salary certificate and employment contract showing the required income, plus a

tract, tenancy contract or Ejari, where applicable, recent water and electricity bill, where required, valid health insurance, additional immigration or identification documents depending on the applicant's nationality and circumstances. Marriage and birth certificates used to establish the family relation-

Can a tenant sub-lease property without the landlord's permission?

I have rented an apartment from my cousin who rented it from its owner. Two days ago, we received an evacuation notice for non-payment even though we pay the rental monthly to our cousin who is paying to the owner as per his allegations? does the owner have the right to evacuate us?

As a general rule, and according to Article 24

of Law No. (26) of 2007 Regulating the Relationship between Landlords and Tenants in the Emirate of Dubai, the tenant may not assign the use of or sub-lease the real property to third parties unless written consent of the landlord is obtained unless otherwise agreed by the parties to the lease contract.

A landlord, pursuant to Article (25) of the same law, may request eviction

of the tenant from the real property before expiry of the lease contract only in the following cases: (a) unless otherwise agreed by the parties, where the tenant fails to pay the rent or any part thereof within 30 days from the date of service of a notice on the tenant by the landlord requesting the payment; (b) where the tenant sub-lets the real property or any part thereof without obtaining the landlord's

written approval, in which case the eviction will apply to the tenant and to the subtenant, who will reserve the right to claim compensation from the tenant. You have to check if your cousin is really paying to the owner and to check whether he sub-leased the property with or without the acceptance of the owner. In case he sub-leased it with the acceptance of the owner, then you have to man-

age the payment to the owner before the lapse of 30 days from the date of the service of notice, otherwise the landlord will have the right to evacuate you after those 30 days.

In case he subleased it without the acceptance of the owner, then the owner shall have the right to evict you when he discovers this matter, even if you are paying on time, unless the owner expressly approves your existence.

More foreign tourists to visit Goa this season

PANAJI: Following the disruption caused to tourism worldwide by the COVID-19 pandemic, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said foreign tourist arrivals in the state were expected to return to pre-COVID levels within a year, while highlighting the government's focus on high-end tourism, infrastructure development, tourist safety and improved transport facilities.

In an interview on foreign tourist arrivals in Goa in 2025, Sawant said: "It is not matching the pre-Covid level yet, but definitely within a year, that will match. I have full faith in this."

Highlighting the government's efforts to attract tourists who wish to spend more time in the coastal state, Sawant said the focus was on developing facilities and "For those who want to stay longer and spend more time here, it is

a high tourist destination that we are targeting. So definitely, facilities like this are also available for them. More and more, their stay will increase. That is why we are trying to increase the stay in the entire state. The good infrastructure that we have created now will increase their stay in Goa," he said.

Comparing Goa's tourism strategy with destinations such as Thailand and Vietnam, which are often promoted as affordable holiday options, Sawant said the state was prioritising high-end tourism and witnessing increasing demand for five-star hotels.

"That is the marketing strategy for those countries. But definitely, we promote maximum high-end tourism in Goa. For this, the demand for new 5-star hotels in Goa is still increasing. So, I would say that People in India and even in foreign countries,



the kind of facilities they get here and the kind of safety they feel, I don't think

they will feel so much safety in other countries and other places," the Goa CM added.

Addressing negative reports about Goa's roads and cleanliness circulating on social media ahead of the peak tourist season, Sawant alleged that some people were attempting

to divert tourism from the state. "Some people target it because they want to di-

vert tourism. I am studying it in depth with the help of the central agencies. Especially with social media, this kind of targeting is always there," he said.

He also highlighted the importance of November and December, which see increased tourist activity due to Christmas, the International Film Festival and other celebrations.

On tourist safety, including complaints about high taxi fares and alleged exploitation by taxi operators, Sawant said the state government had deployed additional personnel to assist visitors.

Jail, fine for H-1B visa violators

WASHINGTON: A new bill introduced in the US House of Representatives proposes a sharp increase in penalties for certain violations of the H-1B visa programme, including a maximum \$250,000 fine

and 10-year debarment for serious violations.

The H-1B Visa Fraud Crackdown Act (HR 10643) was introduced on Oct 1, 2026, by Representative Beth Van Duyne along with five other Republican lawmakers. The bill has been referred to the House Judiciary Committee. Importantly, the proposal is not yet US law. It would have to pass Congress and be signed by the president before its provisions could take effect.

Under the proposed legislation, the maximum fine for one category of serious H-1B violations would rise from \$35,000 to \$250,000. The bill would also increase the minimum period for which an employer could be barred

from participating in the H-1B programme from three years to 10 years.

The proposed changes are particularly relevant to Indian professionals and technology companies, given India's significant presence in the US H-1B programme. However, the bill's text focuses on penalties for specified violations of the H-1B programme and document fraud. It does not propose a general increase in fees for ordinary H-1B applications or a blanket penalty on H-1B visa holders. For another category of violations, the proposed penalty would rise from \$5,000 to \$100,000, while the minimum debarment period would increase from two years to five years.

India retorts to US Green Card curbs

NEW DELHI: In its first official response to the US Department of Labour's decision, India also objected to US vice-president JD Vance calling immigrant workers "foreign indentured servants"; billing it offensive and reminding the Trump administration that America was shaped by immigrants.

In a suomotu statement

New airport planned in...
(Cont. from page - 2) could serve not only Malda but also the neighbouring districts of North Dinajpur and South Dinajpur. He said road connectivity from Gazole towards Bihar and from Malda towards Jharkhand could further improve the project's regional importance. The proposed airport could help strengthen connectivity, promote trade and industry and create employment opportunities.

on the US government's decision, the external affairs ministry said: "Talent mobility adds value to both economies. While it creates opportunities for Indians, it equally helps US companies with cutting-edge talent, innovation, research, productivity, competitiveness and job creation, besides creating shareholder wealth in the US.

This is, therefore, an area of tremendous mutual benefit for the two countries and our expectation is that all stakeholders in this process can appreciate this fact. The steps announced by the US do not advance the shared ambitions of both countries."

The ministry also sought to point out that PERM is distinct from the H-1B visa programme. "The suspension of PERM applications does not, by itself, affect the validity of existing H-1B visas or the status of H-1B

visa holders and their dependents, though there could be some impact on the permanent-residency/Green Card process of eligible employees of the affected companies."

Indian IT firms are unlikely to face near-term fallout from the US suspension of a key green-card programme, as major technology companies have reduced their dependence on this route for employment, analysts said.

Navi Mumbai shift on hold, more time...

(Cont. from page - 2) sive proposition and could result in financial losses. Their weekly departure slots at CSMIA, therefore, will not be discontinued from Oct 25, as originally envisaged, and airlines will get additional time to work out the transition.

The airlines will now hold further discussions with Adani Airport Holdings (AAHL), the operator

of both airports, on the commercial and operational conditions for the proposed shift. The carriers will subsequently submit their proposals to the civil aviation ministry, which will use the inputs to firm up the transition plan.

"The airlines were firm that shifting to Navi Mumbai at this stage is not possible. Such a transition takes time and requires strategic

thinking. Airlines cannot make the move without proper due diligence and a clear understanding of the terms and conditions. The airlines will negotiate the conditions with Adani next week and submit their proposals to the ministry," a source said. The next consultation meeting between the airlines and airport operators will be held on Oct 13 at CSMIA.