



OVERSEAS NEWS AND EMPLOYMENT



PASSPORT TO GLOBAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

MUMBAI: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2025 • VOL. NO. 2 • Issue No. 72 • DIV. OF FLYCREATIVE ONLINE LIMITED (A unit of Creative Group) • 6 PAGES

'One Route, One Fare'

MUMBAI: The Union government has decided on a new initiative on airfares by offering a single, fixed ticket rate that remains constant regardless of booking date, the civil aviation ministry said.

Union Civil Aviation Minister Rammohan Naidu Kinjarapu inaugurated what's called the "Fare Se Fursat" ("free-

dom from fare stress") scheme by the government-owned regional carrier, Alliance Air.

"It is aimed at giving passengers freedom from the stress of fluctuating airfares and promoting ease of flying in the country," said the minister. Secretary, civil aviation, Samir Kumar Sinha, was at the launch

(Cont. on page - 2)

Kuwait ambassador-designate receives credentials

Ambassador-designate to Kuwait Paramita Tripathi received letter of credential from President Droupadi Murmu in New Delhi. Her appointment as the ambassador of India to Kuwait marks a new chapter in the already strong and historic ties between India and Kuwait.



With this, Tripathi is set to take charge of her new assignment in Kuwait, ushering in new momentum in the shared journey between the two friendly countries.

About 56pc Indian employers plan workforce expansion

NEW DELHI: Over half of employers (56pc) in India intend to expand their workforce in the second-half of the current financial year (H2- FY26), while 27pc plan to maintain stability and 17pc foresee rationalisation.

Large enterprises are driving most of the hiring momentum, while medium and small businesses are proceeding with a more cautious, return-first approach. "As India's economy sustains a strong growth trajectory, driv-

en by 7.8pc GDP growth in Q1 FY2025-26 and GST reforms, employers are aligning their people strategies to real business outcomes, commissioning milestones and festive demand cycles," TeamLease Services, a leading staffing firm, said in its report.

Sectors leading the employment surge include e-commerce and tech start-ups, logistics and retail, with projected Net Employment Changes (NECs) of 11.3pc, 10.8pc and 8.1pc, respectively,

revealed the report, based on a survey of 1,251 employers across 23 industries and 20 cities, conducted from June to August.

The automotive, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure seg-

ments are also expanding steadily, supported by policy incentives such as PLI and EMPS, localisation efforts and strong domestic consumption.

These industries together reflect the resilience and adaptability of India's job

market, where technology, consumption and infrastructure investment continue to drive workforce demand. "India's workforce is entering a transformative phase where traditional hiring approaches (Cont. on page - 6)

India debars BLS from tenders: will UAE visa, passport services be affected?

ABU DHABI: India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has debarred BLS International, the outsourced

agency for Indian passport and visa applications services in several countries

including the UAE, from participating in future tenders of the MEA and Indian missions abroad, leading to the company's shares tumbling on the Indian stock market. In a disclosure letter submitted to the National Stock Exchange of India, the company said it had been debarred from participation in future tenders of the MEA and India missions abroad for a period of two years. "The order for debarment has been issued on account of allegations including court

cases and complaints of applicants," it cited.

The news of the debarment of BLS from participating in MEA's tenders raised questions on how it would impact the operations of BLS International in the UAE and elsewhere. However, the company has clarified that there is no (Cont. on page - 2)

TAFI Western India Diwali evening celebrated

MUMBAI: The Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI), Western India Chapter Diwali evening turned out to be a houseful celebration of tradition, knowledge, and camaraderie, with members dazzling in colourful ethnic attire.

The evening featured an insightful session on POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) compli-



ance by Adv. & Solicitor Chaital Vas, followed by engaging destination

presentations by Kaizan DMC with Uzbek Air and (Cont. on page - 2)

HOLIDAY NOTICE

As Monday (20th Oct.) is Diwali (Lakshmi Puja), the **one** office will remain closed. Hence, there will be no e-newspaper published on Tuesday (21st Oct.).





India-UK visa divide

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer's first official visit to India marked a fresh beginning in New Delhi-London relations. Photo opportunities apart, his meeting with Prime Minister Modi in the country's business capital Mumbai yielded substance — a \$468-million missile deal, renewed commitment to an early Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and plans to open nine British university campuses in India.

