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Saudi Arabia: 250 construction workers facing unpaid wages for over 3 months

Report living in desperate conditions, Mecca company warned to settle dues in a week

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Hundreds of workers in a Mecca-based construction company have faced over three months of unpaid wages. Photo for illustrated purposes.

Image Credit: Bloomberg

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Abu Dhabi: Hundreds of workers in a Mecca-based construction company have faced over three months of unpaid wages, local media reported.

This wage abuse, experienced by 250 workers, mostly from Asian countries, was brought to the knowledge of the Saudi Ministry of Human Resources, which issued a stern warning to the company to settle the workers' dues within a week, Al Watan newspaper reported.

The ministry called on all companies to ensure timely payment of workers' wages.

In December last year, Saudi Arabia implemented the final phase of the wage protection programme.

In that phase, companies that employ one to four workers were obligated to deposit the workers' wages in their bank accounts. Thus, all facilities are now bound by such an obligation.

The wage protection system, first introduced in August 2013, monitors the process of disbursing wages for all workers (citizens and residents) in private-sector facilities. It aims to establish a database that comprises updated information about wage payment, and determining the level of commitment by companies towards due payment of wages.

Three months

Workers, most of whom work in the maintenance sector, complained their financial dues have not been paid for the last three months and their financial conditions were getting worse day by day.

They added their burdens increased, especially since many workers have to sustain their families back home, in addition to other financial obligations in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi workers said although the Kingdom approved economic stimulus packages, aimed to preserve the jobs of citizens in the private sector, the company failed pay salaries, under unjustified and unreasonable pretexts.

One of the workers added that failure to pay their salaries is an abuse of their rights and threatens a humanitarian and immoral disaster, calling for the need for immediate intervention to resolve their financial claims, and to respond quickly to their repeated complaints.

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