



Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Newsletter

Special Issue - November 2021

Egypt

# "LUXOR .. SPHINX AVENUE"

## EVENT

25 November 2021



## H.E. The President Attends "Luxor .. Sphinx Avenue" Event



On November 25<sup>th</sup>, H.E. the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the First Lady, attended "Luxor..Sphinx Avenue" event, which was attended by the Prime Minister, a number of ministers and state officials, and ambassadors of more than 35 countries Cairo. The event was widely covered by local and international media and attended by more than 200 representatives of international news agencies, newspapers and television



channels. The aim of the event was to promote Luxor, as the largest open museum in the world, and showcase its diversity of touristic offerings, and rich history; especially after the completion of the excavation project of the "Sphinx Avenue", the restoration project of the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak temples, developing lighting systems, and restoring the hall of the 14 columns of the Great Colonnades hall of Amenhotep III, Luxor temple, in addition to developing Luxor's infrastructure. Before the event started, H.E. the President was accompanied by the Minister on a short tour of Luxor Temple, during which H.E. the President met a young female restorer from Luxor, who was part of the team working on the restoration of the Great Hypostyle hall at Karnak Temples.



## The Event: "Luxor .. The Sphinx Avenue"



The event "Luxor..Sphinx Avenue" took place in the Great Colonnade hall of Amenhotep III in Luxor Temple. This was the place where the famous Luxor cache was discovered more than 20 years ago. In ancient times, this hall was dedicated to various celebrations, including the ancient Opet Festival. "Luxor..Sphinx Avenue" event featured a march, inspired by the ancient Opet Festival, with dozens of performers, including students from Upper Egypt universities, wearing ancient Egyptian-style clothes and treading the Great Processional Path while carrying three golden, boat-shaped shrines to the deities Amun-Re, Mut, and Khonsu. It also featured, artistic and musical performances and a documentary on Luxor titled "Luxor..The Secret".



The documentary highlighted the rich and diverse offerings of Luxor; its awe-inspiring Theban monuments, the dazzling Nile, the charming traditional market and horse-drawn carriages, a host of other tourist attraction, and its people who always greet visitors with a smile. The film also showcased how Luxor's present traditions are inspired by its history. The Minister gave a speech, thanking H.E. the President for giving unprecedented support to the Tourism and Antiquities sector and for endorsing the idea of the event. He also thanked the P.M. for his constant supervision during the preparation phases of the event, where many ministries also contributed. He said that the event also aimed at promoting Egypt's tourism in accordance with the Ministry's new branding strategy that showcases Egypt as young vibrant welcoming destination, full of life and pride in its great civilization; raising the awareness and sense of belonging among Egyptians, especially children and youth; and shedding light on the completion of Luxor's visual identity project.







## The Ancient Egyptian Chants



The ancient Egyptian chants chosen for the parade were texts drawn from chants and hymns that were linked to the most famous ancient Egyptian festival "Opet festival". They are written on the walls of ancient Egyptian temples. They featured texts from 3 chants: the First is the opening song of the harpist from the Red Chapel of Hatshepsut at Karnak, the Second is the festival chant from Luxor Temple (the Great Colonnades hall); which serves as the main chant of the Opet Festival, the third is the prophecy of Hatshepsut's coronation also found on the walls of Red Chapel of Hatshepsut.



