SOUTH INDIAN Bank
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NRI CONNECT

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H1B VISA REFORMS 2025: AN NRI PERSPECTIVE

CONTENTS

H1B VISA REFORMS 2025: AN NRI PERSPECTIVE

Key Changes in the H1B Program

The H1B visa program has experienced significant updates in 2025, reflecting evolving U.S. immigration priorities. These reforms include new fees, a wage-based lottery system, and revised eligibility rules, each of which has implications for Indian professionals and NRIs pursuing work opportunities in the United States. Understanding these adjustments is essential for planning career paths and evaluating potential international assignments.

Employer Costs and Implications for Professionals

One notable change is the introduction of a $100,000 fee for any new H1B petition filed on or after September 21, 2025, while renewals or extensions with the same employer remain exempt. Although discretionary exemptions exist for cases of national interest, the criteria are not clearly defined. For Indian professionals, this means employers may exercise greater selectivity in sponsorship, particularly for junior or entry-level roles, affecting career prospects and workforce planning.

Wage-Weighted Lottery and Eligibility Adjustments

There is a proposal to replace the traditional random lottery with a wage-weighted system. Applicants with higher salary offers receive more entries in the lottery, while lower-paid candidates receive fewer. This shift emphasizes competitive remuneration and is designed to align visa allocation with market demand. For NRIs and international students, it underscores the importance of strategic career choices and informed negotiations with potential employers.

Redefining Specialty Occupations

In addition, the Department of Homeland Security has refined the definition of "specialty occupation." Degrees must now demonstrate a direct connection to specific job responsibilities. This measure ensures that H1B visas are utilized for roles requiring specialized knowledge, making it essential for professionals and employers to clearly articulate the alignment between qualifications and job duties.

Strategic Considerations for NRIs

The reforms are expected to influence talent mobility, with some professionals exploring alternative destinations such as Canada, the UK, Australia, and Singapore. NRIs planning long-term careers in the U.S. may benefit from early awareness and professional guidance, allowing them to make informed decisions about employment, visa strategies, and investment opportunities. Staying updated on policy changes and aligning career plans accordingly can help maintain flexibility and resilience.

Closing Thought

The 2025 H1B reforms emphasize specialized skills and competitive remuneration. For Indian professionals abroad, the key takeaway is that awareness, preparation, and adaptability are essential. By understanding these changes and planning strategically, NRIs can navigate the evolving landscape while safeguarding professional ambitions and long-term opportunities.

THE RBI's STEADY HAND AND WHAT IT SIGNALS FOR GLOBAL INVESTORS

The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee, in its latest review, chose to keep the repo rate unchanged at 5.50 percent, maintaining a neutral stance. The pause follows the 50 basis-point rate cut earlier this year, and reflects the central bank's cautious optimism. The decision reflects confidence in the economy's ability to sustain growth while keeping inflation largely in check. For NRIs, this steady stance offers reassurance that India remains committed to policy stability, a factor that supports predictable returns on deposits and investments and maintains the country's appeal as a resilient emerging market.

Policy Beyond Interest Rates

The central bank's guidance went well beyond interest rates. It underscored an effort to balance growth with prudence through initiatives that strengthen financial stability and facilitate smoother cross-border transactions. RBI's continued emphasis on liquidity management, digital oversight, and financial inclusion reflects a maturing monetary ecosystem, one where stability is not passive but strategic. For overseas investors and NRIs alike, this signals India's gradual alignment with global best practices in monetary governance.

Trade in Rupees, Think in Global Terms

Recent updates have advanced India's push toward rupee-based international trade. In August 2025, the RBI allowed surplus balances in Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs) - used by foreign banks to settle rupee trade - to be invested in government securities. An October amendment expanded eligibility to corporate debt instruments. These measures make the rupee trade more flexible and attractive for foreign participants. For NRIs engaged in global business, such steps mark a steady move toward the rupee's growing international relevance.

Simpler Rules, Broader Access

The rationalisation of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) proposes to simplify how cross-border transactions are managed. A new draft framework expands the scope and eligibility for Authorised Dealer licences and introduces a "Forex Correspondent" model to widen access to foreign exchange services. These measures aim to simplify compliance, improve efficiency, and enhance transparency in global financial dealings. For NRIs, it means faster, more reliable remittance and investment processes, making India's financial ecosystem easier to navigate and more attuned to international needs.

Reading the Broader Message

Together, these moves signal a steady reform-anchored policy direction built on stability, simplicity, and global confidence. The RBI's approach blends caution with optimism, avoiding abrupt shifts while gradually expanding the channels through which capital and commerce can flow. For investors observing from abroad, this signals not just resilience but consistency, a quality that often determines long-term trust in a financial ecosystem.