For India, access to the UK market could boost exports in textiles, pharma and services, particularly IT and fintech. Still, mutual investment in research, digital innovation and clean energy will be the real test of intent.

Starmer had met Modi at the G20 in Rio where he told the Indian prime minister that the talks should either be stepped up or the two sides should conclude it was never going to happen. During the discussion, the leaders agreed their commitment to continue implementing the Migration and Mobility Partnership (MMP). While noting the progress in co-operation for curbing irregular migration, both sides reiterated their commitment to continue collaboration in this domain.

It is understood that Starmer has made it clear that UK would not relax visa rules for India. He said there were no plans to open up more visa routes to Indian workers or students. Speaking to Indian media, Starmer observed that no business leaders had "raised with me the question of visas" during his trip. Instead the visit to India "is about providing the opportunities" for Indian businesses "to take advantage" of the UK-India trade deal, signed in July after years of negotiations.

Unfortunately, the UK is making issuance of visa more and more difficult as part of a wider crackdown on soaring levels of immigration into the country. The recent order on the knowledge of English, may be in good intention, can hurt many nationalities. The UK government tabled tougher new English language test requirements on visa applicants, including from India, in parliament. The new "Secure English Language Test" will be conducted by a Home Office-approved provider, with the results to be verified as part of a subsequent visa application process for all skilled workers from Jan 8, 2026.

The applicant's standard of speaking, listening, reading and writing English must be equivalent to A-Level or Class 12, referred to as level B2, which the Home Office believes will ensure applicants are "better able to integrate into life in the UK".

Finance requirements for student visas will also be increased for the 2025-26 academic year, meaning foreign students will have to prove they have sufficient funds to support themselves. The current requirement of having maintenance funds of 1,483 pounds per month will be raised to 1,529 pounds for London and to 1,171 pounds per month (up from 1,136 pounds) for the rest of the UK.

The Immigration Skills Charge (ISC), effectively a tax paid by UK employers sponsoring skilled foreign workers and intended to be reinvested in training the domestic workforce, will be raised by 32pc. It means small or charitable organisations must pay 480 pounds per person, per year (up from 364 pounds). Britain should realise that hampering free flow of skilled persons would be harmful in the long run.

LIPSYNCH

"Freedom is the right to tell people what they do not want to hear."

--- A British quote

TAFI Western India Diwali evening celebrated



(Cont. from page - 1)

ASEGO Insurance. A special moment of pride came with the felicitation of Immediate Past President Ajay Prakash, along with Past National Committee Members Sampat Damani and Jitul Mehta, and the warm welcome of incoming president Abaas Moiz.

The highlight of the evening was a bouquet of exciting lucky draws sponsored by VFS Global, Minor Hotels, Xandari Resorts, Uzbek Airlines, Pyramid DMC Thailand, Classic Holidays, Travel Patio, Global Destinations, Sopo Lodges Kenya, and Outrigger Hotels Thailand, adding sparkle

to the festive celebration. Vikram Paul and Manu Anand from Emirates welcomed TAFI Western India to Participate in the upcoming Emirates Cricket Cup. The event truly reflected TAFI WI's spirit — The Way Forward — combining education, recognition and togetherness.

India debars BLS from tenders: will UAE visa...

(Cont. from page - 1) impact on financial, operation or other activities. "This debarment shall not affect the financial/ performance of existing operations of the company," stated BLS, which operates around 15 Indian passport and visa application centres in the UAE. "This debarment shall not affect the existing contracts of the MEA and shall continue as per the existing terms," it clarified. Further, it added that the company was evaluating the MEA's order and "will take appropriate action to address it in due course as per the law." However, the two-year debarment from bidding for MEA's and In-

dian missions' tenders has a huge significance here in the UAE. With the debarment, BLS International

now stands disqualified to enter the bidding procedures of the Indian embassy in Abu Dhabi.

'One Route, One Fare'

(Cont. from page - 1) event, as was the chairman of Alliance Air, Amit Kumar and CEO Rajarshi Sen.

