

Nepotism part of Egypt culture: Mubarak

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Gamal Mubarak

Head of the ruling National Democratic Party's influential Policies Secretariat Gamal Mubarak admitted on Sunday to the existence of nepotism within the government.

"It is part of Egyptian culture," he said in an "open chat" broadcast live on the Internet. "But we'll fight the phenomenon with more stringent conditions for public office."

He favorably compared the private sector to its public counterpart in this regard. "The private sector knows no nepotism," he said. "There, it's strictly business."

Mubarak went on to point out that Egyptians "don't like to live far from their parents" and that "we generally prefer to work in the same city we live in."

"That's why we see all these buildings built on arable land -- so that family members can be close to each other," he explained. "But it costs the government a lot to provide these places with infrastructure and services."

Mubarak also conceded that citizens faced an overabundance of red tape in order to obtain business permits. "The young suffer the most in this regard," he said, vowing to work on streamlining the relevant procedures.

"The government was criticized for supporting major projects carried out by the private sector," Mubarak concluded. "When, in fact, those who benefit the most from such support are small and medium-size projects."

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