

Ministry slashes labour card fees for fishermen

Move will help boost fishing; charges dropped to Dh300 per year

- By Bassma Al Jandaly, Senior Reporter
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Dubai: Fees for labour cards for fishermen have been reduced from Dh3,000 to Dh300 per year, according to a new decision by the Ministry of Labour.

An official from the Ministry of Labour told *Gulf News* that the decision to reduce the fees for labour cards for expatriates who work as fishermen was taken to boost the fishing profession which is of high importance in the UAE.

"The cost of labour cards for expatriate fishermen has been reduced to Dh300 per year," said the official.

The official said the decision will be implemented next month.

"That will not put any financial burden on the Emirati owners of boats who are paying the cost of the labour cards for their workers," said the official.

The official said fishermen used to be under the Ministry of Labour's company classification and that put too great a financial burden on boat owners.

Financial pressure

The official said that reducing the fees for labour cards for fishermen was taken by the Ministry of Labour after requests by Emirati boat owners to reduce the financial pressure on them.

"We need to encourage this profession in the UAE as it is one of the main sources of income here," said the official.

He said the ministry is looking to make people's lives easier and to enhance the labour market in the country.

Meanwhile the Ministry of Labour announced the new fees for labour cards and labour permits.

Saqr Gobash Saeed Gobash, Minister of Labour, issued recently a new resolution classifying establishments into groups according to the degree of their compliance with labour legislation, systems and standards, cultural diversity approach and on-time payment of salaries, the provision of accommodation, and Emiratisation quotas.

Gobash said that earlier the fine for the delay in issuing or renewing the labour cards for workers and employees was Dh5,000 per year from the expiry date of the labour card.

Main conditions

Under the new system there will be a fine of Dh1,000 for each month of delay from the date of expiry of the labour card.

According to Article 2 of this resolution all establishments will be exempt from the payment of fees for employing an Emirati.

Gulf News reported earlier that under the new classification system, companies are divided into three main categories; the first group which tops the scale, the second which includes the current three categories A, B and C and the third one which along with the first are the newcomers.

The resolution ranks the firms in accordance with how they meet three main conditions, including the percentage of the workforce which should not be less than 20 from the professional levels (1-2-3) of the total manpower.

The conditions also include that a worker's monthly pay should not be less than Dh12,000 if he is in level 1, Dh7,000 in 2 and Dh5,000 in 3, and the Emiratisation rate should not be less than 15 per cent in these levels.

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