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Director's Note

Mr. Vipul R. Kothari
Managing Partner / Director

Kothari Auditors & Accountants
Global Business Services DMCC

In 2018, economic growth of Middle Eastern Economies is expected to rise to 2.4% from a eight year low growth of 1% in 2017. Despite a relatively slow start in 2018 and a heightened geopolitical environment, we expect a positive approach for the year though risk profile shall vary from country to country.

Amongst all, UAE is considered to have the most diversified economy in the MENA region. But it's growth and overall economic activity has weakened with sharp drop in oil prices over the past couple of years. However, in 2018 economy is expected to rise with expansionary fiscal stance at the federal and emirate levels, upcoming trade, expanding tourism environment and a pick-up in investment ahead of Expo 2020 in Dubai.

According to the economists, new UAE investment law will boost FDI inflows, loosefiscal policy and large investments in infrastructure. This shall show a substantial growth in the non-oil economy by supporting private investment momentum. UAE is a highly open economy, with the total value of trade being more than twice the country's GDP. Therefore, the uptick in regional and global economic activity will contribute positively to economic output in the UAE this year.

With extension of the OPEC agreement to end of 2018 and UAE's increasing compliance with the production cuts, which averaged 124% in the first quarter, oil sector growth is expected to be limited this year. GCC budgets get more benefitted from higher oil prices combined with increased output, as it helps reducing pressure on governments to push ahead with further expenditure reform while still allowing budget deficits (and borrowing requirements) to decline.

Consumer's purchasing power has reduced with introduction of VAT in the UAE. Weigh on growth and higher interest rates in the US would also drag on prospects since the dirham is pegged to the dollar and local interest rates closely track those in the US.

Despite all challenges, we believe that later part of 2018 and 2019 should see a momentum of growth. Companies however are advised strict cost control as well as monitoring their liquidity on regular basis.

UAE AND RUSSIA:
VISA EXEMPTION PACT SIGNED

Hosted by Russia, the UAE-Russian Federation Joint Committee was held in Kazan earlier this year and was attended by delegates from both the UAE and Russia.

With a strong focus on promoting bilateral tourism, investment and trade, the eighth session of this committee saw the signing of the mutual exemption of visa requirements for citizens of the UAE and Russia.

Numerous other agreements and memoranda of understanding between the UAE and Russia were also signed during this committee meeting.

Business is booming between the two countries with the total value of non-oil trade between the two countries reaching $2.5 billion in 2017, compared to $2.1 billion in 2016.

Efforts are being made by the UAE to support organizations and businesses to invest in Russia, while simultaneously encouraging to attract Russian investment in to the country.

In all probability the next joint committee meeting is expected to be held in Abu Dhabi.

10-YEAR VISA:
BOOST TO DUBAI'S START-UP SCENE

With the proposed introduction of the 10-year visa the Dubai Government has confirmed its stance for greater innovation in both regulation and technology. And though start-ups can anticipate further positive developments, this is definitely the first step in enabling start-ups to forge an entrepreneurial sprit and drive growth.

Most businesses await a positive return on investment to signal a positive upward growth. On the other hand raising investments for an uninterrupted flow of funds is as important though time consuming. The proposed new 10-year visa rule helps on both these fronts providing time to prove competence and ability and create new investors along with a chance to align their practices and profits.

For start-ups at least three years are needed to raise the first $1 Million and then at least two to three more to strengthen their position and move ahead. This period is a crucial stage of establishing themselves and the new rule provides the necessary breathing space, thus helping build businesses and creating new job opportunities.

Investors can also be rest assured with substantial time to track the progress of the start-up before deciding on investing.

Additionally it will also align basic legal requirements resulting in transparency, guaranteed investor participation and preventing chances of frauds.

The MENA territory has over 3,000 start-ups with the last few years seeing several raise of more than $1 billion thus putting the UAE start-up sector on the global commerce fore front.

Various incubators and initiatives, including the Accelerator Programme from Entrepreneur's Organization (EO) can take credit for this achievement.

With other countries providing start-up visas typically for a 5-year period, Dubai stands to be the preferred start-up destination in the Middle East, bringing more entrepreneurs to its fold in increasing innovation and change. This is an opportunity no start-up can resist

EMERGING MARKET CURRENCIES: TURBULENCE AHEAD

With the last phase of first half of the year seeing emerging markets extend the longest losing streak seen since November 2016; the outlook for the second half of trading for 2018 does not look very promising.