"Fare se Fursat" is being implemented on a pilot basis from Oct 13 to Dec 31, 2025, across select routes, to evaluate operational feasibility and passenger response. The static fare system eliminates uncertainty and stress associated with fluctuating airfares, ensuring predictability of costs, even

for last-minute bookings. Speaking at the launch, the minister said: "The scheme perfectly aligns with the core principles of the UDAN scheme."

He was referring to the "Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik" ("Let the common man fly") scheme of the Narendra Modi government. He said Alliance Air is carrying forward PM Modi's vision of "democratising aviation and making it affordable for the middle class."

TAAI WESTERN INDIA MEETING



Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), Western India, meeting was held at Orchid Mumbai with the national team, making strategies for the way forward for the welfare of membership.

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On 27.10.2025
 At: Dhaid Travels, Mumbai.
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				11 Oct	15 Oct 2025
				17 Oct	21 Oct 2025
				23 Oct	27 Oct 2025
DIAMOND (CHILD)	RS.30,000	RS.8,000	RS.38,000	29 Oct	02 Oct 2025
GOLD (ADULT)	RS.23,000	RS.10,500	RS.33,500	04 Nov	08 Nov 2025
GOLD (CHILD)	RS.23,000	RS. 7,000	RS.30,000	10 Nov	14 Nov 2025

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FOREX RATES
 As on 16th October 2025 (In rupees)

Currency	BillBuy	BillSell
US Dollar	87.21	88.38
British Pound	117.05	118.72
Euro	101.38	103.56
Japanese Yen	57.8	58.74
Swiss Franc (CHF)	109.25	111.7
Canadian Dollar	61.9	63.31
Australian Dollar	56.36	57.65
Norwegian Krone	8.54	8.8
Swedish Krona	9.11	9.37
New Zealand Dollar	49.8	50.93
Hong Kong Dollar	11.08	11.42
Kuwaiti Dinar	292.901	281.6426
Singapore Dollar	67.09	68.61
Saudi Arabian Riyal	22.95	23.68
U A E Dirham	23.49	24.18

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UK imposes tougher English language tests for skilled visa applicants

LONDON: The UK government tabled tougher new English language test requirements on visa applicants, including from India, in parliament as part of a wider crackdown on soaring levels of immigration into the country.

The new "Secure English Language Test" will be conducted by a Home Office-approved provider, with the results to be verified as part of a subsequent visa application process for all skilled workers from Jan 8, 2026.

The applicant's standard of speaking, listening, reading and writing English must be equivalent to A-Level or Class 12, referred to as level B2, which the Home Office believes will ensure applicants are "better able to integrate into life in the UK".

"This country has always welcomed those who come to this country and contribute, but it is unacceptable for migrants to come here without learning our language, unable to contribute to our national life," said UK Home Secretary Shabana Mah-

mood. "If you come to this country, you must learn our language and play your part," she said. Laid out as part of a written ministerial statement (WMS) in the House of Commons this week, the measures form part of the British government's 'Immigration White Paper' from May, designed to tighten the visa regime.

Among the other changes in law, the time for international students to find a graduate-level job after completing their studies under the Graduate Route visa, popular among Indian students, will be cut to 18 months from the current two years from Jan 1, 2027. However, PhD-level graduates will continue to be eligible for three years of permission as part of an announcement made earlier this year.

Finance requirements for student visas will also be increased for the 2025-2026 academic year, meaning foreign students will have to demonstrate they have sufficient funds to support themselves.

