

Recruitment racket: Victims' anguish on record

Reproduced here are the complaints of some of the many victims who contacted us, claiming they have been duped by recruitment agencies

- Mazhar Farooqui, Deputy Editor
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Just a fortnight into our investigation and we are already besieged by complaints from victims detailing how they were duped by fraudulent placement agencies in the UAE.

Scores of victims from various nationalities and backgrounds have contacted us on e-mail and through phone to express their anguish and raise concerns about the recruitment racket. Some like Akbar Pirani came to our office, while others like Mary Cummins and Tawfiq Ahmad wrote to us about their bitter job hunting experiences from foreign shores. Yet there's a common thread that runs through all the complaints: Bring the cheating recruiters to book.

Hundreds of job aspirants fall prey to these bogus recruiting agencies daily. "On a good day, we meet 200 applicants," disclosed a man who works at one such agency in Sharjah.

We hope the voices of those who have written to us are heard and our report marks the beginning of the end of this huge job scam.

-Mazhar Farooqui, Deputy Editor

Victims' anguish on record

Designer duped

I was duped by Foreigners Employment Management & Consultancy after I responded to their advertisement for the job of an interior designer. There was no e-mail or office address in the advertisement - just a telephone number. The advertisement also said there will be no charge from the candidate. I called the number and was given directions to their office in Buhairah Corniche, Sharjah. When I went there I told them I was looking for a job for around Dh9,000, but they straightaway offered me a Dh12,000 job. Then they asked for Dh100. I paid them. The following day, they called me saying that my CV has been shortlisted for the job and I have to come to their office and make a Dh300 deposit. They said if I was not satisfied with the job, I could take a full refund. I blindly paid the money, which they said was just a security deposit. They said I would get a call for an interview soon. But I did not receive any call from them. I called them back on their landline numbers but there was no response. Once a woman picked up the phone

and said she would call back. But she didn't. I tried calling them many times but couldn't get to speak to anyone as their phones were either engaged or just kept ringing. I have the receipt of Dh300 with a "not refundable" stamp, which I did not notice initially in a fit of happiness.

After three to four weeks of continuous follow-up, they sent me for an interview for which I took leave from office. At the interview, I learnt that the salary they were offering was Dh2,000 and not Dh12,000 as promised earlier. It was then I realised that I had been cheated. They're frauds, they have no jobs with them for anyone. I wish I could complain about this to the government. We can save thousands from falling into the trap of such dubious placement agencies.

Surendra Acharya

They made me recharge etisalat card with Dh50

It's true that fraudulent agencies are making money by duping poor job seekers. I was in the UAE between May 21 and August 15 this year and had a bitter experience while hunting for a job. One such company is Al Aidy Al Mahirah. I paid them Dh50 in cash and recharged their etisalat card with another Dh50. A lady there said it was towards registration charges. The next day they called me and asked for another Dh250. But when I said I would pay the amount after I got my first salary, they hung up and never called back.

Another such agency is New Future agency in Al Ghusais opposite Emirates Driving School. They also demand money for job placements. I did not find a good job during my visit and am now back in my home country, India.

Tawfiq Ahmad

The salary was too good to be true

I responded to an advertisement for a customer service executive. They told me to come to the Carrefour Express supermarket building (Dubai Gate) in Sharjah.

I was ushered into a room with several tables. A man who identified himself as Ali said I was suitable for the job and asked me to pay Dh100 so that he could open a file for me.

As I was looking for a job, I paid the money without thinking twice. He even gave me a receipt. After four days I got a call for an interview. When I went back, I was told I had been hired by a British company. The salary was too good to be true. During the interview I was asked where I lived and how I commuted. I was like ... that's not part of the interview. Now I realise they wanted to gauge my living standard. He was so convincing... he said I should pay Dh500. When I said I didn't have any cash, he directed me to an ATM nearby saying they wouldn't send my documents unless I gave him Dh500. After I gave him the money, I realised they were lying... how can they say I've

been selected and still ask for money to send my documents to the employer? I Googled them and my worst fears came true. There were several complaints against them. Later, I called them and enquired about my job. They were rude, very rude. I demanded to speak to their manager. They transferred my call to a guy who claimed he was working on my application. When I confronted him with what the websites said about their company, he said they can't give a job to every Tom, Dick and Harry in Dubai!

The authorities should stop this menace. I hope my story will prompt them to do something about the recruitment racket.

Fatma Ali

I got scared...

I urge the authorities to clamp down on all these fraudulent recruiters. My experience was at Al Aidy Al Mahirah. I paid them Dh100 to register my papers. The following day, they called me saying they had a position for me in a Free Zone. When I went there two days later, they asked for another Dh300. There were over 200 job application forms there, so I got suspicious. I said I was not interested in the job and asked for a refund. They refused and there was a big argument. The in-charge of the place was very rude. He brought all his office staff and started shouting at me. He said I could do anything I wanted but they would not refund the money. I got scared and left.

