

# **PRE DEPARTURE TRAINING MANUAL**

For Intending Emigrants

**QATAR**

## **Part – I**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION FOR OVERSEAS MIGRANTS**

#### **Definition**

Emigration, in this context, means the departure of any person from India with a view to taking up any employment (whether or not under an agreement or other arrangements to take up such employment, with or without the assistance of a registered Recruiting Agent or employer) in any country or place outside India.

#### **The Present Situation**

Every year hundreds of thousands of Indians emigrate in search of job. The effect of economic liberalization in India is visible on labour migration too. One of the striking features of labour migration from India is that more than 90 percent of the total outflow is to the Middle East.

#### **The Emigration Act**

The Emigration Act, 1983, seeks to safeguard the interests and ensure the welfare of emigrants. Only the recruiting agents registered with the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs are eligible as per the Act to conduct the business of recruitment for overseas employment and they are required to obtain proper Registration Certificates (RC) from the Protector General of Emigrants.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, administers the Emigration Act through the eight offices of Protector of Emigrants (POEs). The offices are located at Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Chandigarh, Cochin, Hyderabad and Thiruvananthapuram.

#### **Service Charge**

No recruiting agent shall collect from the worker the charges more than the equivalent of his wages for forty-five days as offered under the employment contract, subject to a maximum of twenty thousand rupees, in respect of the services provided and shall issue a receipt to that worker for the amount collected in this regard.

#### **Emigration Check Required (ECR) Category**

Categories of persons, whose passports have been endorsed as “Emigration Check Required” (ECR), if intending to travel to an ECR country (Listed on page 3) for employment purposes, are required to obtain emigration from the Protector of Emigrants (POEs) either directly or through the recruitment agents or through the employer concerned.

#### **Emigration Check Not Required (ECNR) Category**

Section 22 of the Emigration Act, 1983 provides that no citizen of India shall migrate unless he obtains authorization from the concerned POE in the prescribed manner and form. However, with a view to facilitating the movement of the workers, 13 categories of persons (listed later in this chapter) have been exempted from this requirement and have been placed under “Emigration Check Not Required” (ECNR) category. Such persons are not required to obtain any emigration clearance from the offices of POEs before seeking employment abroad.

### **Countries with ECR / ECNR status**

There are total of 175 countries (called as ECNR countries) do not require emigration clearance, whereas 17 countries are listed as emigration check required countries, they are listed below:

### **List of Countries for which Emigration Clearance is Required (ECR)**

1. Afghanistan
2. Bahrain
3. Indonesia
4. Iraq
5. Jordan
6. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
7. Kuwait
8. Lebanon
9. Libya
10. Malaysia
11. Oman
12. Qatar
13. Sudan
14. Syria
15. Thailand
16. United Arab Emirates
17. Yemen

### **List of Persons/Categories of Workers in whose case Emigration Check is Not Required**

1. All holders of Diplomatic/ Official Passports
2. All Gazetted Government Servants
3. All Income-tax payers (including agricultural income tax payers) in their individual capacity
4. All professional degree holders, such as Doctors holding MBBS degrees or Degrees in Ayurveda or Homeopathy; Accredited journalists; Engineers; Chartered Accountants; Lecturers; Teachers; Scientists; Advocates etc.
5. Spouses and dependent children of category of persons listed from (2) to (4).
6. Persons holding class 10 qualification or higher degrees.
7. Seamen who are in possession of CDC or Sea Cadets, Desk Cadets (i) who have passed final examination of three year B.Sc. Nautical Sciences Courses at

T S Chanakya, Mumbai; and (ii) who have undergone three months pre-sea training at any of the government approved Training Institutes such as T S Chanakya, T S Rehman, T S Jawahar, MTI (SCI) and NIPM, Chennai after production of identity cards issued by the Shipping Master, Mumbai/ Kolkata/ Chennai

8. Persons holding permanent immigration visas, such as the visas of UK, USA and Australia.
9. Persons possessing two years' diploma from any institute recognized by the national Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) or State Council of Vocational Training (SCVT) or persons holding three years' diploma/equivalent degree from institutions like polytechnics recognized by Central/State Governments.
10. Nurses possessing qualifications recognized under the Indian Nursing Council Act, 1947.
11. All persons above the age of 50 years.
12. All persons who have been staying abroad for more than three years (the period of three years could be either in one stretch or broken) and spouses.
13. Children below 18 years of age.

### **Guidelines for Emigration Clearance**

The procedure for emigration clearance has been simplified. Emigration clearance to individuals/groups is granted on the same day on which the application is made at any of the offices of the Protector of Emigrants (POE).

### **Procedure for Emigration Clearance**

- 1) Emigration clearance will be made on the passport when the individual approaches either directly or through a registered Recruiting Agent or through the employer concerned.
- 2) In cases in which the profession indicated in visa does not tally with the profession indicated in the passport, an affidavit may be obtained from the Recruiting Agent/Employer concerned.
- 3) No clearance may be given for Iraq unless specifically authorized by Indian Embassy in Iraq.
- 4) No emigration clearance shall be granted for recruiting Indian nationals for any Foreign Employer placed in 'Prior Approval Category' (PAC)

### **Applying for Emigration Clearance**

The application for emigration clearance should be made in the prescribed form with prescribed particulars by the applicant directly or through a Recruiting Agent or through the employer concerned to the POE.

