

Executive

Legal action over telecoms

Private Lebanese telecommunications providers are taking their case to the courts once again in a renewed effort to prod the government into increasing the private sector's share of the industry and adhering to an existing telecom law. Five local private sector firms — two data service providers and three Internet service providers — submitted an official notice to the telecom ministry on March 8, citing unfair practices within the ministry's plan to introduce third generation (3G) services into the market through mobile operators Alfa and MTC without granting them licenses or frequencies, as reported by EXECUTIVE last month. The companies also attempted to file a case with the Telecom Regulatory Authority (TRA) on March 14, as the present telecom law gives it the authority to be an arbitrator, but a board member rejected this. The TRA and Charbel Nahas, caretaker minister of telecommunications, were not available for comment. Nahas has stated in the past that he deems the telecom law to be inapplicable, a claim the TRA has rejected.