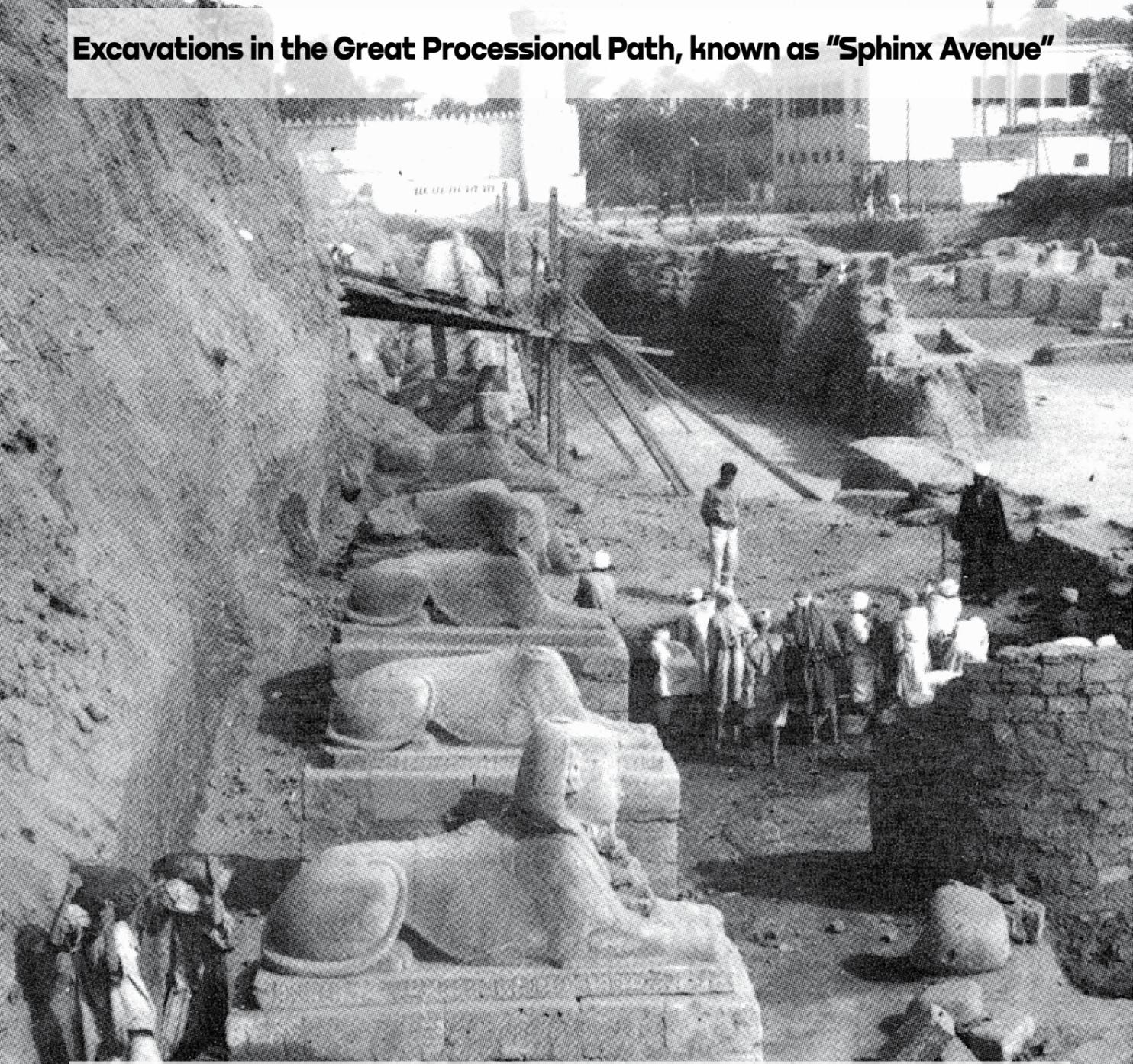
## Preparations



Luxor witnessed intense preparations for the event. The PM paid several visits to Luxor to follow up on the preparations of the event. The Minister also visited Luxor several times, to follow up on the excavation project of the Great Processional Path "Sphinx Avenue", in addition to restoration work in Luxor and Karnak temples. He also held meetings with the Egyptian company in charge of the event, reviewing all details of designs, artistic performances and elements, decorations, advertising materials, costume designs, lyrics and accompanying music. etc