Closing Thought

The RBI's latest policy decisions show that steadiness, when backed by thoughtful reform, can be a powerful catalyst. By holding rates steady, simplifying foreign exchange rules, and encouraging rupee-linked trade, India is building a framework where growth and governance reinforce each other. It is a message of confidence for those who engage with India from afar, a sign that opportunity thrives best where stability leads the way.

News Corner

India to launch first household income survey in over five decades to track welfare impact

Survey to capture earnings, government cash transfers, and welfare benefits across states

ISHAAN GERA
OCTOBER 16, 2025 / 15:41 IST

Income survey to capture government incentives

India is preparing to launch its first comprehensive Household Income Survey in more than five decades. The landmark exercise aims to map how

Tariff rollercoaster prompts Chinese exporters to 'give up' on US

AI-generated illustration for representational purposes only.

Synopsis

Chinese exporters are shifting focus to Europe, Latin America, and other regions due to unpredictable U.S. tariff policies. Despite finding new markets, many report significant drops in order volume and revenue, with some even selling at a loss. The instability has led many to abandon the U.S. market, not by choice, but because American buyers have

Exports (Photo | Freepik)

Business

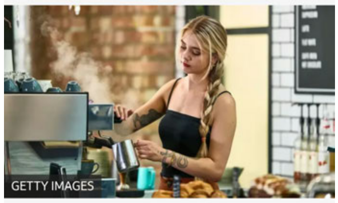
US tariff taking toll on India's export, trade deficit widens to 13-month high

Department of Commerce ca[…] the impact of the US tariff will be even significant in the coming month

Pushpita Dey
Updated: 15th Oct, 2025 at 11:54 PM

India's merchandise trade deficit widened all-time high in 13 months to $32.15 billion in September, primarily due to the impact of US tariffs, fall in petroleum exports and sudden

UK economy grew slightly in August ahead of key Budget



Nick Edser
business reporter

16 October 2025

The UK economy grew slightly in August, official figures show, as focus intensifies on what measures the government might unveil in next month's Budget.

An increase in manufacturing output helped the economy expand by 0.1%, the Office for

Vehicles stop at a red traffic light, a day after an Israeli attack on Hamas leaders, in Doha, Qatar, September 10, 2025. REUTERS/Ibraheem Abu Mustafa. Reuters

ECONOMY

Qatar GDP to grow by over 6% in 2026: IMF forecast

Qatar's current account balance is expected to be 10.8% this year and 10.2% in 2026

Staff Writer, The Peninsula

Inflation eases across India, but these states are still feeling the heat

Synopsis

India's retail inflation hit a 99-month low in September. However, some states saw higher price increases. Kerala experienced a surge driven by gold prices. Jammu & Kashmir and Punjab faced rising costs due to fuel and light categories. Rural areas in several states also recorded more inflation than urban centers. This data comes from the Statistics Ministry.

Canada stressing domestic security in India dealings, Canadian FM Anita Anand says

Anita Anand, the Canadian minister of foreign affairs, speaks to Reuters during an interview in Mumbai, India, October 14, 2025.

Synopsis

As Canada seeks to enhance its international standing through strengthened relations with India, the government is placing a firm emphasis on security and law enforcement at home. With

In China, global companies struggle as home-grown brands steal thunder

Synopsis

Global giants are grappling with the complexities of the Chinese market. Economic downturns and tepid consumer spending are compelling brands like BMW and IKEA to innovate and rethink their strategies. As local competitors swiftly rise, claiming significant portions of the market, the landscape is becoming increasingly competitive.

Gold price prediction: Gold rate to fall big in second half of 2026, predict experts

Gold rate. (AI image)

Synopsis

Gold rate has surged 61 per cent year-to-date. Will gold price continue to rise in the long run or there will be a slide? Experts have made predictions.

Trump says price of Ozempic will be lowered

Synopsis

President Donald Trump announced that the price of Novo Nordisk's popular weight-loss drug will be significantly reduced. Negotiations for price changes are expected to be rapid. The company has engaged in discussions with the administration regarding drug pricing. The focus remains on improving patient access and affordability of these medications.

RBI repeats pre-market dollar sales, reinforcing support for rupee

Synopsis

The Reserve Bank of India actively sold U.S. dollars before the market opened on Friday. This move reinforced its commitment to supporting the Indian rupee. The intervention helped the rupee open stronger against the dollar. This action follows similar pre-market interventions earlier in the week. The central bank's strategy signals a shift in its approach to managing the currency.

