

Saudi man acquitted of theft after three years in jail

Doha court said there had been a “severe technical deficiency” in filing the charges

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Manama: A Saudi man wrongly accused of stealing a mobile phone in Qatar has been released after spending three years in prison.

Doha Court of First Instance said there had been a “severe technical deficiency” in filing the charges against him.

The man's woes started after a resident filed a case in August 2007, claiming that his mobile handset was missing from his office in Maither area, Qatari daily Gulf Times reported.

The authorities passed on to Qtel, the mobile operator, the serial number of the phone and, by using the detection system, the Saudi man was identified as the user of the stolen mobile. He was summoned by the police and presented to the court as a suspect.

The Saudi national kept denying the charges during investigation and also in the court.

After languishing for three years in connection with the case, he was finally acquitted when the court discovered that the 15-digit serial number passed on to Qtel did not correspond to Saudi man's mobile number.

The court observed that there was no witness of the alleged crime and that the plaintiff did not accuse anyone of theft.