### **Documents required for Semi-Skilled Workers**

Semi-skilled individuals who seek emigration clearance directly from the Protectors of Emigrants (and not through Recruiting Agents) are required to produce the following documents in original for scrutiny and return:

- 1) Passport valid for a minimum period of six months with valid visa.
- 2) Employment contract from foreign employer duly attested by the Indian Mission.
- 3) Challan towards deposit of prescribed fee.
- 4) Valid Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Policy

### **Documents required for Unskilled Workers**

Unskilled workers and women (not below 30 years of age) seeking employment abroad as housemaids/ domestic workers shall continue to furnish (in original) the following documents at the time of obtaining emigration clearance:

- 1) Passport valid for a minimum period of six months with valid Visa.
- 2) Work agreement from the foreign employer duly attested by the Indian Mission and signed by employer and employee or Permission letter from the concerned Indian Mission/ Post.
- 3) Challan towards deposit of prescribed fee.
- 4) Valid Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Policy
- 5) Approval of the Ministry, if the female worker is below 30 years of age.

### **Documents required for Emigration Clearance (Through Project Exporter)**

1. Valid Passport (Valid for at least 6 months)
2. Valid visa in English language.
3. Permit issued by Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, with effective date of validity.
4. Valid Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Policy
5. Valid Bank Guarantee

The Protector of Emigrants (POE) shall, after satisfying himself about the accuracy of the particulars mentioned in the application and in the other documents submitted along with the application, grants emigration clearance in the prescribed manner and form. In case there is any deficiency, the POE shall intimate the same by order in writing to the applicant or, as the case may be, the Recruiting Agent or employer, through whom the applications have been made about the deficiencies and require him to make good such deficiencies within such time as may be specified in the order or reject the application.

### **Details of the Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY)**

- The Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) was started in 2003. The PBBY was upgraded as the Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana, 2006 to provide broader coverage to the emigrant workers.
- The scheme has been further modified in 2008. The emigrant workers get a minimum insurance cover of Rs. 10 lakhs (instead of Rs. 5 lakhs) and the policy will be for the period of employment contract, i.e. either 2 years or 3 years as the case may be. The reduced premium along with other benefits have been made effective from 01.04.08.
- A comparative statement of PBBY 2006 and PBBY 2008 is as under:

<b>Item</b>	<b>PBBY 2006</b>	<b>PBBY 2008</b>
Minimum sum for which insured under PBBY	Rs. 5.00 Lakhs	Rs. 10.00 Lakhs
Hospitalization (Medical Expenses) Covering injuries / sickness / ailment / diseases	Rs. 50,000/-	Rs. 75,000/-
Repatriation covers for medical unfit	Actual one-way economy class air fare	Actual one-way economy class air fare
Family Hospitalization in India	Rs. 25,000/-	Rs. 50,000/-
Maternity	Rs. 20,000/-	Rs. 25,000/-
Attendant	Actual one-way economy class air fare	Actual one-way economy class air fare
Legal Expenses	Rs. 25,000/-	Rs. 30,000/-
Actual Premium to be charged (without any hidden costs)	Rs. 475/- for the contract period	Rs. 275/- for 2 years policy period. Rs. 375/- for 3 years policy period.

### **This policy is available from undernoted Insurance Companies:-**

1. Oriental Insurance Company Ltd.
2. United Insurance Company Ltd.
3. National Insurance Company Ltd.
4. ICICI Lombard.
5. Star Health & Allied Insurance Co. Ltd.
6. IFFCO Tokyo
7. Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Co. Ltd.
8. Reliance General Insurance Co. Ltd.

### **Claim Procedure**

Insured worker is supposed to have the copy of PBBY insurance policy with him. Name of the nominee is so mentioned on the policy, in view of the eventuality of death of insured.

In the event of claim, insured worker/claimant has to lodge a claim under the policy, with the respective insurance company's office wherefrom the policy was issued, if not specifically provided by the insurance company otherwise. While doing so, claimant has to indicate the policy number and details of accident. In the event of death, nominee has to lodge the claim.

After intimation of reported claim, insurance company intimates the insured/claimant the details of documents required to settle the claim. After processing such requisite documents, claim amount is paid to the insured worker/claimant, as the case may be.

### **Do's and Don't Do's**

In the Qatar, laws demand that you must not move about in public without your "Iquama". "Iquama" are identity cards / labour cards issued to all expatriates soon after they settle down on their jobs.

Qatar does not allow change in job sponsorship, but only after prior permission is obtained.

- The emigrant workers must get their service agreements prepared in both English and Arabic. They should not part with their passports and copies of the service contracts.
- Non-payment or delayed payment of wages could be reported to Indian missions, for redressal of grievances.
- Workers are given gratuity equivalent to 21 days' wages for every completed year of service.

### **Verification of the genuineness of visa/an employment documents**

The matter may be referred to the Embassy of India in the destination country, if necessary, with full particulars of the sponsor company (Name, Address, Telephone and Fax No.) which issued the visa, along with Passport particulars.

### **Fate of Indian Nationals with 'Visit visa'**

Some companies issue 'Visit Visa' (commercial 'visit visa') to meet their urgent manpower requirement for short-term work. After the work is finished, workers are allowed to come back to the home country. In case the employer needs them for further period; employer may arrange employment visa for such workers.

Visit visa is different from employment visa and it is not covered by the labour laws of the destination countries. Therefore visit visa workers do not have legal rights.

### **Employment Contract**

Indian workers are advised to obtain written contract duly signed by the sponsor / employer company before their arrival in the destination country.

