

Global BRIEF



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QATAR: PROPOSAL WILL REQUIRE A MEDICAL FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS WITHIN 3 DAYS NOT 3 MONTHS

All foreign nationals going to Qatar for employment will be required to undergo the health check at the Medical Commission within three days of their arrival. This is the proposal to be made by the health authorities to the Ministry of Interior.

Currently the requirement is that new arrivals are checked within three months of their arrival and these health checks are mandatory for all foreign workers who are required to undergo them before the immigration department at the Ministry of Interior stamps the work permit on their passports.

The new proposal includes the suggestion that a stamp or sticker be affixed on the passports of all newly arrived workers at the entry point by immigration officers. This stamp or sticker would explicitly state that the worker has to undergo the health check within three days for the visa on which they arrived, to be valid.

Currently, the Medical Commission screens an average of 1,000 such workers daily. The check includes a chest X-Ray to rule out Tuberculosis and a routine blood check to establish whether the person is infected by HIV, Hepatitis-B and C. If the employee tests positive, they are immediately repatriated.

MEXICO: VISA RULES CHANGE FOR 3 COUNTRIES

Under new immigration regulations issued by the Mexican government last week, tourists and businessmen from Brazil, Ecuador and South Africa will have to apply for three- or five-year visas that allow for multiple entries into Mexico.

ZIMBABWE: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT IMPOSES EXIT VISAS ON ZIMBABWEANS

The new amendments to the constitution empower the government to impose exit visas on those Zimbabweans who wish to leave the country was gazetted into law last week.

This means the government can pass laws to deny passports to certain Zimbabwean individuals deemed undesirable or simply deny them an exit visa when they wish to leave the country.

The Act has been described as the greatest challenge yet to Zimbabweans' liberties by human rights and civic groups.

INDONESIA: ACCOUNTANTS ARRESTED AND JAILED FOR AUDITING ON VISIT PASS

According to the Jakarta Post, two Malaysian accountants were arrested after allegedly entering on visit visas and conducting an audit at a client site. KPMG stated that they were using a short visit visa for business purposes, and that according to their representative was lawful.

The Immigration regulations refer to a Presidential decree No. 103/2003 which permits a visa exemption for short visits and passport holders from Malaysia are among citizens of countries that do not require a work permit based on reciprocal recognition and bilateral arrangements.

The Immigration authorities' position is that under the decree, Malaysian citizens are permitted to enter Indonesia if the purpose of their visit is in the context of recreation or tourism, social-cultural or business reasons or as a governmental duty only and not for audit purposes which is work.

SAUDI ARABIA: BUSINESS VISA REGULATIONS EASED

Saudi Arabia has eased business visa regulations as part of its efforts to attract foreign investment.

The new law allows owners, board chairmen and directors general of foreign companies, as well as investors, to get visas without an invitation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has instructed its missions abroad that they must issue all visas, especially trade visas, within 24 hours. The new instructions abrogate all previous rules related to issuing visas to businessmen and investors.

According to the new instructions, entry visas will be given for business purposes to representatives of foreign companies on the basis of applications presented by the federations of chambers in their respective countries. Company representatives carrying an invitation from a Saudi chamber but which have no business relations with a Saudi firm are also entitled to receive entry visas.

The new rules allow businesswomen and women investors to get entry visas on condition they have a close relative accompanying them or working in the Kingdom or come as part of a business delegation.

Women investors and businesswomen coming without a close relative will be given visas by the ministry or its branches if they have an invitation from a Saudi company.

Business and visit visas would be given for one month or a maximum of three months. The Ministry can issue six-month multiple visas for foreign executives who require more than one visit.

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