Pranita Reddy

There was no job

They are 100 per cent cheats. Dubai Gate offered me a position at Royal Hospital after I registered with them by paying Dh300. But later I found out that Royal Hospital never had a vacancy in the first place. I tried to contact Dubai Gate but they never returned my call. My friend was duped by another company. When he went public with his complaint they threatened him, so I decided to keep my mouth shut. But now I want to see some firm action against such recruitment agencies

S. Agarwal

Twin blow

I am on a visit visa and paid Dh400 to Foreigners Management and Dh150 to Dubai Gate earlier this month. But as it turned out, both jobs were fake. I went to the Buhairah police station to lodge a complaint but was instead asked to approach a special section of the Sharjah court where complaints of visit visa visitors are lodged.

I urge the authorities to take stern action against these recruiters who are minting money by duping unsuspecting job aspirants.

Akbar Pirani

I want to teach them a lesson

Al Aidy Mahirah Employment people took Dh400 for a job and now they are not even answering my calls. I am fed up. I paid the amount in January this year. It's been nine months since then. Is there any way I can teach them a lesson, and get my money back?

Aruna

It's a shame

I responded to an advertisement put up by Al Waseela for nurses. The advertisement said no money would be charged by the agency yet they asked me for Dh100. I felt suspicious and decided to Google the name of their company. I found several complaints against them. It is a shame that they are continuing with the racket.

Mary Cummins

Litany of excuses

I paid Al Aidy Al Mahirah Dh100 to register my CV. But when I asked for a receipt, they gave me the company's business card and a number which they said was for my reference. After a few days, they called me for an interview and said that I would get a job with a salary range of Dh3,000-Dh4,000 provided I paid them another Dh300. I gave them the money. When I didn't hear from them, I started calling them every few days to enquire about the progress of my file. One day I got a call from them saying that my interview had been arranged. I was asked to go to Sharjah. When I reached Sharjah, they called me saying that the interview had been cancelled due to external reasons. I got very upset and went to Al Aidy to seek an explanation only to be told that the person in charge of arranging interviews was outside the country. On the internet, I came across several complaints from people who have been duped by recruiters. I went to Al Aidy and demanded a refund. At their office, I was assured by one of their staff members that I would definitely hear from them in the next three days. Of course, this never happened. I visited the company again. This time I met a person called Samy Makram. He was very arrogant and rude. He said that they could only refund half of my money. My only wish now is for authorities to crack down on all such agencies.

E. Mohammad

Double whammy

I was offered an attractive position with British Airways by Dubai Gate after I paid them Dh600 (Dh200 as registration and Dh400 as service charge) earlier this month. Around the same time, I also contacted Al Aidy Al Mahirah who took Dh100 as registration and Dh500 as processing fee for a job with Emaar. When I didn't hear from either of them, I

lodged a complaint with the police and also filed a case at the Sharjah court. After a lot of argument, Al Aidy and Dubai Gate refunded Dh400 each. They are big cheats and it's high time they were brought to book.

Aishwarya

No redressal

I tried to lodge a complaint at the Buhairah police station after being duped by Dubai Gate who had promised me a job with a British company and taken money to register and forward my CV to the client. They said the job was confirmed and I only needed to pay them so that they could speed up the documentation process. But now I know better. The police have asked me to file a case with the court, but I don't want to get involved in what I believe would be a long-drawn-out process.

Hamid Raza

Interview sham

An accountant's position advertised by Al Aidy Al Mahirah clearly said there will be no charge from the candidate, yet when I visited them they asked for Dh100 as registration charge. Three days after I paid the money, they called me, saying my CV had been selected and that I would get a salary of Dh7,000. But when I went to their office they made me pay another Dh400. They said it was their fees to arrange an interview and complete some formalities so that I could join work the following week. I was desperate and paid the money. Several weeks later, I got a call for an interview with a maintenance company in Al Rigga. When I went there I realised that just like the recruitment, the interview was also a big sham. Six of us were interviewed by one man at the same time and for one position. He [the interviewer] was unprofessional and kept laughing all the time. I hope the authorities do something about this racket which is giving Dubai a bad name.

Gulam Mustafa

Ready to testify

I have written on a forum about how Dubai Gate deceived me. I am frustrated. I approached the police and the public prosecution but nothing happened. Should the need arise, I am ready to testify against them.

Tamim Yusufzai

I fell into their trap

I have been cheated by Al Waseela. I came to the UAE seeking a job but fell into their trap. They took Dh500 for a job. But now they're not responding to my phone calls. Please help me get my money back and inform the authorities about their racket.

Nimesh S.A.

I borrowed money to pay them

They (Dubai Gate) promised me the job of a securityman and took Dh400 to forward my CV to the employer. They said my job was confirmed. It's been several days now. They don't respond to my calls any more. I went to their office many times but each time I was given a new excuse. I came here on a visit visa which is expiring next week. If they can't give me the job, they should at least return my money which I borrowed from a friend.

Vijay S.

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