The official language of the contract recognized by the Gulf countries is Arabic. In a bilingual contract (English and Arabic), the Arabic version prevails in case of any dispute on the clauses of the contract.

## **Essential terms for a contract**

The contract should contain all-important terms of employment as per 15(2) of Emigration Rules.

- (i) Period of employment/place of employment;
- (ii) Wages and other conditions of service;
- (iii) Free food or food allowance provision;
- (iv) Free accommodation;
- (v) Provision in regard to disposal, or transportation to India, of dead body of the emigrant;
- (vi) Working hours, overtime allowance, other working conditions, leave and social security benefits as per local labour laws;
- (vii) To-and-fro air-passage at the employers' cost; and
- (viii) Mode of settlement of disputes;

## **Obtaining copy of the contract while in India**

As per the instructions of the Government of India, recruitment agents are expected to provide a copy of employment contract to each worker before his/her departure. To safeguard his/her own interest, an individual worker has to demand from the recruitment agent a copy of the duly signed contract before departure. Complaints may be lodged against defaulting agencies with the nearest Protector of Emigrants.

## **Important Documents**

In addition to all the originals, copies of the following documents may be retained with the employee.

1. Employment contract,
2. Passport,
3. Visa and
4. Certificates of educational qualification

## **Guidelines for those Emigrating through RAs**

- Be sure of your Recruiting Agent. Ask him to show his Registration Certificate issued by the Protector General of Emigrants, Govt. of India. Do not deal with him unless he is registered and the registration is valid. In case of doubt, check with any of the offices of the Protectors of Emigrants (POEs) or the Protector General of Emigrants (PGE).
- DO NOT deal with sub-agents as they are not permitted under the Emigration Act, 1983 and Rules.
- Ask the Recruiting Agent to show you the Demand Letter and Power of Attorney from the foreign employer.
- Also carefully go through the Employment Contract detailing the salary/wage levels and other service conditions.



- DO NOT pay the Agent anything other than the service charge more than the equivalent of his wages for forty-five days as offered in the employment contract, subject to a maximum of twenty thousand.
- Make payments preferably by Demand Draft or Cheque and obtain a receipt.

Complaints of overcharging or cheating can be lodged with the concerned POE or with the Protector General of Emigrants (PGE).

### **Check before Departure**

- Ensure you have a valid Passport at least for six months. A valid Visa must be either stamped on or accompany your Passport. Always keep a photocopy of your Passport and Visa.
- You must possess a copy of the Employment Contract signed by you and your foreign employer duly attested by the registered recruiting agent.
- Insist on a copy of Employment Contract in English duly authenticated by the recruiting agent.
- Open a Savings Bank N.R.E. Account in one of the Banks in India to enable you to send your remittances from abroad.
- Get familiar with local labour laws, working and living conditions of the country of employment. Keep complete address of the Indian Embassy there, with you.

### **In the Country of your Employment**

- Obtain a Resident Permit or Identity Card, Labour Card or IQUAMA.
- DO NOT part with your Passport and copy of Employment Contract signed by you in India.
- DO NOT sign any other Employment Contract or any blank paper.
- DO NOT strike work or resort to agitations. These are illegal under Qatar's labour laws. You could be arrested, imprisoned and also deported.
- AVOID all contacts that may result in AIDS – a dreaded disease.
- Keep in touch with the nearest Indian Mission and report any complaints about non-payment or delayed payment of wages or compensations or any other problem to the Indian Mission.

### **Customs Formalities**

- Personal baggage – Customs checking is VERY STRICT. Kindly co-operate with the Customs staff at the International Airport.
- Ensure that you do not carry any narcotics or alcoholic drinks. Alcohol is strictly prohibited. Its consumption is a serious offence attracting severe punishment.
- DO NOT accept any unchecked parcel from any one. If you have to take a parcel for someone, check thoroughly that it does not contain alcohol or narcotics. Otherwise, it may land you in serious difficulties on arrival in the country of employment.

## Precautions

- You must make and keep a photocopy of all the pages of your Passport. DO NOT lose your Passport or its photocopy.
- In case you misplace your Passport, inform the nearest Indian Mission immediately giving them details, i.e. Passport number, date and place of issue, your name and date of your entry in to the country of employment. You can give these details only if you keep a photocopy of your Passport.
- DO NOT lose your copy of Employment Contract. Make photocopies and keep them with you always.
- You must have a full name, address, telephone/fax number of your foreign employer, before you leave India.
- If you have difficulty in locating your foreign employer, contact the nearest Indian Mission immediately.
- DO NOT accept temporary or permanent employment with another person or establishment other than the sponsoring Company/ establishment/ person. Employment with persons other than your original sponsor is strictly prohibited and attracts severe punishment.
- Before the Visa or Employment Contract expires, get them renewed. If you are returning to India for a short while during the tenure of your Employment Contract abroad, ensure that the validity period of Visa does not expire before you return to the country of employment.
- Ensure also that your Passport is valid. Get it revalidated from the concerned Indian Mission abroad or from the Regional Passport Office (RPO) in India, at least two months before its expiry.

