

Antiquity theft met with harsher penalties

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Parliament's Culture Committee has instituted harsher punishments for those found guilty of stealing or smuggling archaeological artifacts.

Newly revised penalties include life imprisonment and a fine of LE100,000 to LE500,000 for stealing antiquities or smuggling them outside the country. Any tools or vehicles used for the purpose, meanwhile, will be confiscated by the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

The same penalty will apply to those found guilty of vandalizing archeological sites or artifacts or digging for antiquities without official permission. Other penalties include three to five years in prison and a fine of LE10,000 to LE50,000 for building on archeological sites or displacing antiquities without permission.

The penalties will apply to all contractors and archeological expeditions that diverge from the conditions laid down in their respective licenses.

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