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 • **Tuesday, 21st October 2025, for Diwali Amavasya (Laxmi Pujan)**
 • **Wednesday, 22nd October 2025, for Diwali (Bali Pratipada)**
 • **Thursday, 23rd October 2025, for Bhaidooj**
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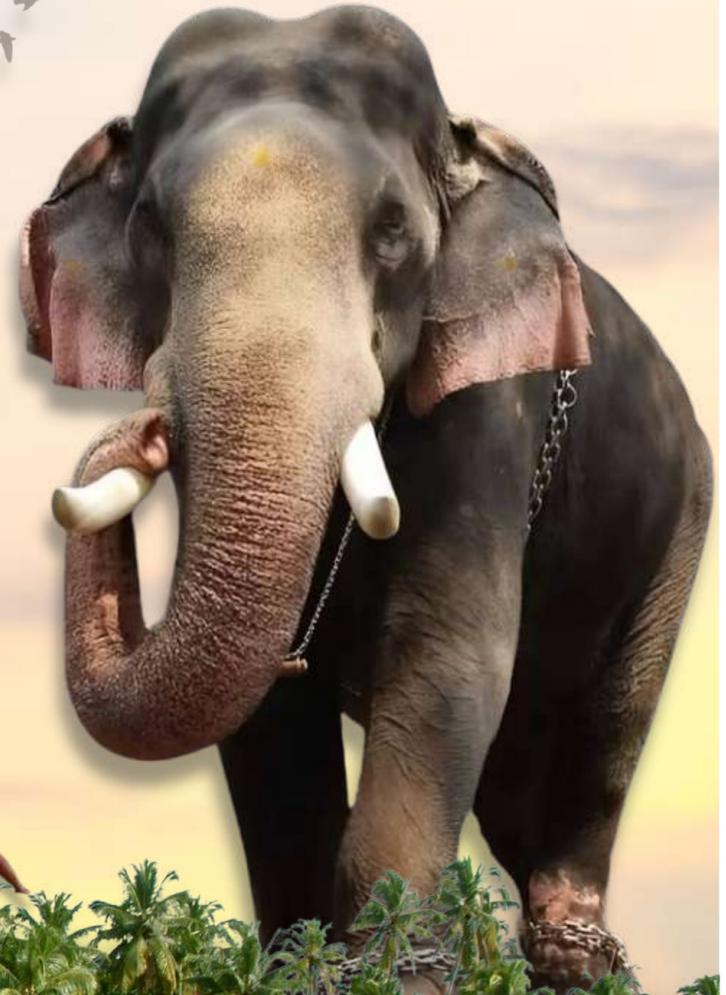
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GULF FAQs

Can full-time employees legally start their own business?

I work in a private firm in the UAE. What does the law say about starting a business while being employed full-time? Will it be a legal problem if the business I started and my current job are similar? I work in the HR department in my firm, and the company I plan to start is an HR consultancy. Can you explain?

An employee may establish a new entity or become a partner or shareholder in an existing entity in the UAE, provided that the employer issues a No Objection Certificate (NOC) permitting the employee to do so. Accordingly, if you intend to establish a new human resource consultancy firm while still being employed with your current employ-

er, it is advisable first to obtain an NOC from your current employer.

Furthermore, if you establish a human resource consultancy and the nature of the work is similar to your role in your current employment, then this may be considered as joining a competitor of your employer only if your signed employment contract includes a non-competition clause. This is by Article 10(1) of the Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulation of Employment Relations, which states, "Where the employee performs a work which gives him access to employer's customers or business secrets, the employer may make a provision in the employment

contract that the employee shall not compete with or be engaged in any business which competes with him in the same sector after the expiry of the contract. Such a clause shall specify the place, time, and type of work to the extent necessary to protect the legitimate business interests and the non-competition period shall not exceed two years after the expiration of the contract."

However, the non-competition clause in your employment may not be applicable once you leave the employment, provided you and your employer have agreed in writing that non-competition between you and your employer does not apply upon the end of your cur-

rent employment contract. This is under Article 12 (4) of the Cabinet Resolution No. 1 of 2022 Concerning the Executive Regulations of Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulation of Employment Relations, which states: "It shall be permissible to agree in writing on the non-performance of the non-competition clause after the end of the employment contract."

In addition, the provisions of non-competition may be exempted as mentioned in Article 12 (5) of the Cabinet Resolution No. 1 of 2022 on Employment Relations, which states: "An employee shall be exempted from the non-compete clause provided for in Article (10)

of the Employment Law under the following conditions:

a) If the employee or the new employer pays compensation not exceeding three months of the employee's wage agreed upon in the last contract to the former employer, and the former employer's written consent thereto is required.

b) If the contract is terminated during the probationary period.

c) Any professional categories according to the needs of the employment market in the UAE, as determined by the decision of the ministry under the employment classification approved by the cabinet."