## Embassy of India, Doha

Villa no M-12, Street no-42  
Wadi Al Neel, Old Hilal Area  
Doha(Qatar)

Telephone : 00-974-44255777; 44255700 (After office hours)  
Fax : 00-974-44670448 (General); 44672684 (Consular)  
E-Mail : ambassor@qatar.net.qa, amb.doha@mea.gov.in (Amb); indembdh@qatar.net.qa (General); hoc.doha@mea.gov.in (HOC); indfscm@qatar.net.qa (Commercial); cons.doha@mea.gov.in (Consular)

## Important Contacts

Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs  
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New Delhi-110021

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Protector General of Emigrants  
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

Ph: 91-11-26874250  
Fax: 91-11-24197984  
Email: pge@moia.nic.in

### **List of Offices of Protector of Emigrants in India**

1. Protector of Emigrants, New Delhi  
Jaisalmer House, Canteen Block,  
Mansingh Road, New Delhi 110001.  
Ph. 011 – 23382472  
Fax 011 – 23073908
2. Protector of Emigrants Bombay,  
Building E, Khira Nagar,  
S V Road, Santa Cruz (West), Mumbai, 400054.  
Ph. 022 – 26614393  
Fax: 022 – 26614353
3. Protector of Emigrants Thiruvananthapuram,  
Sugandh, 24/846 (1), Thycaud,  
Thiruvananthapuram – 695014.  
Ph. 0471 – 2741790
4. Protector of Emigrants Kochi,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Putherikal Building,  
Market Road, Kochi 682035.  
Ph. 0484 – 2360187
5. Protector of Emigrants, Chennai,  
TNHB, Ashok Nagar Shopping Complex (Annexe)  
Ashok Nagar, Chennai 600083,  
Ph. 044 – 24891337
6. Protector of Emigrants Chandigarh,  
Kendriya Sadan  
Fifth Block, Ground Floor,  
Sector 9A, Chandigarh- 160017.  
Ph. 0172 – 2741790
7. Protector of Emigrants Kolkata,  
Room No: 18, A-Wing,  
3rd Floor, M S O Building, D F Block,  
Salt Lake, Kolkata 700084.  
Ph. 033 – 23343407
8. Protector of Emigrants Hyderabad,  
Gruhkalpa, Ground Floor  
Opposite to Gandhi Bhawan,  
Nampally, Hyderabad.  
Ph: 040 - 24652557

### **Information Available on the Website of MOIA**

- Revised emigration requirements
- Recruiting agents having suspended RC
- Online emigration clearance system
- List of Registered recruiting agents with valid RC at [poeonline.gov.in](http://poeonline.gov.in)
- Internal watch-list of recruiting agents
- Recruiting agents having cancelled RC
- Foreign employers on PAC
- Project Exporters at [poeonline.gov.in](http://poeonline.gov.in)
- Emigration Act, 1983
- Emigration Rules, 1983
- Pravsi Bharatiya Bima Yojana
- Redressal of Public Grievances Information on Recruiting Agents and Black Listed Foreign Employers
- Guidelines for recruiting agents/guidelines for prospective Emigrant workers.

Public can address their queries and grievances at [indianemigration @ nic.in](mailto:indianemigration@nic.in)

## **Part – II**

### **QATAR**

#### **Introduction**

Qatar is a peninsular state in the northeastern coast of Arabia bordered on the south by Saudi Arabia and surrounded by the Persian Gulf on the other three sides. Qatar has a population of 750,000. It has an area of 11,437 sq km. The capital of Qatar is Doha.

#### **History**

Qatar has a history of subjugation by Persians for thousands of years. More recently it came under Ottoman Turks. It was dominated by the Al-Thani family for almost 150 years. It remained a British protectorate till 1971 and became an independent country in that year. For the major part of its history, Qatar had remained a land for short-term settlements by nomadic tribes due to its arid climate. Nomadic tribes and clans camped within small pearling and fishing villages. The clans often clashed with one another, making and breaking coalitions, for making territorial supremacy.

During the nineteenth century, the Al-Khalifa clan reigned over the northern Qatari peninsula. Resentment festered against the Al-Khalifas, along the eastern seaboard of the Qatari peninsula. In 1867, the Al Khalifas quashed the Qatari rebels. The response of the British to this attack set in motion a political process, which ultimately resulted in the establishment of the state of Qatar. Britain tacitly recognized the state. The Qatari negotiator was Mohammed bin Thani, a respected entrepreneur and long-time resident of Doha. His clan, Al-Thanis, who had taken little part in the politics of the region, entered into the diplomatic foray, which ensured the participation in the movement towards the independence of Qatar. Their domination as the ruling family continued. It gained official status as a British protectorate in 1916.

The Emir is the head of the state. Qatar turned into an independent state with significant oil and natural gas reserves and revenues, after independence. During the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the Qatari economy was crippled by the continuous siphoning off of petroleum revenues by the Emir who had been in power continuously since 1972. He was overthrown by his son, Emir Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani in a bloodless coup in 1995. A new Constitution came into force in 2005, providing for a 45-member council, two-thirds of whom were to be elected and one-third to be appointed by the Emir. Elections are expected in 2007.

#### **People**

The Indigenous people of Qatar are primarily of Arab descent and Muslims. The population consists more of expatriates than indigenous people, most of whom are from south Asia (India and Pakistan). Most of the inhabitants of Qatar live in Doha (the capital) though large numbers live also in the other towns and villages of the state, such as Wakrah, Dukhan, Umm Said, AL-Khor and Medinat Shamal.

The expatriate population consists mainly of males and the sex ratio of Qatar is one heavily biased in favour of males: 188 males per 100 females. Similarly, the citizen population, 90 percent of which consists of Shia Muslims, forms only less than 30 percent of the total population. The expatriate population from India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Iran and the European countries comprises besides Muslims, Christians, Hindus and Budhists. Surprisingly for an Arab monarchical state, Qatar does not insist, according to

the Nationality law, on religion as a requirement for a person to acquire citizenship rights. However no foreign missionary groups operate in the country.

