

# Etisalat employees working part time without contracts

Hundreds of employees of etisalat's 181 directory service are not under the company's sponsorship, Gulf News has learnt.

- By Bassma Al Jandaly, Senior Reporter
- Published: 00:00 February 9, 2010



Ajman: Hundreds of employees of etisalat's 181 directory service are not under the company's sponsorship, *Gulf News* has learnt.

The call centre employees, who are based in Ajman, say they have never been issued with employment visas or labour cards. They told *Gulf News* they are paid Dh16 per hour but have no contract. Many of them have been working there for more than five or six years.

"I was sponsored by my father," said a 25-year-old Arab employee, who has been at the centre for five years. "I was able to obtain a visa from a company in Dubai and am working at etisalat," he said.

Another employee, who has been working there for three years, said he was sponsored by his father. His sponsorship is going to expire in three months, he added.

A woman employee said she worked for the call centre for one and a half years but has stopped working for them now.

"I was on the sponsorship of my father," she said.

The woman said etisalat told them it was a part-time job.

"Some of us have worked there for more than six years without a contract, visa or even a labour card," she said.

## Illegal practice

"Ministry of Labour inspectors or officials from the residency department have never inspected the centre which is located near the residency department in Ajman," she said.

Ahmad Bin Ali, Vice-President of Corporate Communications at etisalat, said the men and women are employed at etisalat via an employment company. "I have no idea if they

have labour cards or not as we hire them through an employment company. We have no contract with them," he said.

He said they worked for etisalat as part-time employees and that etisalat did not have any information about part-time employees.

"Our relation with them is through the recruitment companies we are dealing with," he said.

Bin Ali said etisalat deals with numerous recruitment companies.

"They are housewives, students and some other people who like to work part time," he said.

He said they have no days off and are paid per hour.

A Ministry of Interior official said this was an illegal practice. All employees must have a contract with the company they work for.

"How will etisalat protect the secrecy of information if the people who are working there are not employed by etisalat," the official said.

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