

Most Immediate

Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs
(EP-I Division)

Subject: Restriction of Visas to Certain Categories of Expatriates in Oman.

The Indian Ambassador in Oman has informed that the Omani Ministry of Manpower has stopped issuing visas to companies engaged in a wide range of activities namely, import and export, cleaning, barber shops, laundries, electronic repair shops, garbage cleaning and selling, textile shops, mobile shops, health clubs, workshops in aluminum, iron, wood, car repair and all related activities, tailoring shops and beauty parlours. The companies engaged in these activities will not be eligible for visa clearance which means the existing companies cannot bring any new expatriate workers in the above-mentioned fields nor can new companies be set up.

2. A copy of D.O. letter No. MUS/CW/386/12/2007 dated 27th July, 2008 received from Ambassador of India, Oman is enclosed for information and necessary action.



(BABU CHERIAN)
Under Secretary (EP-I)
Ph. : 011-24121528

Protector of Emigrants:

1. Mumbai
2. Delhi
3. Chennai
4. Kolkatta
5. Chandigarh
6. Hyderabad
7. Thiruvanthapuram
8. Kochi

RA Associations:

1. Manpower Exporters Association,
41/2073D, 3rd Floor,
Nedunadagan Square
Kalabhavan Road, Ernakulam North
Kochi - 682018
(Shri K. Srinivasan, President)

 (PCO)

*Copy
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them to our mission
5/8/08*

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R. 1824 / JS(PO)/OIA/08
29 July

137/Div(EP)
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भारत का राजदूत
سفير الهند
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA

No. No. MUS/CW/386/12/2007

27th July, 2008

Subject: Restriction of Visas to Certain Categories of Expatriates in Oman.

Dear Sir,

In a major step taken towards Omanisation, the Omani Ministry of Manpower today announced that it has stopped issuing visas to companies engaged in a wide range of activities namely import and export, cleaning, barber shops, laundries, electronic repair shops, garbage cleaning and selling, textile shops, mobile shops, health clubs, workshops in aluminum, iron, wood, car repair and all related activities, tailoring shops and beauty parlours. The statement issued by the Ministry said that the companies engaged in these activities will not be eligible for visa clearance which means the existing companies cannot bring any new expatriate workers in the above-mentioned fields nor can new companies be set up. However, those already employed in these activities can renew their visas. The objective of this announcement apparently was to enhance Omanisation and use "plenty of local talent for whom very little space is available in the employment market". These regulations will apply only to the small Grade 3 and 4 companies and not to those who are excellent companies with good track record for compliance with labour laws and Omanisation targets.

However, a senior official of the Ministry also clarified that these restrictions are temporary in nature and would be effective only till 31st December 2008 after which the policy will be reviewed.

A policy which commenced in 1988, Omanisation seeks to gradually bring in more employment for Omanis. Earlier, Omanis were only interested in high-profile jobs. However, since not many Omanis have acquired sufficient skills and professionalism needed for high-end jobs, unemployment could not be reduced substantially. This is clear from the fact that despite Omanisation, there has been a steady growth in the number of expatriate workers, especially Indians coming to work in Oman. The situation was so bad that last year, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said had to admonish Omani youth for not taking up low or middle level jobs. He advised them not to refuse any job as long as it was in conformity with the Omani culture. Some lower-end jobs such as sale of vegetables, driving of taxis and heavy duty vehicles have already been given to Omanis. Omanisation has been quite successful in the public sector and by the end of the first decade of its existence i.e. 1998, the number of Omanis in Government Service exceeded the set target of 72%. The ratio of Omanisation in private sector has been

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Urgent.
Kindly put up
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comparatively low as it went upto 16.6% in 2001 from 14.7% in 1995. The percentage of Omanisation fixed by the Ministry of Manpower varies from sector to sector. For example -- Transport, Storage and Communication sectors require 60% Omanisation; Finance, Insurance and Real Estate 40%; Industry 35%, Hospitality 30%; whole-sale or retail trading 20% and contracting 15%.

The new regulations of Ministry are likely to create anxiety and reduce job opportunities among the expatriate population, especially those from India and other neighbouring countries. Though the Government contends that this latest decision will be valid only till the end of the year, there is a high probability of it being continued.

In view of the above regulations, you may like to adequately sensitize the recruiting agents and the public at large in India.

With warm regards,
Yours sincerely,

Anill Wadhwa
(Anill Wadhwa)
Ambassador

Shri G. Gurucharan
Joint Secretary
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs
New Delhi

Copy to:

1. Shri N. Ravi, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.
2. Shri Sanjay Singh, AS(Gulf), Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.
3. Shri Ohm Prakash, Private Secretary to Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, New Delhi -- may kindly bring this to the notice of Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs.
4. Shri J. Panda, Protector of Emigrants, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, New Delhi.
5. Smt. Sheela Thomas, Secretary, Non-Resident Keralites' Affairs Department (NORKA), Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala-695 001 : -471-2327438).
6. Shri A. Raghotham Rao, Chief Secretary, Government of the State of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad (Fax: 0091-40-2345 3700)

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7. Shri Eduardo Faleiro, Commissioner, (NRIs) Government of Goa, Secretariat, Panjim (Fax No. 0091 - 0832 225254).
8. Shri Ramesh Inder Singh, Chief Secretary, Government of the State of Punjab, Chandigarh (Fax No. 0091 0172 2742488 / 2740 936)
9. Shri L. Tripathy, Chief Secretary, Government of the State of Tamil Nadu, Chennai (Fax No. 0091 445072 304)

(Anil Wadhwa)
Ambassador