## **Religion**

Qatar explicitly uses the Wahhabi law as the basis of its government and the vast majority of its citizens follow this Islamic doctrine, a puritanical version which takes literal interpretation of the Quran and the Sunnah.

All Qatari women wear the black *abaya*; the government however does not impose the style universally.

## **Economy**

Qatar transformed itself from a poor British protectorate depending for livelihood on pearling and fishing into an independent state with significant natural gas and oil revenues and a rich standard of living. Now the country offers several social services to its citizens and all the amenities of a modern nation.

Qatar's national income is derived from oil and natural gas exports. The country has oil estimated at 15 billion barrels, while gas reserves in the giant north fields which straddles the border with Iran, are estimated to be between 800 and 900 trillion cubic feet. Qatar has the highest GDP per capita in the Middle East. Qatar is also one of the two lowest taxed sovereign states in the world.

The country has been striving to stimulate the private sector and to develop a "knowledge economy". In 2004, it established the Qatar Science and Technology Park to attract and serve technology-based companies and entrepreneurs, from overseas and from within Qatar. Qatar also established an "education city" which consists of an international college. For the 15<sup>th</sup> Asian Games in Doha, it established a "sport city".

The monetary unit of Qatar is Riyal. The Qatari Riyal is equivalent to Indian RS 12. The per capita GDP of the state was more than US \$ 20,300 in the year 2006.

Climatic conditions are hospitable in the country. Most of land lies flat in barren deserts covered with loose sand and gravel. The summer is the hottest season. Natural hazards like dust storms and sand storms are common.

Only 1 percent of the total land area is arable. Five percent of the land constitutes permanent pastures. The rest of the land is used for other purposes. Only 1 percent of the national income is derived from agriculture and other primary sector activities. Forty nine percent of the GDP comes from Industry and 50 percent from services according to estimates made in 1996.

## **Telecommunications**

Qatar has a modern Telecommunication system centered in Doha. They include a Tropospheric scatter to Bahraini micro-wave radio to relay to Saudi Arabia and UAE, submarine cable to Bahrain and UAE, satellite earth stations, Intelsat and Arabsat. Internet Qatar uses smart filter to block websites the country deems inappropriate to Qatari interests.

## **Public holidays**

Weekend	:	2 days (Friday, Saturday)
Independence day	:	1 day (September 3)
Eid ul –fitre	:	4 days
Eid ul- Adha	:	4 days

## **Laws**

Penalties including prison sentences and deportation are given to drug offences, homosexual acts and import of pornographic material, pork products, alcohol and firearms.

## **Customs**

Arab customs are different from those in India. Efforts should be made to adapt to the customs and behaviour of the region.

Qatari laws are comparatively liberal. Women are allowed to drive cars which they are not, legally, in Saudi Arabia. Qatar is the first country in the Gulf region, which allowed women the right to vote. Women are permitted to dress as they please, in public (though Qatari women don the black *abaya*). Qatar's laws tolerate the consumption of alcohol to a certain extent. Public bars and nightclubs operate, but only in expensive restaurants.

## **Dress**

There are different ways of dressing for local and expatriate women. Outside the home, Arab women dress according to religious custom ie they must cover most of the body, from head to foot. The traditional black overgarment (*abaya*) is ankle length with long sleeves and a high neckline, and the hair is covered. Some Arab women (especially Saudis and those with strictly religious husbands) are totally covered, including their face and hands. This is to protect women from unwanted attention.

Foreign women can wear western clothes but should always dress conservatively.

Arabs proscribe clothes for women which reveal the shoulders, arms and legs. Any woman dressing provocatively will be regarded as being of 'easy virtue' or perhaps even as a prostitute. In the home, Arab women often adopt western dress, particularly younger women, and there are no restrictions on dressing for foreign women in private.

Arab men wear the *thobe* (a loose, ankle-length robe). It can be worn for all occasions, including social and business. The traditional head covering is the *guthra* (a white or red and white checkered cloth) held in place by the *agal* (a black 'rope'). Arab men wear casual dress on very informal occasions or at the beach.

Foreign men are not expected to wear Arab garments. Men should avoid wearing shorts and sleeveless shirts in public. However, suits are rarely worn in the Gulf, except for important business meetings and related social events. Standard dress in the office is a shirt (usually long-sleeved), tie and lightweight trousers.

## **Forms of Address**

It is important to greet local people in the correct way. It is important to address a person by his full name, particularly on formal occasions and in correspondence. The general formal address is Sayyed (sir) for men and Sayeeda or Sayeedity (Madam) for women, followed by the person's full name. Rulers are addressed "Your Highness (Your Majesty). Senior members of the ruling families are called your Excellency followed by Shaik and their full name.

## **Greetings**

The most common greeting in the Gulf is *Salam alaykum* ('Peace be upon you'), and the correct reply to which is *Wa alaykum as-salam* ('And upon you be peace'). Other common greetings and the accepted replies are:

Greeting	Meaning	Reply
Ahlan wa sahan	Hello	Ahlan bik
Sabah al-khayr	Good morning/afternoon	Sabah an-nur
Masa al-khayr	Good evening	Masa an-nur

Note that *tisbah ala-khayr*, meaning 'good night', is said on parting, as in English, and the reply is *wa inta min ahlu*.