Similarly in emerging market currencies, the Colombian peso is the only tracked currency to have advanced against the dollar year to date whereas the Indian rupee recently dropped to its on record lowest against the US dollar. The euro, the pound and the yuan lost 5% in the second quarter, while the Japanese yen lost 4%, all worrying signs for the developing markets.

For the UAE dirham and Saudi riyal, currencies that are pegged to the dollar, gains are on the rise from other weakened currencies.

The results of the last US presidential elections shocked the world and may well be the reason for the most intense and prolonged period of pressure for emerging markets.

Whispers of a US-China trade war are further hampering investors confidence in developing economies and may potentially damage global economic momentum that is already gloomy since a decade. Poor investor sentiment is affecting traders from taking risks which in turn means less attraction to the stock markets in general, resulting in limited investor attraction to emerging market assets.

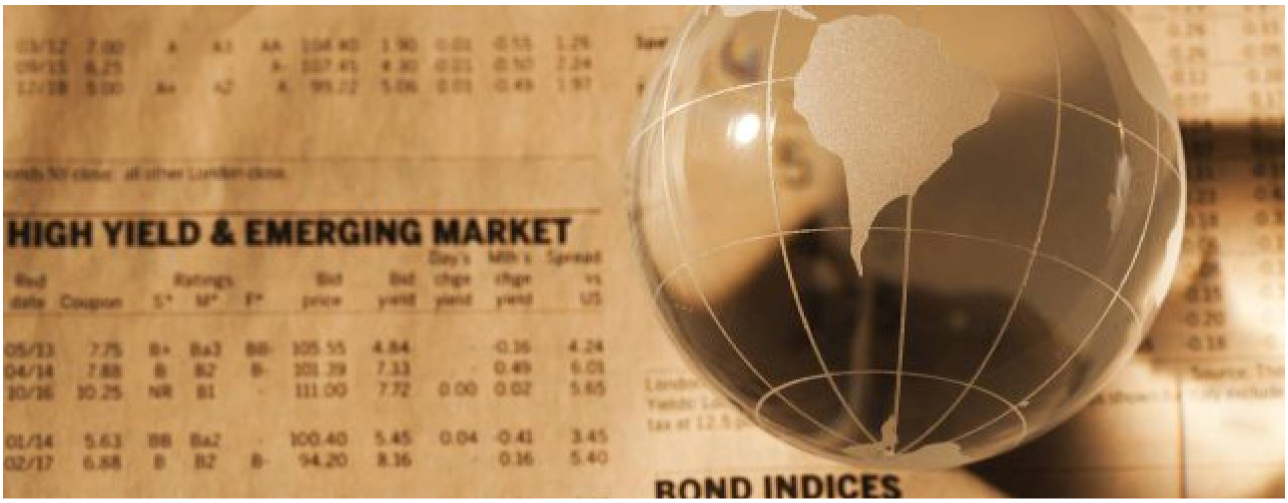
The United States stable latent strength of economic momentum and the Federal Reserves probable higher interest rates have supported the strengthening dollar to a rise of 5% over the past three months, currently being valued around its strongest level in a year and thus pressurizing and negatively affecting a number of different currencies globally.

Further aiding this growth is the increased divergence in economic/monetary outlook based on signs of falling

economic growth in regions other than the US.

The concerns being raised is whether central banks will intervene in the market to protect their respective currencies, either as direct involvement in the foreign exchange market or raising interest rates. In the case of the Reserve Bank of India and Bank of Indonesia this has not resulted in any benefits for their respective currencies.

Only a change in dollar strength can prevent weakness in emerging markets unlike the present scenario where dollar buying continues to be the trend of the forex market.



TIGHT MARKET AFFECTS:
RISE IN OIL PRICES

Ending a rough patch, US light crude futures gained 5 cents to settle at $73.85 a barrel, more than expected for a Canadian production outage lasting until Sept'18.

The global benchmark Brent jumped 96 cents at $78.07, on falling output in Libya and possible sanctions on Iran now that the European and Korean refiners have reduced their purchases to virtually nil.

The United States plans to cut down its oil exports from Iran, the world's fifth-biggest producer, to zero by November, thus pushing other big producers to pump more.

Concerns are there whether the Saudi and Russian increase in production will be enough to offset - not just Iranian production - but also supply disruptions coming in from Libya, Nigeria and Canada.