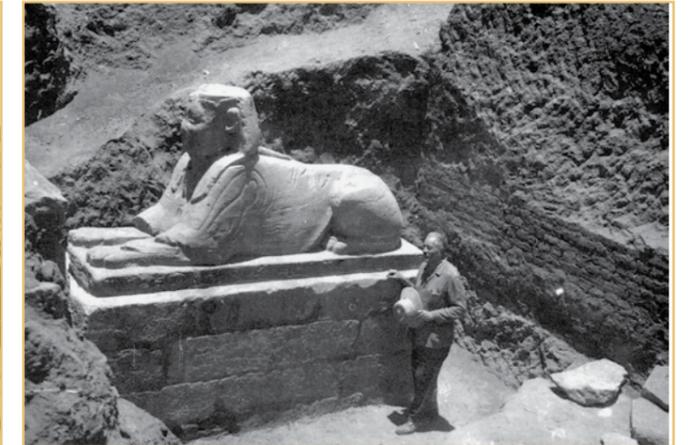


## Excavations in the Great Processional Path, known as "Sphinx Avenue"



The Event's highlight is the reveal of the 2700 meters long Great Processional Path, also known as the Sphinx Avenue. It links Luxor and Karnak Temples with 1057 statues on both sides. Each is carved from a single block of sandstone and shaped in two forms: one with a human head and a lion's body, considering the lion a symbol of the Sun God Amun, and the other with a ram's head and a human's body considering the ram a symbol of "Khanum" the Fertility God in ancient Egypt.

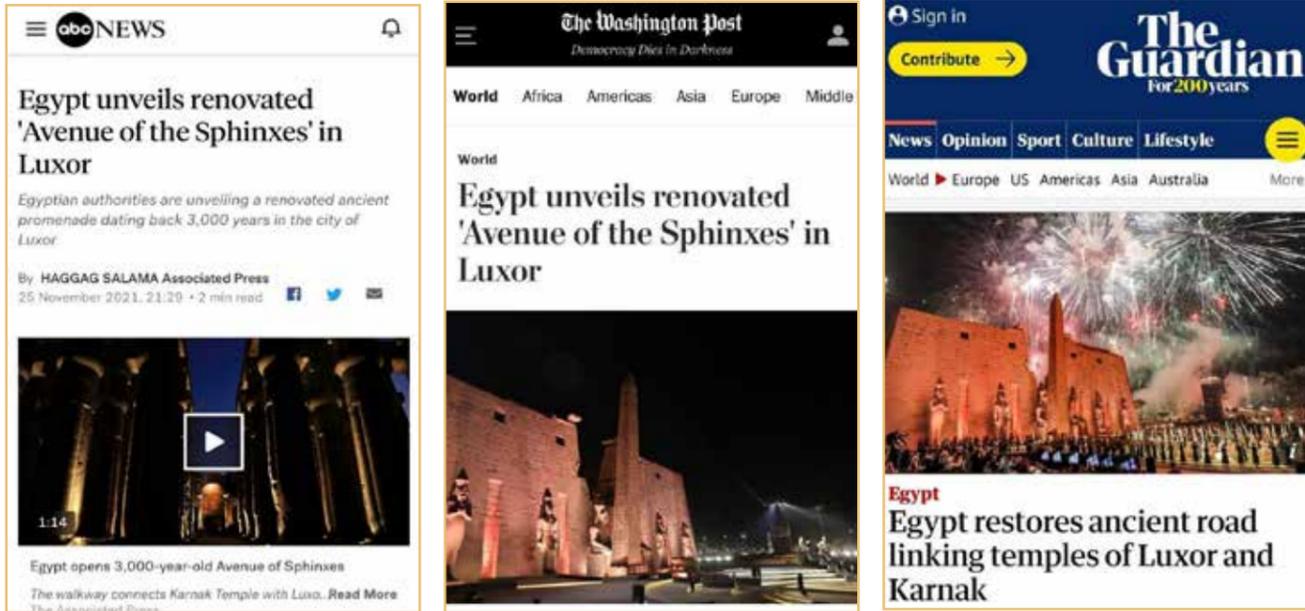
In ancient times, the walkway used to be a Great Processional Path for Kings, where most of the ceremonies took place; like the Opet festival, King's Coronation Day and various national feasts.



