

Egypt to ditch foreign garbage companies

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The government is currently looking for ways to terminate contracts that were signed in 2002 with French, Spanish, and Italian garbage collection companies

The contracts, which were signed by then-Prime Minister Atef Ebeid, are set to expire in 2018.

Sources at the Ministry of Local Development said the decision to abandon the contracts was taken when the three companies failed to do their jobs, leaving piles of garbage to accumulate in the districts assigned to them.

Ministry of Local Development officials also said that the Italian company in charge of trash collection in Cairo and Giza recently increased its annual fee to LE256 million up from LE186 million. The other two companies receive LE200 million.

The Italian sanitation company went on strike over the summer after accusing the Egyptian government of "swindling" it.

The government is considering forming a holding company to facilitate breaking the contract, the sources at the Ministry of Local Development said.

Minister of Local Development Mohamed Abdel Salam el-Mahgoub is preparing a report on the performance of the three companies that he will present to Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif in a few days.

"Governors were given a green light to appoint temporary workers so as to increase their garbage collection force," he said of efforts to solve the garbage problem. El-Mahgoub also said that metal waste alone amounts to 20 million tons a year.

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