For instance in Canada, an outage at the 360,000-bpd Syncrude oil sands facility has reduced flows into Cushing, Oklahoma, the delivery point for US futures. Moreover though some Syncrude production is expected online in July, sooner than expected, full operations will not be underway till September, later than expected.

The buoyed prices can also be attributed to the falling production in Libya where oil output has more than

halved in 5 months, falling to 527,000 barrels per day, and further expected to drop every day.

In a bid to dampen price gains and offset global production losses, an understanding to increase output was reached by Saudi Arabia, fellow members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies including Russia.

There are growing concerns in the market that if the Saudis offset the losses from Iran, it will only use up global spare capacity thus leaving markets extra vulnerable to further or unexpected production declines.

US TARIFFS:
GLOBAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY AT RISK

In a start to a trade war between the US and China, tariffs on $50 billion (Dh183.5 billion) worth of Chinese goods were implemented. This is expected to reduce China's gross domestic product (GDP) by 0.2% though the overall impact is expected to be limited.

In response China has imposed tariffs on US goods with the same value, including vehicles and agricultural products.

Another group of Chinese goods worth $16 billion are under review in the US for further tariffs.

China is combating this head on with diversified and flexible monetary policies to achieve their annual growth targets, including the GDP growth rate and inflation level, while controlling the unemployment rates.

With the US violating the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and "trade bullying", in the long run this ongoing trade war is expected to be mutually harmful to both China and the US while hindering economic globalization.

PRICING POWER

These tariffs are expected to largely affect Chinese industries like consumer goods, electronics and manufacturing.

Because of its pricing power, China is confident that the impact is controllable and the Chinese goods are eventually expected to reach American consumers in the absence of alternate products in spite of increased taxes.

GLOBAL DEBT PILE-UP: WORLD BANK CEO CONCERNED

In the wake of global policy tightening cycle, global debt is now a huge concern and after a decade of low interest rates, many places are seeing a staggering $164 trillion of corporate and public debt.

The fourth quarter of 2017 saw the World debt, inclusive of household debt, jumped to $237 trillion, more than $70 trillion higher than a decade ago.

Under pressure, central banks globally are following a Federal Reserve that's raising interest rates faster than initially anticipated thus stressing emerging markets and developing economies.

The period of low borrowing costs hasn't seen policy makers in most economies take advantage and make necessary and required steps. Now there is an immediate need for structural policy changes, including responses to waves of anti-globalization.

Under these circumstances and with still fairly low interest rates countries need to review project afford ability including infrastructure.

Efforts are being made by the World Bank to attract private-sector investors for "blended finance" projects.

THE WORLD BANK

Though the World Bank is concerned about the impact on investor confidence, the advice is to focus on solving problems and relieving anxieties regarding political momentum against trade.

In spite of an existing strong world economy the outcome of the US-China trade conflict is early to predict.

With unchecked growing population adding to 55% of the world's city population, attention to jobs and social protection for the urban poor is critical so that cities can provide for them through infrastructure and employment.

It's encouraging to see China's progress on domestic investment.

Great care is advised to ensure investment abroad doesn't increase debt.

CHINA-ARAB COOPERATION FORUM:
UAE PARTICIPATION

The UAE participated in the China-Arab Cooperation Forum hosted in Beijing.

An impressive attendance of the Arab nations highlighted the historical ties between Arab countries and the People's Republic of China.

Over recent years Arab-Chinese relations had witnessed considerable growth and expansion and China is considered a strategic partner of Arab countries.

This camaraderie is creating a comprehensive strategic partnership across various sectors benefitting both the governments and citizens through opportunities and resources while promoting development and knowledge exchange.

The UAE is interested in developing further ties with China while maintaining their continued and constructive communication on various issues of mutual concern including geographical and political importance of Arab nations and the prestigious role China plays on the global stage.

The core belief lies in the co-ordination between Arab states and China to expand cooperation frameworks to strengthen global security and stability in the face of spreading terrorism and extremism.

INNOVATION IN THE ARAB WORLD: UAE NO. 1

In Global Innovation Index (GII) 2018 edition the UAE successfully maintained its number one position in the Arab world, a reflection of its government digital services, level of local competition, gross expenditure on research & development financed by business and foreign direct investment net outflows.

Its global position is 38th.

The innovation-related performance of 126 countries and economies representing the vast proportion of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is evaluated via this index. 2018's appraisal was based on 80 indices including innovations, institutions, human capital & research, infrastructure, market value, business growth, knowledge & technology outputs, and creative outputs.