LIST OF CORRESPONDENT BANKS WITH SWIFT ARRANGEMENT

Currency Details	Bank & Address	SIB's A/c no. with them	SWIFT Code
USD (US Dollar)	**J P MORGAN CHASE BANK NA, 383 Madison Avenue New York, New York 10179 ABA Routing Number: 021000021**	906918203	CHASUS33
	The Bank of New York Mellon (BNY Mellon), 240 Greenwich Street NY 10286, USA ABA ROUTING NO: 021000018	803-3162-716	IRVT US3N
	Standard Chartered Bank, One Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10010-3603 ABA ROUTING NO: 026002561	3582021649001	SCBLUS33
GBP (Pound Sterling)	**J P MORGAN CHASE BANK NA, 25 Bank Street, Canary Wharf London United Kingdom E14 5JP IBAN: GB03CHAS60924280035960**	80035960	CHASGB2L
	Standard Chartered Bank, 1 Basinghall Avenue, London EC2V 5DD, United Kingdom IBAN Number: GB88 SCBL 6091 0412 6928 56	01269285601	SCBLGB2L
EURO	**J P Morgan SE , Taunustor 1,** 60310 Frankfurt am Main , Germany, IBAN: DE55501108006231419232	6231419232	CHASDEFX
	Standard Chartered Bank (Germany) GMBH, Franklinstrasse 46-48 60486 Frankfurt /Main, Germany, IBAN:DE40512305000018160002	018160002	SCBLDEFX
JPY (Japanese Yen)	**Standard Chartered Bank,** 21st Floor Sanno Park tower Tower 2-11-1 Nagatacho, Chiyoda-ku Tokyo 100-6155 Japan	23762101110	SCBLJPJT
CAD (Canadian Dollar)	**The Bank of New York Mellon(BNY Mellon),** 240 Greenwich Street NY 10286, USA	8033060042	IRVTUS3N (Intermediary bank:- Royal Bank of Canada, Toronto ROYCCAT2)
CHF (Swiss Franc)	**Zurcher Kantonalbank,** Hardstrasse 201, Zrich (Prime Tower) IBAN Number : CH9500700070001284444	0-0700-01284444	ZKBKCHZZ80A
AUD (Australian Dollar)	**State Bank of India,** Suite 31.02, Australia Square,264, George Street Sydney,NSW 2000, Australia	30113039120001	SBINAU2SXXX
AED (UAE Dirham)	**Mashreq Bank,** P O Box1250, Riqa, Diera Dubai, UAE, IBAN No : AE960330000019030000172	019030000172	BOMLAEAD
SGD (Singapore Dollar)	**DBS Bank Ltd** 12 Marina Boulevard, Marina Bay Financial Centre Tower 3, Singapore-018982	037-003682-0	DBSSSGSG
SAR (Saudi Riyal)	**Al Rajhi Bank,** Head Office, Al Olayia Main Street – Riyadh, Al Akaria Building 3, P.O. Box 28, Riyadh – 11411 Saudi Arabia.	IBAN: SA0780000100608010055456	RJHISARI

