

# Do not hire illegal maids, police warn residents

Officials called on UAE nationals and expatriates not to employ anyone living in the country illegally

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- Published: 00:00 June 10, 2010



Abu Dhabi: Make sure that those who work for you at home or at your private business are legal residents, the Interior Ministry has warned the community.

Officials called on UAE nationals and expatriates not to employ anyone living in the country illegally for the sake of their own safety and the safety of the community.

"Those employing illegal residents like infiltrators risk jail terms," an Abu Dhabi police official warned.

Speaking to Gulf News, the official, who asked not to be named, revealed the details of a recent case that put a family through "immense suffering".

"About three months back, a man working at a senior position in a prominent gold jewellery chain came to report a theft of about Dh150,000 worth of valuables from his home on Electra Street.

"The man, an Indian national, said he and his family went on a trip to Dubai and returned to find valuables including — gold ornaments, video camera, laptop — missing from his apartment," the official said.

Through investigation the police found that the family had employed a part-time Sri Lankan housemaid, who never reported to work after the theft.

With this, the whole case changed against the man who reported the crime.

"The man was arrested and presented before the court along with the housemaid who was found to be absconding from her original sponsor for three years."

Later, in court he was fined Dh50,000 and narrowly escaped imprisonment, while the maid was sentenced and is to be deported after serving a jail term, the official said.

Urging residents never to make such a mistake, he added that those who want domestic help must seek legal ways of doing so to keep out from trouble.

As Gulf News had reported, authorities have intensified the hunt for illegal residents as part of a campaign called Sahim that kicked off yesterday. Sahim will continue to run until June 20.

The public have been asked to report immediately any such persons they know of through the dedicated toll free number 80080. Residents who cooperate this way will receive a reward, officials said, without disclosing further details.

Lieutenant General Saif Abdullah Al Sha'afar, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, said in a statement yesterday that the issue of employment of illegal residents and infiltrators is one of the main challenges faced by the security agencies.

**Penalty: Clear stipulation**

The Law of Foreigners Entry and Residence stipulates that anyone who employs or harbours an infiltrator will be given a jail sentence of not less than two months and fined Dh100,000.

According to the same law, any establishment owner who employs an expatriate who is not under his sponsorship or leaves an employee under his sponsorship to work for someone else without observing the conditions set or seeking permission will face a fine of Dh50,000.

Phone: Call 80080 to report illegal residents.

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