The UAE's achievement is largely because of last year's score growth rate of 10%, one of the highest percentage score growth rates among all GII countries. This rating enforces the ongoing efforts made in talent investment and strong associations between the government and the private sector.

There are both short-term and long-terms plans underway to better this position in the GII and 2021 should see the UAE in the top 10 innovation world leader's slab.

These plans include showcasing intellectual property positives, endorsing a cohesive network that aims to promote fundamental research collaboration between universities, the private sector, and the government; identifying, uniting and tracking the results of these innovation-based schemes and facilitate finances through venture capital.

The GII is regarded as one of several key indicators under the UAE National Agenda's 'Competitive Knowledge-based Economy' pillar, being controlled by the Ministry of Economy in partnership with several private and public entities including the Ministry of Education, the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority, the Central Bank, the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization, the Ministry of Finance, the Securities and Commodities Authority, and the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, among others.

MENA PRIVATE EQUITY INDUSTRY:
TOUGH ROAD AHEAD

2016 and 2017 saw the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region fund raising challenges for the private equity and venture capital business because of economic headwinds and geopolitical factors. While seven funds were raised in 2016, the number of closes fell to nine and funds raised were at a low of $582 million, dropping to below $500 million in 2017.

Recent events relating to Abraaj - the region's biggest buyout firm - which is facing litigations from lenders and investors like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and International Finance Corporation (IFC), the World Bank's private investment arm, on charges of loan defaults and combining of funds are expected to further influence investor view points in the long run.

In view of these impediments several general partners (GPs) are turning to source funds through alternate channels including co-investment options.

Tail end of 2016 saw cumulative funds under management of private equity industry in the region increase to $27 billion while four funds disclosed excess of $50 million last year compared to five in 2015. Two funds raised in excess of $100 million, compared to three in 2015.

Substantial profits have been made by venture capital (VC) investments in the MENA region over the last two years and are being favored by regional investors as a go-to asset class.

Venture capital fund raising though shows significant slowdown during the last two years and it is expected that the problems of the PE industry is likely to be reflected in VC fund raising too.

PRIVATE EQUITY INVESTMENTS – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

(quick definitions and meanings of frequently used terms)

PRIVATE EQUITY

Funded by institutional and retail investors and not listed on a public exchange funds and investors that directly invest in private companies or engage in buyouts of these, thus resulting in the delisting of public equity.

LEVERAGED BUYOUTS

A leveraged buyout (LBO) is the acquisition of a company using a substantial amount of borrowed money to meet the acquisition cost. Both, the assets of the company being acquired and the assets of the acquiring company are often used as collateral for the loans. Their purpose is to facilitate companies make large acquisitions without committing large capitals.

VENTURE CAPITAL

Big investors, investment banks and any other financial institutions providing financing for start-up companies and small businesses with long-term growth potential is called venture capital. This may take more than a monetary form and could extend to technical or managerial expertise.

ANGEL FUNDS

Often from the friend or family circle, angel investors invest in small start-ups or entrepreneurs for an equity stake. Mostly these are well-off investors or experienced

industry insiders who take nascent businesses under their guidance. Usually institutional investors such as venture capital funds or private equity funds do not prefer to commit capital to small and unproven businesses and this is where angel investors step in.

GENERAL PARTNERS (GPS) & LIMITED PARTNERS (LPS)

Private equity firms raise private funds in general partnerships and manage the capital categorized as the general partner (GP). In addition to raising the funds and administering the daily operations of the fund, the GP is responsible for identifying and closing on investments, assisting the company management teams in maximizing value, and liquidating investments so distributions can be made out of the partnership to the limited partners.

Investors who invest up to a specific allocation for the fund become limited partners of the general partnership. In context of private equity (PE), a limited partner (LP) is a third party investor in a private equity fund.

SEYCHELLES INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMPANIES (IBC)

1. SYNOPSIS:

Seychelles is an archipelago located northeast of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean. The archipelago is approximately 2.5 times the size of Washington, DC. It is comprised of over one hundred islands. The total population of Seychelles is approximately 79,000. The weather ranges from humid to tropical marine. The government type is a republic. The capital city of Seychelles is Victoria.

Seychelles is one of the newer offshore center in the world and benefits from it's extensive offshore legislation.