You should always shake hands when greeting and parting from Arab men. In the case of Arab women, you should be guided by the woman's behaviour: many Arab women won't shake hands with non-Arab men, although educated women might. This is normal even with close friends whom you meet frequently.

If the handshake you receive when leaving somebody is longer than the one you received when meeting him, it indicates that you've made a good impression.

Incidentally, newcomers should note that refusals or protracted reluctance to meet people are frowned upon.

Note also that you shouldn't approach Arab women, look at them or talk to them unless you've been properly introduced.

After handshaking, it's customary to enquire after the other person's health and other matters, and you should expect similar enquiries to be directed at you.

(Don't enquire after the health of the female members of an Arab's family; restrict your questions to those regarding the family in general or the sons.) This may take a long time, as neither party wishes to be the one to draw matters to a close.

Foreigners aren't expected to know or use all the subtleties this ritual involves, but you will make a good impression if you learn at least some of the standard expressions and use them in the correct way.

Whether in face-to-face conversation or speaking to people on the telephone, don't talk business straight away; if you do so, Arabs will assume that you're impatient or not interested in them personally.

### **Hands & Feet**

You should accept refreshment whenever it's offered, but note that you should always use your right hand for drinking and eating, as the left hand is regarded as unclean (as it's used for 'toilet purposes'). Similarly, you should avoid showing the soles of your shoes or feet, which implies that you think the other person is 'dirty', which is obviously highly offensive. You should therefore keep your feet flat on the ground and not cross your legs.

### **Invitations**

If you're invited to the home of an Arab, you should always accept.

You should generally take every opportunity to become acquainted with local people and avoid the natural tendency to stay within the social and physical confines of your foreign 'ghetto'.



Your Arab host will be interested in you and your views. However, you should avoid politics and religion as subjects for discussion; your opinions might be regarded as ill-informed or even offensive, even if they seem acceptable to you from a western perspective.

When you enter the *majlis*, the reception room for visitors, you should always remove your footwear, unless the host indicates otherwise.

If you're with a female companion, she will be whisked off to join the women.

You will almost certainly be offered something to drink and perhaps eat; accept the offer.

Arabs are almost always polite and expect the same from those they meet, and believe that sharing a meal with a person positively affects the relationship.

It's certainly worth learning enough Arabic to communicate the pleasantries, greetings and responses of the country you're living in.

You will enjoy people's reaction and your hosts invariably offer encouragement to those who attempt to speak their language. It's important to note, however, that the Arabic language has a special significance, having been designed to carry the word of God, so it's important to use it respectfully.

You should never visit an Arab's house without warning him that you're coming. If the women of the family are present, this won't be appreciated.

You should also avoid expressing admiration for any of your host's possessions, as tradition dictates that he must then offer it to you. Although this tradition isn't followed by everybody, it can nevertheless cause embarrassment. What's more, the correct response is for the recipient to give an even more valued gift in return, so think twice before admiring an Arab's Rolls Royce!

### **Don't Dos**

You should also heed the following warnings:

- Don't offer alcoholic drinks to an Arab, unless you're certain that he drinks alcohol. This can cause great offence.
- Don't walk on a prayer mat or in front of any person at prayer and try not to stare at people who are praying.
- Don't try to enter a mosque without first asking permission. It's unlikely that you will be allowed in.
- Don't try to enter the Holy sites or mosques. The roads are well signposted to notify everybody of this restriction. If a non-Muslim is found within the prohibited areas, he's likely to be assaulted and will be afforded no protection against the assailants.
- Avoid blasphemy, particularly in the presence of Muslims.
- Avoid putting an Arab in a position where he might suffer a 'loss of face' in front of other Arabs. He will appreciate this, if he notices your action.
- Don't beckon to people with a finger, as this is considered particularly impolite. Arabs might use such a gesture to summon a dog.
- Avoid shouting and displays of aggression or drunkenness at all times, as such behaviour is rarely tolerated.

- During Ramadan, don't eat, drink or smoke anywhere where you can be seen by Muslims during the hours of daylight and don't engage in any noisy behaviour or embrace or kiss anyone in public.

Used personal effects are allowed duty-free importation, provided the customer intends to reside in Qatar for at least 12 months and that the items have no commercial value and are not for re-sale.

Normal customs clearance takes approximately 5 to 6 working days for sea shipments and 2 to 3 days for air shipments. Customs remain closed on Fridays, except for live animals.

All prohibited articles detained by customs may be destroyed without consignee's consent.

### **Prohibited Items**

Weapons, firearms and ammunition (even decorative items of this nature) Alcoholic beverages, Pork products, Narcotic drugs, Wireless transmitters and Communication equipment, Pornographic or political material, Explosives, Any item made of ivory, all printed matter, records, films, books, pictures, tapes, slides, movies, videos, compact discs, computer software, etc. are subject to censorship and confiscation (must be packed separately for easy access). If caught with any of these items, the customer will be subjected to severe penalties and possible jail term.

### **Education**

Education is compulsory for all Arab residents between 6 and 16 years of age. Parents are offered options to choose from different curricula, study atmospheres and student activities.

Higher education has registered great progress in Qatar. There are two campuses (one for each gender) of the University of Qatar, besides private colleges and Universities. The "Education City" offers the best Western education through world's leading universities.

In Qatar, there are no restrictions on the movement of people. All residents and visitors should carry a form of ID, such as a driving licence. Qatari culture expects respect and politeness from all in public behaviour.

