

PRESS CLIPPING SHEET

PUBLICATION:	Egyptian Gazette
DATE:	28-March-2015
COUNTRY:	Egypt
CIRCULATION:	60,000
TITLE :	Gov't may postpone fuel smart card plan
PAGE:	02
ARTICLE TYPE:	General Industry News
REPORTER:	Ahmed Kamel

Gov't may postpone fuel smart card plan

Ahmed Kamel

THE government may postpone fuel smart card distribution plan to Q1 of fiscal year (FY) 2015/2016, which begins on July 1, an official source was quoted by local media as saying yesterday on condition of anonymity.

Earlier this month, Planning Minister Ashraf el-Araby said that gasoline and gasoil smart cards would be distributed nationwide by the end of April, noting that "the government has not set a certain date for implementing the smart card project yet".

"The distribution of gasoline via smart cards will be according to a national database for demand," Minister Araby said.

E-Finance, the Cairo-based company in charge of the fuel smart card system, awaits a government decree to start carrying out the second phase of the project, which covers Alexandria, Mersa Matrouh, Fayyoun, Minya, Assiut, Sohag and the New Valley governorates, the source said.

Ibrahim Sarhan, CEO of E-Finance, said his company has already distributed 2.5 million cards, according to car number plates.

"The government has prepared a national database for fuelling stations, which top 3,000. Roughly 8,000 workers in these stations were trained on the new system, which is ready to go," Sarhan said.

The new distribution mechanism aims at tightening the grip on fuel supplies nationwide. "The goal is to supervise fuel distribution after reaching the stations. It will monitor each litre of fuel across the country," he noted.

E-Finance has set up the scheme in four phases. The company has completed only phase, however, it is ready to finalise the remaining stages anytime.

The first stage, which was finalised in December, covered the four governorates of Suez, Port Said, Ismailia and Damietta, according to Petroleum Ministry data.

The third phase includes Cairo, Giza, Qaliubiya, Gharbiya, Kafr el-Sheikh,

Menoufiya and Beni Sueif governorates. The final phase covers Sharqiya, Beheira, North and South Sinai, Red Sea, Luxor, Aswan and Qena governorates.

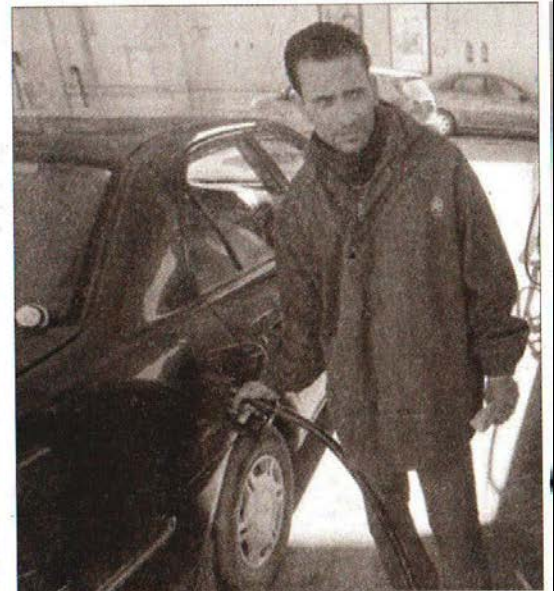
Earlier this month, Hamdy Abdel Aziz, the spokesman for the Petroleum Ministry, said the E-Finance company had issued three million cards, while the number of cars exceeded five million.

The number of cars totals 6.86 million nationwide, according to the state-run Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS).

"The Petroleum and Interior Ministries have signed a co-operation protocol to get data of all licensed cars nationwide, and distribute smart cards through traffic departments in all governorates," Abdel Aziz said.

The Egyptian General Petroleum Company (EGPC), a subsidiary of the Petroleum Ministry, pumps about 40 million litres of gasoil and 25 million litres of gasoline per day, according to official data.

Commenting on the possible delay of



A WORKER filling a car at a gas station in Cairo.

the smart card, petroleum expert Salah Abdel Salam said: "The government will decide on launching the new project at appropriate time. Registration is still open for all motorists even in the governorates, which were covered by the first phase."

"The scheme will put an end to fuel black market and profiteering from subsidised gasoil and gasoline. It will ensure that subsidised fuel will go only to the beneficiary through a secured electronic mechanism," Abdel Salam added.