2. THE SEYCHELLES INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMPANIES:

A Seychelles IBC has the following characteristics:

a. Shareholders:

A minimum of one shareholder is required and can issue shares in registered form. No details of the shareholders appear on the public file but a register of shareholders must be kept at the registered office address of the company in Seychelles. Corporate shareholders are permitted.

b. Directors:

A minimum of one director is required and corporate directors are permitted. Details of Director is required to be filed in Seychelles Registry within 90 days after the company is incorporated. Details of the directors do not appear on the public file.

c. Officers/Secretary:

The secretary may be a natural person or body corporate, be of any nationality and need not be resident in the Seychelles.

d. Restrictions on Name and Activity:

Names must end with one of the following words, or abbreviations thereof – Limited, Corporation, Incorporated, Societe Anonyme or Sociedad Anonima. A wide variety of other suffixes such as BV, GmbH, and SARL may also be used if desired.

The following words and their associated activities cannot be used: Assurance, Bank, Building Society, Chamber of Commerce, Chartered, Co-operative, Fund, Imperial, Insurance, Municipal, Mutual Fund, Royal and Trust or it can not have any word which implies that a licensable activity is being undertaken.

e. Local Requirement:

As a matter of company law the IBC MUST maintain a registered office address within Seychelles and must also appoint a Seychelles resident as registered agent. We would generally provide these services as part of the domiciliary service fee.

The details of where the accounting records must be maintained via Board of Resolution, otherwise the Company will be subjected to penalties. Any change in this address must be notified within 14 days.

f. Timescale:

Incorporation can be achieved within 24 hours. However, it does take approximately 1 week for documents to arrive from Seychelles. We do keep ready-made companies in stock available for immediate purchase.

g. Annual Reporting:

No accounts need to be filed but annual returns are required to be filed. It should be noted that penalty fees will be incurred if the license fee is not paid when due.

h. Taxation:

An IBC is exempted from local taxation.

Seychelles IBC's are non-resident companies and hence not entitled to tax residency certificate and also can not avail benefits under any Double Tax Avoidance Agreements.

I. Confidentiality:

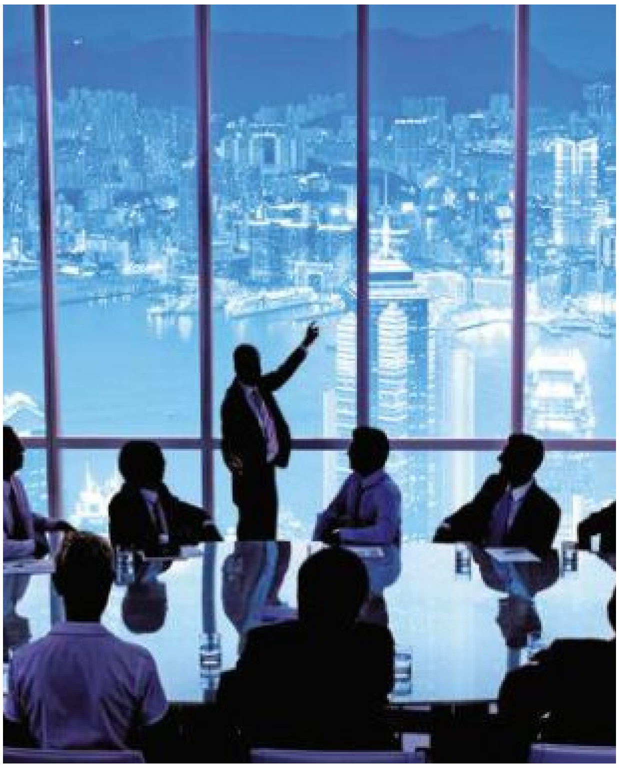
The Republic of Seychelles is an independent country. As such, it is not sharing or reporting information to any overseas "principal", or organization. Seychelles is not subject to the EU Savings Tax Directive, unlike some other offshore tax havens related to the EU member states (primarily, to the UK and its overseas territories).

Seychelles has avoided entering any information-sharing agreements with foreign countries or organizations for exchange of financial aid. Client on fidentiality is robustly enshrined in the Seychelles corporate and business legislation.

j. Company Renewal:

Renewal for Seychelles Offshore Companies falls every anniversary date of incorporation. Late payment of the Government duties in Seychelles will result in a 10% penalty fee if the payment is up to 90 days late, and 50% late penalty fee, if the payment is over 90 days late. After that time, the Registrar of Companies will proceed to strike-off the company from the Registry for non-payment of fees.