Although Arabic is the official language, English is widely spoken. English may be used in communications with local people, and in shops, restaurants, supermarkets, pharmacies and other places of commerce. A few words of courtesy in Arabic will be highly appreciated.

Qatari nationals dress in the Arabic style; men wearing the *thobe*, the *gutra* and the *agal*, and women the *shayala* and the *abayah*. Expatriates are free to wear they feel like wearing, but appropriate to the Qatari sense of decency and decorum. The Dress should not be revealing or provocative. Men generally wear long pants and shirts. Women's dress should cover shoulders and knees. For business attire, men usually wear suits. Working women tend to wear items similar to those they wear, back in their home countries.

Physical contact between men and women in public is discouraged, including hand-shaking. Local people are opposed to strangers taking their pictures without prior permission. The taking of photographs of sensitive sites or people, such as the police force or the armed forces, should be avoided.

The documents that expatriates should bring with them to Qatar include the following.

Valid passport of the employee and all the members of family who want to live in Qatar. Upon arrival in Qatar, passports must have a validity period of at least six months.

Copies of marriage certificate, highest academic diplomas/certificates and birth certificates, and birth certificates of accompanying dependent spouses and children.

In order to speed up immigration processing, it is advisable to bring 24 passport size photographs of the expatriate and each member of his family.

Proof of blood type (for immigration processing and processing of driving licence application). A blood donor card or medical documentation would also suffice. A statement of physical and mental fitness obtained from personal physician on relocating to Qatar.

Employees and other relocating members of the family should take a medical examination by personal physician within four weeks prior to departure. In addition, Qatar's Immigration services will perform tests on Chest-Xray, HIV/AIDS antibodies, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Blood typing, Statement of fitness; Inoculations against Typhoid, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Influenza, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Polio and Pneumovax are advised.

#### **Model Labour Contract**

Embassy of India  
P.O. Box 2788, DOHA, QATAR Telex No. 4646 INDEMB DH  
Telephone No. 672021 GRAM : INEMBASSY DOHA  
Fax No. 670448

#### **Employment Contract**

On the day Corresponding Between:

1. Mr . ..... in his capacity as First Party .....

2. Mr. .... Personal/family identity card  
No. .... Holder of Passport No.....Living in India

Address .....Second Party

The two parties agreed on the following:

.....  
.....

The Second party agreed to work for the First Party in the occupation in the State of Qatar.

#### **I. Duration of Contract**

- a. The duration of this Contract is one year/two years effective from the date Second Party arrives in Qatar. The Contract terminates with termination of its duration without further notification. If the First Party desires the continuance of the Contract he shall notify the Second Party, in writing, about this desire for the renewal at least

thirty days before the termination of the Contract. The Contract shall be renewed for a further period subject to mutual agreement of the First Party and the Second Party.

- b. The Contract may not be cancelled before its termination without the consent of the two parties, and the Second Party will have to pay before he finally leaves the work all his debts payable to the First Party.

## **II. Travel Charges**

- a. The First Party shall undertake to pay the travel costs of the Second Party from the City of.....in India to the Place of work in the State of Qatar and the return air passage. The employer shall also bear the travel costs of the worker from the State of Qatar to India and back to Qatar on leave periods as provided for in the individual employment contract. These costs do not include expenses for acquiring a Passport or paying any insurances.
- b. The First Party will be exempted from paying the return air passage in case the Second Party cancelled the Contract before its termination for unlawful excuses or in case his service is terminated for reasons defined by the Law such as breach of employment contract or for any of the grounds stated in Article 20 of the Qatari Labour Law.

## **III. Advances**

- a. The First Party shall pay to the person of the Second Party, if he desires, an advance of.....in ..... currency (about the salary of one month) before his travelling and to be deducted from the dues of the Second Party by monthly instalments to the amount of 10% (Ten Percent) of the basic salary.
- b. The deduction of instalments shall take effect from the salary of the month following the start of the work of the Second Party.
- c. The preceding two terms are applicable to loans paid to the Second Party in Qatari currency.

## **IV. Wage and Gratuity**

- a. The basic pay is ..... per month/day as for the forty eight normal working hours per week. The Second Party shall have a paid weekly rest-day every Friday. He shall also receive payments as for the overtime in accordance with the Qatari Labour Law.
- b. For workers of production or piecework or task work. The basic pay is .....as for the accomplishment of daily average performance according to trade or occupation as follows:-. Additional pay shall be paid as for the amount of work accomplished by the Second Party exceeding the preceding daily average performance as follows:-

In case there is no work by production the pay of the Second Party will be .....Qatari Riyals.

- c. The First Party shall undertake to put down in writing in a special card the daily overtime as provided for in paragraph (a) or the amount of work accomplished per

day paragraph (b). The card shall be handed over to the First Party at the end of the day for registration and thereafter handed back to the Second Party.

- d. End of Service Gratuity .....

#### **V. Accommodation and Living**

- a. The First Party shall undertake to arrange a free single accommodation for the Second Party and to supply it with beds and water closets according to health conditions.
- b. The First Party shall undertake to provide the Second Party with cold drinkable water.

#### **VI. Medical and Social Care**

- a. The First Party shall provide the Second Party with free necessary medical treatment at the hospitals of the State of Qatar.
- b. The First Party shall provide the Second Party with medical first-aid at the residence of the latter under the supervision of he who is assigned by the First Party.
- c. The First Party shall undertake that the Second Party shall receive his payable indemnity for labour accidents, disability or death arising out of service or as a result of his service.