LIST OF EXCHANGE HOUSES/BANKS HAVING RUPEE DRAWING ARRANGEMENT WITH SOUTH INDIAN BANK

Country	Name of the Bank/ Exchange Company	Remittance Facility
UAE	Hadi Express Exchange, P.O Box 28909, Dubai, UAE Ph: 00971-43537650	SIB Express
	Al Ahaliya Money Exchange Bureau, P.O Box 2419, Abu Dhabi, UAE Ph: 00971-26270004	SIB Express
	M/s. Khalil AL Fardan Exchange, Shop 06 Yousufnasser Abdulla, Al Nasser Building Al Sabkha, Deira Dubai	SIB Express
	Al Fardan Exchange Company, P.O Box 498, Abudhabi, UAE Ph: 00971-26223222	SIB Express
	Al Ansari Exchange, Head office, P.O Box 6176, Dubai, UAE Ph: 00971-26224421/26108888/43772666	SIB Express
	Sharaf Exchange LLC, P.O Box 29040, Dubai, UAE Ph: 00971-43554560	SIB Express
	Lulu International Exchange LLC, P.O Box 4059, Plot No. C-210 Muroor Road, Abu Dhabi, UAE Ph: 00971-26421800	SIB Express
	Joy Alukkas Exchange, P.O Box 171468, Bur Dubai, UAE Ph : 00971-42522900	SIB Express
	Lulu International Exchange LLC, P.O Box 4059, Plot No. C-210 Muroor Road, Abu Dhabi, UAE, Ph: 00971-26421800	SIB Express
	M/s. Horizon Exchange, S112 R13 Building Karama Shopping Complex, Dubai, UAE	SIB Express
	GCC Exchange, P.O Box 41704, Al Sabkha, Deira, Dubai, UAE	SIB Express
	Delma Exchange, P.O Box 129869, Abu Dhabi, UAE Ph: 00971-26225511/26225544	SIB Express
	Federal Exchange, Mohammed Bin Zayed City, P.O. Box 29407, Abu Dhabi, UAE. Tel : +971 2 555 8851	SIB Express
	M/s Send Exchange, Zayed 1st Electra Street, Khalfan Megar Al Suwaidi Building, Abu Dhabi, UAE	SIB Express
	M/s DAR Exchange, Abu Baker Al Siddique Street, Deira Dubai, P O Box 87073, Dubai, UAE	SIB Express
	Al Jaber Exchange, Unit No G15, Ground Floor, Mazyad Mall, 79 street, Mohammed Bin Zayed City, Abudhabi	SIB Express
	M/s. Baniyas Exchange, Units No 8 And 9 Ground Floor, Bldg Mohammed Mubarak Al Mansoor,UAE	SIB Express
	M/s. Al Bader Exchange, Unit No 1, Ground Floor Building of Ali Saeed Al Badi Mahdar Al Maryah, Street Abudhabi, UAE	SIB Express
	M/s. Xpress Money Services LTD, Unit 209 210, Al Sarab Tower, ADGM Square Al Maryah Island, Abudhabi, UAE	SIB Express
	M/s. Salim Exchange, Salim Exchange Management Office 703 Al Hisn Tower, Rolla Sharjah, United Arab Emirates	SIB Express
Kuwait	UAE Exchange Centre, Kuwait, P.O Box 26155, Postal Code: 13122, Safat, Kuwait, Ph: 00965-22459417	SIB Express
	National Exchange Co., P.O Box 11520, Postal Code: 15355, Dasma, Kuwait SIB Express Ph: 00965-5736603	SIB Express
	M/s Kuwait Asian International Exchange Co W.L.L, Office No. 48 Adel & Anwar Mustafa Thunayan Al Ghanim Complex, Street 7 Block 73, Fahaheel Area, Kuwait Tel: +965-23912944	SIB Express
	M/s Wall Street Exchange Co WLL, P.O. Box : 29942, Safat, 13160, Kuwait Tel:+965 1822055 Ext. #115	SIB Express
	M/s. U J Exchange Company, Hawally, Tunis Street, Block 7,Al-Fajr complex -Shop 24, Safat13127, Kuwait Tel: +965 22286600 | +965 60724866	SIB Express
	M/s. Al Zamil Exchange Company, Shop 00011 Sadoun Aljasem, Alyaqoub Fahd Alsalem St Qibla, Kuwait. Ph: +96597893745	SIB Express
Oman	Joyalukkas Exchange LLC (formerly Majan Exchange LLC) P.O Box 583, Postal Code: 117, Sultanate of Oman. Ph: 00968-24794017	SIB Express
	Oman International Exchange, P.O Box 994 Postal Code: 114, Hay Al mina, Sultanate of Oman, Ph: 00968-24834954	SIB Express
	Hamdan Exchange Co., Head Office, P.O Box 190 Postal code: 211, Salalah, Sultanate of Oman Ph: 00968-23211258/24830893	SIB Express
	M/s Wasel Exchange SAOC, PB 3548, PC 112, Ruwi, Muscat, Oman. Ph: 00968 9263 8801	SIB Express
	M/s Purushottam Kanji Exchange Co LLC, P O Box 41, Postal Code100, Sultanate of Oman	SIB Express
	M/s. First Exchange LLC, Building No 3146, Way No 3727 South Ghubra, Muscat, Oman.	SIB Express
Bahrain	N.E.C BSC (c) (formerly Nonooo Exchange Co)., P.O Box 11970, Manama, Bahrain Ph: 0097317230905	SIB Express
	Zenj Exchange Co., P.O Box 236, Manama, Bahrain Ph: 0097317224352	SIB Express
	M/s Bahrain India International Exchange Co. BSC (c) , P.O Box :3204, Manama, Kingdom Of Bahrain	SIB Express