Declaration of annual returns, Latest valid passport copy and recent utility bill for address proof of shareholder/director are required to be submitted at every renewal as a part of enhanced due diligence. If shareholder is a corporate entity, then latest certificate of incumbency and above stated docs of directors would be required.



k. Required Documents:

KYC Documents for individual Director/Shareholder

- Passport – original to be verified personally in our office, otherwise client can provide an original notarized copy of the passport
- Proof of address (in the form of utility bill, dated less than 3 months)
- Bank reference (dated less than 3 months with satisfactory record clearly mentioned and also the time period the client has been dealing with the bank: minimum of 2 yrs)
- Detailed CV
- Professional reference letter (can be issued by Lawyer or Certified Public Accountant)
- Dully filled FATCA Form
- Notarized US Declaration (if a US Person)

KYC for Corporate Director/Shareholder
- Certificate of Incorporation
- Registered address and place of business
- Certificate of Current Standing if incorporated more than 1 year
- Register of Directors
- Register of Shareholders
- Memorandum & Articles of Association

All documents of the corporate entity must be certified by a Lawyer or Certified Public Accountant .

SETTING UP A COMPANY IN DUBAI WORLD TRADE CENTRE

About Dubai World Trade Centre:

Dubai's very first major Tower and Business centre, the Dubai World Trade Centre building instantly became the heart to dubai's growing global business community. The Dubai World Trade Centre has played a pivotal role in the growth of international trade for the Middle East, ever since inauguration in 1979. A focal point for overseas businesses to establish their presence in a country rich with opportunity, the Dubai World Trade Centre embodied HH Sheikh Rashid Al Maktoum's vision of a modern city that would attract the world's leading companies.

With over 30 years experience and more than one million square feet of multipurpose space and some of the world's most high profile events, a destination in it self, DWTC hosts more than 500 events across international trade fairs, mega consumer shows and prestigious conventions and welcomes more than 3 million visitors from 160 global markets every year.

The key benefits to establish a business in DWTC is as follows: 100% corporate tax, personal income tax and import/export tax exemption, 100% foreign ownership, 100% repatriation of capital and profits, no currency restrictions, strategic location in the heart to Dubai and one of the largest events management free zone.

Location	:	Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, (U.A.E.)
Proposed activity	:	Trading/Service/Consultancy/Event activities can be carried out
License available	:	Commercial, General Trading & Professional License can be obtained
Types of entities	:	FZE (Single Shareholder), FZCO (1-10 shareholders) & Branch office
Shareholder	:	Can be Individuals or Corporate entity/ Combination of both
Director	:	Individuals only (Minimum one. Shareholder can also be Director)
Share capital	:	AED 300,000/- in case of FZE & FZCO & AED Nil/- in case of Branch office (Required to be deposited in Bank before or after incorporation). Do note that shares are deemed to be issued on incorporation of the company irrespective of whether share capital is deposited in bank pre or post incorporation.
Audit	:	Annual audit report to be filed by FZE & FZCO. Not required for Branch office.
Estimated time	:	1 week for incorporation & setting up company. Another 10-15 working days for immigration card subject to security clearance & thereafter Visa may take approximately 7-10 working days on normal basis.

Doc's required:

Shareholder: Individual	Shareholder: Corporate
a. Letter of authorization & intent	a. Letter of authorization & intent
b. Application form to be duly filled & signed	b. Application form to be duly filled & signed
c. Company Profile	c. Company Profile
d. Passport copy with visa page of manager/director	d. Passport copies with visa page of owners/directors/manager
e. Tourist/visit visa copy of owners / directors / manager	e. Tourist / visit visa copy of manager/director
f. Entry stamp page for owners/directors/manager	f. Entry stamp page for manager/director
g. Immigration detail with name in arabic & UID number for owners/directors/manager	g. Immigration detail with name in Arabic & UID number for manager & director
h. NOC for manager / director if holding UAE visa & current sponsor trade license copy	h. NOC for owners/directors/manager if holding UAE visa & current sponsor trade license copy
I. 1passport size photo with white background for manager & director	I. 1 passport size photo with white background for owners/directors/manager
	j. Following doc's of corporate entity to be attested with UAE Consulate in country of corporate entity & MOFA COI / MOA / AOA / POA / BR / COGS

Note: All share holders (or authorized attorney in case shareholder is a corporate entity) are required to personally visit and sign in presence of licensing authority before in corporation of the company. Alternatively they can issue a POA duly attested by UAE consulate in their country of residence & thereafter attested by UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

INDIAN AND PAKISTANI CURRENCIES: THE ROAD AHEAD

THE INDIAN RUPEE

The Indian rupee could have a potential year-end target of 72-75 considering the following:

- The Reserve Bank of India is doing neither of the two for the Indian rupee – intervening to defend a specific level or aggressively raising rates to defend it and seems ok with the depreciation of the rupee, in context to the dollar and the fall of the Chinese yuan to 6.7.

