

# Eida centres crowded despite ID card reprieve

As *Gulf News* reported on Monday, authorities put on hold an earlier decision making ID cards mandatory for accessing traffic department services in Abu Dhabi and Sharjah, citing the uncontrollable crowds at Eida registration centres.

- By Binsal Abdul Kader, Staff Reporter
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Abu Dhabi: About 2,000 people thronged the Emirates Identity Authority (Eida) registration centre at Al Mushrif in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday morning, despite a reprieve announced by the authorities.

As *Gulf News* reported on Monday, authorities put on hold an earlier decision making ID cards mandatory for accessing traffic department services in Abu Dhabi and Sharjah, citing the uncontrollable crowds at Eida registration centres.

The staff at the centre told *Gulf News* that the new announcement made an impact on the crowd yesterday, though it was not visible.

"There were 3,000 people on Monday morning, which has been reduced to around 2,000 on Tuesday," said a staff member.

But, he said, applicants who turned up only for the sake of accessing traffic services were not convinced about the reprieve.

"[Applicants] said they did not want to take a chance."

The employee said they gave around 1,600 on-the-spot appointments by yesterday afternoon for dates between June 21 and 24, allocating around 400 per day.

The Special Task Force of Abu Dhabi Police, who control the crowds, have been stamping the appointments for the applicants outside the centre to avoid the rush.

Most applicants *Gulf News* spoke to said they were not aware of the reprieve.

Dr Ali Al Khoury, Vice-Chairman of the Higher Management Committee at Eida, told *Gulf News* that certain baseless rumours that spread among some Asian communities caused the chaos. Now, the mandatory ID card norm for traffic services has been put on hold for the time being, he said.

"We came to know that there were rumours that residents' bank accounts will be frozen ... so the salary will be denied for not having ID card etc," Al Khoury said. "Any move to make ID cards mandatory for any other services will be announced in advance and people don't need to panic."

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