#### **VII. Holidays**

- a. The Second Party shall be entitled to a normal annual leave not less than two weeks with full pay.
- b. The Second Party shall receive full pay in the following official holidays:- **Eid Al-Fitr (Lesser Bairam) Three Days Eid Al-Adha (Greater Bairam) Three Days Eid Al-Istiqlal (Independence Day) One Day**

The Second Party shall also have three other days of holiday with full pay during the year. These three days are to be declared by the Government or decided by the employer to all workers.

- c. Under the provisions of the Qatari Labour Law, the Second Party shall be entitled to paid sick leave after six months continuous service with the First Party. The sick leave shall not be adjusted against annual leave.

#### **VIII. General Provisions**

- a. The Second Party shall undertake to perform his work according to daily average performance in his occupation. In case he fails to carry out this daily average performance he shall be subject to the table of penalties in this regard.
- b. In the course of contract the Second Party shall not have the right to work for others, and the First Party shall not have the right to hire out the Second Party to any other employer.
- c. The Second Party shall undertake to refrain from interfering in political or religious affairs and he will have to respect the local customs and traditions.
- d. This contract is in conformity with the format ratified by competent authorities in the two countries.

- e. The Qatari Labour Law and its executing regulations shall be considered as the legal basis of the text of this contract. There shall be recourses to the law in respect of any dispute between the two parties unless the terms of this contract provide better benefits for the Second Party.

This contract is made in Arabic and English Versions and issued in one original and three copies, one copy to be given to the Second Party.

**First Party - Employer**

Second Party - Worker

Authentication

Embassy of India Doha (Qatar)

Department of Labour, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Govt. of the State of Qatar  
Doha

**Indo-Qatar Labour Agreement**

India and Qatar signed a Labour agreement in 1985 with a view to regulate the flow of Indian workforce and to protect the basic interests of labourers from India and their Qatari employers. India was the first non Arab country to enter into a labour contract with Qatar.

According to the labour agreement the sponsors in Qatar are required to execute an employment contract as prescribed indicating, inter alia, salient features like wages and other benefits. The contract is first required to be attested by the Department of Labour in the Government of the State of Qatar and is then presented to the Indian Embassy for further attestation. On the basis of such attested contract the sponsor can either arrange recruitment of manpower through the Government of India or its agent or an agent registered with the Government of India or directly from the market.

In the event of dispute between the employee and the sponsor or in the event of the breach of employment contract, the Department of Labour, Government of the State of Qatar intervene and adjudicate, failing which the case is referred to the Labour Court for a decision.

As envisaged in the Agreement the First Joint Committee was held in Doha in 1988 and the second meeting of the Committee would be held soon in New Delhi.

The Indo-Qatar Labour agreement does not cover drivers, cooks, houseboys and housemaids. It is in the interest of these categories of workers to check with this Embassy the bona fides of the prospective sponsor before they proceed to Doha on employment. They also need to sign the employment contract duly attested by the Qatari Labour Department and Indian Embassy in Doha before their travel to Doha. Embassy will not be able to protect effectively the interest of the nationals who travel to Doha for employment with out employment contract and other proper documents.

**Proposed Wages for Workers**

Category	Approx. Wages
Labourers/Unskilled Workers/Housemaids	QR 550-850/-
Semi-skilled workers	QR 700-1200/-
Skilled Workers	QR 850-1500/-
Foremen/Supervisors	QR 1300-2200/-
Drivers	QR 800-1250/-
Clerk and Salesmen	QR 1200-1800/-
Steno-Secretary	QR 1600-2400/-
Engineers	QR 2400-4000/-

### **Do's and Don'ts**

- You can be arrested if you do not carry your Iqama (Residence Permit) at all public places.
- Qatar Government does not allow changes of sponsor and on the termination of your contract, even if it is premature, you must leave the country.
- People seeking employment in Qatar must sign the employment contract in the prescribed format before their travel abroad.
- Non-payment or delayed payment of wages must be reported to the Embassy immediately.
- All cases of death and birth should be registered with the Embassy without delay

**In order to allow the consular and labour sections to better help and serve you please register with the embassy as soon as you arrive in the country.**

### **Indian Community Benevolent Fund**

PO Box 2788 DOHA (QATAR)

The Indian Community Benevolent Fund is a voluntary organization set up to ameliorate the sufferings of unfortunate Indians who fall victims to circumstances beyond their control. Established in 1988 by some of the prominent and well-to-do members of the Indian community under the umbrella of the Embassy, the Fund has been administered and run by the Community. It provides relief and financial assistance in appropriate cases to the deserving Indians in distress including but not limited to the following:

3. Financial assistance towards medical expenses of persons suffering from a life threatening disease or permanent disability.
4. Financial assistance to the dependants of poor Indian nationals who die in Qatar.
5. Provide succour and relief to the victims of unnatural deaths or natural or man-made calamities.
6. Financial assistance in certain deserving cases of deportation and for disposal/transportation of bodies of deceased Indian nationals.
7. Emergency assistance in the form of cash, food, transportation, clothing and items of basic necessities.
8. Assistance in such other circumstances and subject to such terms as the members may decide from time to time.

The Fund has provided assistance to over 1700 Indian nationals to the tune of QR 500,000/- and plans to broaden the spectrum of the activities to provide legal assistance to the unfortunate Indians who fall victim to circumstances beyond their control.

The membership of the Fund is open to all Indians.

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