- India is the highest-valued emerging global market. The withdrawal of offshore funds from Dalal Street's debt and equity market is expected to escalate for the rest of the year and continue to pressure the Indian rupee.

- Petroleum product imports compromise 70% of the Indian current account. Thus high oil prices could see the current account deficit rise to 2.5% of GDP.

- On one hand tax collection post-GST is well below the annual tax revenue targets and on the other pre-election spending on rural payouts and welfare programs is at a high, resulting in deterioration in the Indian budget deficit.

- With a strengthening dollar, the US global trade war and monetary tightening by the Federal Reserve, the Indian government's budget deficit targets have gone up from 3 to 3.3% resulting in the yield on the 10-year G-Sec note possibly rising to 8.25%. In spite of the yield on the benchmark 10-year G-Sec note having risen 140 basis points since early 2017 there is expected selling pressure in the Indian government bond market and a rise in the budget deficit to 3.5% of GDP.

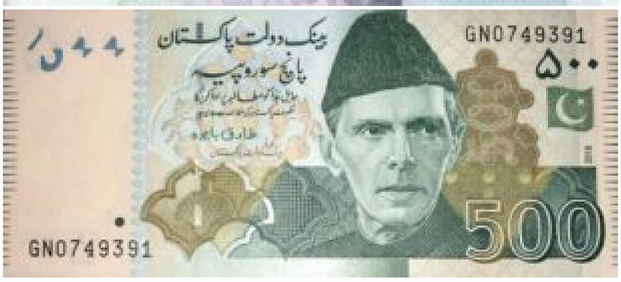
- Because of the depreciating Chinese yuan amplifying selling pressure on all Asian currencies against the rising dollar, the Indian rupee is being overvalued relative to its real effective exchange rates by the least 5%. Adjusted for inflation, the REER suggests a 70 spot rate for the Indian rupee.

- With the ruling party facing elections in key states such as Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, foreign sentiment to hold rupee assets will be soured.

THE PAKISTANI RUPEE

The State Bank of Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have dropped to a merely $9 billion or only a two-month import cover.

Prevailing market scenario is expected to affect the rupee exchange rate and it is expected that the State Bank will allow the rupee to depreciate despite three successive devaluations since Mar'18.



On the other hand, Government's policy of a de facto rupee peg at 105 enabled the Pakistani elite to divert billions of dollars abroad via an overvalued rupee while buying "undervalued" luxury imports.

Amidst all the political uncertainty the turnover on the stock exchange is a mere $30 million and the possibility of no emergency IMF bailout is high.

On the probability of a Chinese hard landing and the reality of higher US interest rates, the worst-performing currency in Asia in 2018, the Pakistani rupee is expected to continue to depreciate in 2018, possibly down to an IMF-mandated level of 132-136.

UAE VISA RULE CHANGES:
WELCOMED BY UAE RESIDENTS

Major changes in UAE visa rules are being welcomed by the UAE residents and expats wishing to live and work here. The new rules also positively effect the UAE's standing as a land of opportunities and confluence of artists and professionals.

Accordingly a new six-month visa is soon to be in effect that will allow job seekers who have overstayed their visa but want to continue working in the country. For individuals wishing to adjust or renew their visa, a fee will be applicable but without having to leave and re-enter the country.

ADAPTING TO CHANGING TIMES

With evolving times and changing international scenarios, technological advancements, economic conditions and social norms, the UAE's new visa laws will streamline and simplify the process and in turn eliminate or reduce the need for 'fixers'.

These laws will also work in favor of overstaying expats by helping them legitimize their situation and not having them rely solely on complicated rules, inadequate information and humanitarian appeals to do so.

They will also take care of tourists who are actually seeking employment in the UAE but are unable to do so openly and legally.

Planned to be comprehensive and humanitarian in nature, these new laws come as a relief to many while boosting the overall economy through the tourism, hospitality, FMCG and retail sectors by relaxing rules for transit visitors.

