

# Oman bans companies from holding staff passports

The ministry has instructed the private sector establishments not make labourers work during noon hours in summer

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Muscat: Oman has declared it illegal to hold passports of expatriate employees.

The ministry has instructed the private sector establishments not make labourers work during noon hours in June, July and August.

Shaikh Abdullah Bin Nasir Al Bakri, Oman's Manpower Minister, and Mohammed Bin Abdullah Al Riyami, Chairman of the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), reviewed means to protect human rights in the country while enforcing the labour laws.

According to an ONA report the two also discussed Ministry's (manpower) role in issuing relevant legislations and regulations that would ensure labour rights, specifically in the private sector.

The meeting also touched on promulgation of the country's General Trade Union and 72 trade unions representing employees in the private sector.

The two also conferred about the need for regulations regarding safety and occupational health regulations for the protection of employees against injuries and disease.

They also dealt with drafting new regulations for foreign manpower recruiting agencies, procedures pursued by the ministry for regulation of labour market and allowing the overstaying expatriates to finally leave Oman by end of September without paying any fees or penalties.

The meeting also focused on the International Labour Agreement on declaration of labour principles and basic rights issued by the International Labour Organisations (ILO) such as the Conventions on Forced Labour, Minimum Age for Employment and Convention on Child Labour Abuse Ban and Convention on Abolition of Forced Labour.

It also viewed the ministry's awareness campaign for employees working in the private sector on their rights and obligations.