**Al Naboodah Construction Group Response to Equidem Research & Consulting Report**

***Tuesday, 12th January 2021***: In response to the Equidem Research & Consulting report published recently, in which claims of mistreatment were raised by an individual who claimed to have worked for Al Naboodah Construction Group (ANCG), we would first like to say that we are extremely concerned by these statements. Equidem Research & Consulting did not contact us to verify these claims prior to publishing the report or give us an opportunity to respond to the statements made in the report.

As a Tier 1 Contractor in the UAE, it is integral to Al Naboodah’s reputation in the industry, as a business and as a family, that we maintain the highest levels of employee welfare to be found anywhere in the region. It is a point of pride to our company that we uphold exceptional standards of worker accommodations and worker welfare, and it is distressing to hear that an employee claims to have been mistreated by the company.

An unfortunate reality of the economic downturn and its impact on the construction industry is that we have had to make reductions in our workforce in line with a decrease in our scope of operations, in order to ensure the continued survival of the business. However, this has been achieved as much as possible through a freeze on recruitment and natural attrition.

In the case that we have had to reduce our workforce levels by redundancies, workers are dismissed within the legal framework of their contracts in an ethical and appropriate manner, and all outstanding financial dues, without exception, are paid to them in accordance with UAE Labour Law. Employees are also free to explore other employment opportunities within the UAE but, if they are unable to find alternative employment or sponsorship, they are repatriated to their home country at ANCG’s expense and provided with transportation to the airport.

That being said, we did not terminate any of our employees specifically “due to lockdown”, as claimed by the report. With high-profile and critical infrastructure projects, the majority of our operations continued throughout the pandemic, all in accordance with UAE government directives and our own comprehensive COVID-19 Management Plan, which ensured the ongoing health and wellbeing of our entire workforce across all offices, sites and facilities.

In addition, none of our employees within ANCG were subjected to a reduction in salary at any point during the course of the pandemic. All employees were paid their full entitlement as per their contracts without interruption. We are one of the very few companies to maintain this policy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the case that a dismissed employee was unable to return to his home country due to travel restrictions, they were provided with continued accommodation and catering facilities at ANCG’s employee villages at our company’s expense, until they were able to travel.

While we cannot comment on the case of this specific individual without further details being provided, of particular concern to us is his claim that he was forced to assume debt to pay agents acting on our behalf in order to take on his role with ANCG.

One of our strictest policies on worker recruitment is that an applicant does not incur any costs at all in order to come and work with us. This includes agency and administration fees, flights, accommodation and visa costs. All of these costs are borne entirely by ANCG.

Upon joining the company, a successful job applicant is asked to sign a legally attested affidavit in his country of origin attesting to the fact that he has not been charged any fees by recruitment agents. In addition, as part of the induction process upon arrival at the company, the new recruit is asked again to sign a document in his own language certifying once again that he has not been made to pay any recruitment costs. If, at this stage, an employee claims to have been charged fees, an investigation is conducted.

Our contracts with recruitment agencies clearly stipulate that they do not charge a job applicant fees of any kind. If a supplier has been found to be in violation of these terms, they are removed from our Preferred Supplier List and blacklisted.

Our unparalleled approach to worker welfare is paramount to our reputation as a family company in the UAE, and to our working relationships with our key partners, including EXPO 2020, Dubai’s Roads & Transport Authority and Dubai Aviation Engineering Projects, to name a few. We are proud of our reputation, and work very hard to maintain it. We are open to any further queries with regards to our approach to worker welfare at any time.

- ENDS -

***About the Al Naboodah Group:***

*Founded in 1958 by two brothers, the Saeed & Mohammed Al Naboodah Group is among the most well-respected family company names in the UAE. Employing around 10,000 people of almost 50 different nationalities, the Al Naboodah Group’s core business focus covers civil engineering, building and MEP, in addition to representing a diverse portfolio of global brands in the automotive, transportation, travel, electrical, logistics, agriculture, smart cities, real estate and renewable energy sectors.*

*Saeed & Mohammed Al Naboodah Holding LLC is the parent company of the Group, and Al Naboodah Group Enterprises was established to oversee the management of the Group’s two main operating divisions – Al Naboodah Construction Group (ANCG), and Al Naboodah Commercial Group (ACG).*

*Al Naboodah is a trusted brand renowned for the delivery of world-class projects and services and exceeding the quality demanded by its clients. We wholeheartedly engage in sustainability at every level in our organisation, starting from the very top, and we acknowledge the vital role it has to play in any organisation looking to a successful future.*

**For more information, please visit:** [**www.alnaboodah.com**](http://www.alnaboodah.com)



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