TOWARDS A COMPETITIVE GLOBAL LABOUR MARKET

As per UAE's goal of a country that's a haven for the global labour market the new visa rules are expected to foster a larger movement of people, opening avenues for international talent.

A BOOST TO THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

The changes to UAE's visa policy now exempt transit passengers from all entry fees for the first 48 hours and transit visa extension for up to 96 hours for a fee of just Dh50.

This is expected to affect tourism industry positively by attracting a larger number of tourists to visit the country's world-class tourist spots hence escalating the demand for hotels and restaurants.

There are some concerns thought regarding the unscrupulous use of this rule to get labor without actually giving them employment visa.

Counter measures by the government are expected to step in and protect the workers.

VISA AGAINST PROPERTY FOR UAE RESIDENTS

IN CASE OF MARRIED COUPLES WHERE ONE IS A NON-RESIDENT OF UAE BUT OWNER OF A PROPERTY

(a) The title deed of the property owned by the non-resident spouse, affection plan of the property and the legalized marriage certificate copy, along with other documents need to be submitted to the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs in Dubai (DNRD) seeking the approval of the DNRD for residence visa of the non-resident spouse. The non-resident shall also submit a letter to the DNRD, specifying she/he has no objection as the owner of the apartment allowing her/his spouse to reside with her/him in the apartment; or

(b) If the intention is to apply for residence visa for the non-resident spouse under the resident spouse's sponsorship, the non-resident spouse could rent her/his apartment to the resident spouse, and upon obtaining an Ejari tenancy contract, the resident spouse can comply with this particular requirement of the DNRD to sponsor the visa of the non-resident spouse; or

(c) The non-resident spouse can obtain a residence visa against the property she/he owns.

A minimum value Dh1 million finished property that has been handed over to its owner by the developer can be used to apply for residence visa in the UAE, with a validity of two years.

The Dubai Land Department needs to be approached with the original passport, original title deed, NOC from the developer and copy of current visa page (if any).

The letter issued by the Dubai Land Department needs to be first given to the Dubai Police for issuance of a good conduct certificate and later to the Dubai Economic Department along with the relevant documents to apply for an investor license.

Once the investor license is issued by the Dubai Economic Department, the DNRD will need to be approached again to apply for residence visa in the UAE with aforesaid documents.

DRAFT LAW FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE PROJECTS ISSUED BY SAUDI ARABIA

By 2020 Riyadh's privatization program aims to generate 35 billion to 40 billion riyals ($9 billion to $11 billion) of non-oil state revenues.

This is expected to be achieved partially via funds from asset sales and additionally through public-private partnerships (PPPs) - deals where private companies invest in infrastructure and get paid for specified periodic operations before eventually transferring it to the state.

Saudi Arabia published a draft law covering partnerships between the government and private sector in a step towards launching billions dollar infrastructure projects and attracting fresh foreign investment while offering investors exemptions from labor laws, real state ownership restrictions and other regulations.

Modified regulations will also facilitate private investment in Saudi Arabia's mining industries.

As per this draft law state employees may need to be transferred out of projects. Exemptions from meeting minimum requirements for the ratio of Saudi citizens in the workforces may also be offered to some companies thus addressing key concerns for potential investors keen on minimizing labor costs.

Though within the holy cities of Mecca and Medina only limited periods lease is allowed, rules may be relaxed to let foreigners own real estate in other cities.

In a bid to enhance transparency and attract varied bidders, provisions in the draft also allow PPP contracts to appeal awards by the government.

VAT REFUND FOR TOURISTS
GET GO AHEAD BY UAE CABINET

With a contribution of 11.3% to the UAE's GDP in 2017, equivalent to Dh154.1 billion, the UAE tourism industry saw nearly 16 million people visiting Dubai and a further 123 million passengers pass through the country's airports.

To facilitate and promote this growing industry, now tourists visiting the UAE from outside Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, can claim a refund on the 5% value added tax (VAT) they pay whilst visiting the country.

Expected to go live in the coming months this rule will apply on goods bought at “participating retailers.” This service will be run by a specialized international firm covering tax recovery services, linking retail outlets and designated tax refund points.

In order to qualify, VAT executive laws specify these exempted goods to be supplied to the visitor whilst he or she is in the country, at the time of purchase.

Not all goods are exempt from refund and a detailed list is expected from the FTA.

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