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Country	Name of the Bank/ Exchange Company	Remittance Facility
Qatar	Al Fardan Exchange Co., P.O Box 339, Doha, Qatar, Ph: 00974-4335117	SIB Express
	Gulf Exchange Co., P.O Box 4847, Doha, Qatar Ph: 00974-4383222	SIB Express
	City Exchange Co., Near Arab Roundabout/Souq Al Najadah, P.O Box 16081, Doha, Qatar Ph: 00974-4435060	SIB Express
	M/s Al Dar for Exchange Works W.L.L, P.O Box 24048, Nuaijah, IBA xBuilding, C-Ring Road, Doha, Qatar Ph: 00974-4566514	SIB Express
	M/s Islamic Exchange Co., P.O Box 80925, Doha, Qatar Ph: 00974-4422718	SIB Express
	Al Sadd Exchange, Post Box.17127, Al Ameer Street, Fareej Al Soudan , Doha– Qatar Ph: +974 44323334	SIB Express
	Doha Exchange Co WLL, Al Jasra Souq Waqif, Doha, Qatar +974 44510733	SIB Express
	M/s. Global For Exchange And Money Transfer Services, Al Mansoura Area Ibn Dirhem P O Box 280, Doha , Qatar.	SIB Express
	Habib Qatar International Exchange Ltd, G – 038, Ground level, City Centre mall, West Bay- Dafna, Doha, Qatar	SIB Express
Saudi Arabia	Al Rajhi Bank, P.O Box 28, Riyadh 11411, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ph: 0096612116000	TT (Swift)
	Arab National Bank, P.O Box 56921, Riyadh 11564, Saudi Arabia Ph: 00966590302887	TT (Tele Money)
Singapore	International Exch. Co. (S) Pte Ltd., 111, North Bridge Road, #01-17/18, Peninsula Plaza, Singapore-179098 Ph: 006563387749	SIB Express
Australia	Flyworld Money Exchange Pty Ltd, 49 Princes Highway, Dandenong Vic, 3175, Australia. Ph: 0449 891 010	SIB Express
	PFG Forex Pty Ltd, 189 B South Center Road, Tullamarine, VIC 3043, Australia. SIB Express Ph: +61-3-9001 5864	SIB Express
	M/s. Smart Remittance Pty Ltd, No 1 309 315, George Street, 2000, Sydney, Australia	SIB Express
Canada	Buckzy Payments INC. 67 Young Street. Suite 701, Toronto, ON M53 1J8. Ph: 91 98470 41060	SIB Express
	M/s U Remit International Corporation, 1500-4, Robert Speck Parkway,Mississauga, L4Z 1S1, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Ph No: +971 544465611	SIB Express
United Kingdom	M/s GCC Exchange UK Ltd, 90, High Street, Southall, Middlesex-UB1 3DB, United Kingdom Ph : +442085712065	SIB Express
	M/s Direct Remit Limited, 444 Edgware Road, London, W2 1G Ph: +971 527553421, +971 553407625	SIB Express
	M/s KMB International Money Transfer Ltd, 88 Caledonian Road, King's Cross, London N1 9DN, United Kingdom Ph: +44 7309058496	SIB Express
	M/s Horizon Remittance Ltd, 115 Uxbridge Road, London, W12 8NL, United Kingdom. Tel: +44208 746 0588 | Mob +447749475175	SIB Express
	M/s Daytona Capital Management Limited (DCM), WeWork Aviation House, DD-01C102-017, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH, United Kingdom. Ph +44 2032862244	SIB Express
	M/s Teeparam exchange Limited, 261 London Road, Croydon London, Pin CRO2RL, United Kingdom	SIB Express
	M/s Shift Financial Services Ltd, 200 First central, 6th floor, Office 22, Lakeside Drive, London, England, UK, NW10 7FQ	SIB Express
USA	M/s Muthoot Finserve USA INC, 1407, Oak Tree Road, Iselin, New Jersey, 08830, USA customersupport@muthootgroup.us Ph 91-8137990642	SIB Express
	M/s Wall Street Finance LLC, 1055 Westlakes Drive, Suite 175, Berwyn, PA19312, USA Ph: +1 267 205 2213	SIB Express
Seychelles	M/s Raji Exchange Limited, K B Emporium Building, Rue de Diolinda, Providence Industrial Estate, Mahe Island, P O Box 1212, Victoria, Seychelles Ph No: +248 2505020	SIB Express
	M/s. Vision Money Transfer Limited, Sound and Vision House, P O Box 708, Victoria Mahe Seychelles.	SIB Express
Jordan	M/s ZamZam Exchange LLC, Wasfi Altall ST, Amman, Jordan (962) 7244844 | (962) 778878878/ 776211343	SIB Express
Kenya	Flex Money Transfer Limited, Suite 13, 4th Floor, The Greenhouse, Ngong' Road, Nairobi, Kenya Ph: +254 203861100 | Office Mobile: +254781304137	SIB Express
Uganda	M/s. Upesi Money Transfer U Limited, Shop Number 106 Plot 13, Mukwano Courts Kampala, Uganda	SIB Express

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