You may contact the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization for further clarification.

Is it legal for employers to make employees pay for upskilling?

If my company changes my profile and job duties, who is responsible for upskilling me? I am going through this problem now at my Dubai-based company. While I am happy to upskill myself, the company is demanding that I pay for it. What to do?

In the UAE, an employer may not assign different roles to an employee other than those mentioned in the employment contract without the written consent of the employee.

This is in accordance with Article 12(1) & (2) of Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021 Regarding the Regulation of Employment Relationships and its amendments, which states:

1. An employee may not be assigned another work which is substantially different from the work agreed upon in the employment contract, unless such an assignment is necessary or aims to avoid an

accident or rectify the consequences thereof, provided that the assignment is temporary as specified by the executive regulations of this Decree-Law.

2. An employer may, in cases other than those stated in paragraph (1) above, entrust the employee with work that is not agreed upon in the employment contract, with the written consent of the employee."

It may be pertinent to note that it comes under the employer's obligation to invest in the development of the skills of the workers by providing them with training and tools in accordance with the law and implementing regulation. This is in accordance with Article 13 (5) of the Employment Law. "Investing in the development of skills of workers working for its service and providing the minimum amount of training, qualification, and empowerment

tools and programmes as per the provisions of this Decree-Law and its implementing regulation." However, an employer may not force or threat-



en an employee to undertake any work against the employee's will. This is in accordance with Article 14(1) of the Employment Law, which states, "An employer may not use any means susceptible of obliging or forcing the employee, or threatening him with any penalty, to work for him or forcing him to do work or deliver a service against his will." In the event an employer forces an employee to perform

work other than that mentioned in the employment contract based on the employee's designation, then the employee may quit the employment without serv-

ing the notice period to the employer. This is in accordance with Article 45(4) of the Employment Law, which states: The employee may quit work without notice and reserve all his entitlements at the end of service if the employer entrusts the employee with work that is substantially different from the work agreed upon in the employment contract, without the written consent of the employee, except in cases

stated in Article 12 hereof." Based on the aforementioned provisions of law, it is your employer's obligation to upskill you. However, your employer cannot force you to undertake new tasks without your written consent and should pay for it. If you feel pressured to perform tasks outside the scope of your original contract, and this pressure includes threats or coercion, you have the right to resign immediately and claim all your end-of-service entitlements. You may discuss this with your employer and request that the employer pay for the training to improve your skills to perform a significantly different role. Furthermore, if your employer does not agree to this and is forcing you to do a different job role, you may approach the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MOHRE) and register a complaint against your employer.

NRI investment in equities to be made easy

MUMBAI: Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said that the markets watchdog is easing regulatory processes to help NRIs invest in Indian equity market.

The regulator is working on simplifying procedures so that NRIs do not have to travel back to India to comply with know-your-customer (KYC) requirements. "We are yet to establish an easy and secure KYC access system for NRIs to facilitate their participation in the securities market. This will be an urgent goal for us," Pandey said at an event organised by the Bombay

Stock Exchange Brokers' Forum here.

SEBI is in touch with RBI and the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to create a system where NRIs can complete their KYC verification through video calls instead of having to travel back home, he added.

It may be noted that there are over 3.5 crore NRIs globally and India is the world's largest recipient of remittances, having received \$135 billion in FY25.

Pandey said that, having already decided in Sept to create a single window for trusted foreign portfolio in-

vestors (FPIs) with lighter compliance requirements, SEBI's "immediate goal" is to make the FPI registration process simple and fast by making it fully portal-based.

"We are already consulting our stakeholders to implement it. We would like to be among the best in the world in terms of facilitating registration," he said.

Pandey described the initiative as a "process issue" rather than one arising from risks, and said that SEBI, RBI and the Income Tax Department would need to work together to enable digitised registration.

IndiGo to start Delhi-Hanoi flights from Dec

MUMBAI: IndiGo announced its plan to introduce daily flights between Delhi and Hanoi from Dec 20. The airline is now expanding its reach to Vietnam by connecting it with more than one Indian city.

