

Abu Dhabi to make ID cards mandatory again

Emirates Identity Authority Acting General Manager Dr Ali Al Khoury said the authority had written to the Ministry of Interior to implement an earlier decision in this regard.

- By Binsal Abdul Kader, Staff Reporter
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Abu Dhabi: Identity cards will soon be a mandatory for obtaining Traffic Department services in Abu Dhabi, *Gulf News* was told on Tuesday.

Emirates Identity Authority Acting General Manager Dr Ali Al Khoury said the authority had written to the Ministry of Interior to implement an earlier decision in this regard.

Although the Ministry of Interior (MoI) had made the ID card mandatory for obtaining traffic services on May 2, the decision was put on hold on May 9, due to the crowds gathering at the registration centres of Emirates Identity Authority (Eida).

Police had reported difficulty in controlling the scores of residents who thronged the Emirates Identity Authority centres in Abu Dhabi and Sharjah as they were not able to apply for a driving licence or renew their vehicle registration without an ID card.

However the Roads and Transport Authority in Dubai did not implement the decision.

The MoI made the ID card mandatory for Traffic Department services in four northern emirates — Ras Al Khaimah, Fujairah, Ajman and Umm Al Quwain in November 2009.

MoI representatives were not available for comment on Tuesday.

The Acting General Manager of the Emirates Identity Authority said: "We have requested the MoI to implement the decision first in the Abu Dhabi emirate as we are prepared to receive increased number of applicants due to a new system".

The [mandatory ID card] decision would soon be extended to Dubai and Sharjah.

"There is a way for the Emirates Identity Authority to be aware of the approximate number of applicants who may turn up for registration at the centres in Abu Dhabi," Al Khoury said.

The pre-registration process (PRP) had been transferred to 100 typing centres in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain, which are keeping the Emirates Identity Authority informed about the number of people completing the pre-registrations process, the official said.

Walk-in customers

Although the system has been envisaged as a "registration by appointment only", the Emirates Identity Authority was taking walk-in customers and people who had made an appointment, because of the low-turn out during the summer, Al Khoury said.

"Based on the flow of applicants, we will implement the appointment-only system; an applicant will receive an appointment via SMS within 48 hours after completing the PRP," he said. "So there will be no rush at the centres".

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