India's largest airline according to market share, IndiGo, currently operates 14 weekly flights connecting Kolkata to Vietnam's Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city. On Saturday, the airline announced plans to connect Delhi with the Southeast Asian city by introducing daily Delhi-Hanoi flights, commencing from Dec 20, 2025. IndiGo will operate its Airbus A320 aircraft on this new



route.

Flight schedule details for Delhi-Hanoi daily service: The Delhi-Hanoi flight 6E-1633 will depart Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport at 7.25am and reach Hanoi at 1pm local time. The return flight 6E-1634 will depart Hanoi at 6pm and reach IGI at 9.25pm. On Saturday, the airline announced plans to connect Delhi with the Southeast Asian city by in-

troducing daily Delhi-Hanoi flights, commencing from Dec 20, 2025. IndiGo will operate its Airbus A320 aircraft on this new route.

About 56pc Indian employers...

(Cont. from page - 1) are giving way to targeted, skill-driven strategies. According to our report, 61pc of employers are adopting selective, performance-based approaches for entry-level roles. By embedding capability-led, performance-linked practices, companies can not only meet today's business needs but also shape a resilient and future-ready

workforce," said Balasubramanian, Senior Vice President, TeamLease Services. Also, the government's push towards formalisation through schemes such as the Employment-Linked Incentive (ELI) looks promising, with 53pc of employers aware of the scheme and 64pc rating skill development support as its most valuable feature, he added.

Emirates to serve Diwali delicacies on flights to and from India

DUBAI: Emirates is making this Diwali extra special for passengers by offering some sweet experiences aboard. The Dubai-based carrier has arranged for Diwali delights and entertainment onboard flights to and from India, from Oct 17-25.

Diwali delicacies will be served in all classes and select lounges to customers travelling to and from Dubai to Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Kochi, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Thiruvananthapuram, Kolkata and Mumbai.

Customers celebrating Diwali on these routes will be treated to a selection of



Air India expands UK services, adds Delhi-London flights

LONDON: Air India has announced a major expansion of its United Kingdom network under the Northern Winter 2025 schedule, increasing its Delhi-London (Heathrow) frequency from 24 to 28 flights a week and restoring its Amritsar-London (Gatwick) service with three flights weekly, effective Oct 26.

The Indian diaspora forms about 1.8 million of the UK's population. Indian and British companies employ more than 6.5 lakh people in each other's countries

The expansion strengthens the airline's footprint across five Indian cities — Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad and Amritsar — and three UK destinations — London Heathrow, London Gatwick and Birmingham.

The announcement came as both Prime Ministers Modi and Keir

Starmer reaffirmed their commitment to deepening India-UK aviation ties, noting that discussions are underway to renew the India-UK Air Services Agreement. A joint statement said the development "creates an opportunity for closer co-operation across the aerospace sector".

According to airline officials, the additional daily flight boosts Air India's capacity on the high-demand Delhi-London route by nearly 1,200 seats each way, with operations to be handled by the airline's new Airbus A350-900 and Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft.

Air India, already the largest carrier between India and the UK, currently operates 61 flights per week and offers more than 18,000 seats one-way — translating to nearly 1.7 million seats annually.

sumptuous Diwali sweets. Premium Economy and Economy Class customers can savour a traditional treat of motichoor laddu with their hot meal — a traditional dessert of fried chickpea flour balls sweetened with sugar syrup, fragrant with cardamom and saffron and garnished with pistachios.

First and Business Class customers will also be offered a Kaju pista roll, a creamy rose flavoured cashew and pistachio roll with dried fruits and nuts, encased in silver leaves. In the Emirates First and Business Class Lounges of Dubai, customers can

savour onion kachoris and paneer potli samosa, served with tamarind chutney and mint chutney, followed by sweet treats of mango sandwich and classic Diwali desserts — balushahi, sweet and spongy kesar rasgullas, and the beloved gajar ka halwa. First Class customers are invited to relax with a dedicated Diwali cocktail, the Spicy Saffron Martini or enjoy the comfort of a Chai Chat Latte mocktail, while Business Class customers will enjoy a Diwali cocktail of Elderflower Gin Fizz or mocktail of Berry Basil Splash.