This excavation project is the largest archaeological project that Egyptian archaeologists and restorers started since 1949. Work stopped, then resumed in 2004 until 2011, and again in 2017. In 2017, it was resumed according to the directives of H.E. the President, as one of the many archeological projects completed and opened recently.

The Sphinx Avenue was built during the reign of King Amenhotep III, who started the construction of Luxor Temple, but the implementation of the avenue occurred during the reign of King Nectanebo I, founder of the 30<sup>th</sup> dynasty.

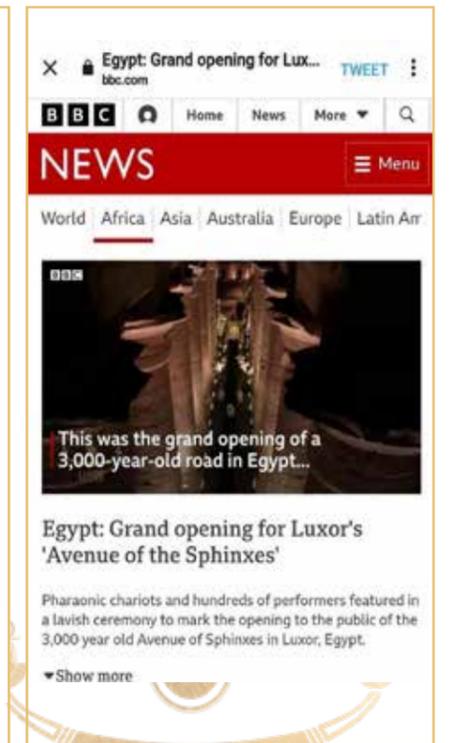
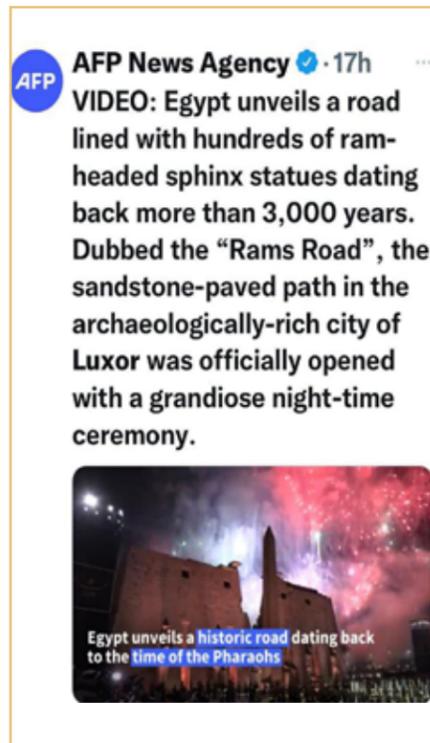
“Luxor...The Sphinx Avenue” Makes Headlines Around the World



“Luxor ... Sphinx Avenue” event received wide local and international media coverage, making headlines in newspapers, TV channels. It was live streamed on their channels and social media platforms. International media described the ceremony as an impressive, historical event that, not only revived the Grand Processional Path “Sphinx Avenue”, adding a new tourist destination in Luxor, but also shed light on the diversity and richness of the touristic and archaeological attractions and traditional markets of Luxor. They said that the event showcased Luxor as the largest open museum in the world, with diverse activities to enjoy there.



The media praised the efforts of the Egyptian government and Egypt's ability to dazzle the world, especially after the Golden Pharaohs' Parade, last April; saying that Egypt was able, in less than a year, to draw global attention to it and its tourist destinations. Some newspapers highlighted the success of the event in linking the past with the present, as it shed light on one of the most famous ancient Egyptian celebrations, which extended over time in Luxor’s folklore, customs and traditions. The event trended on Twitter, where the hashtag “Sphinx Avenue” was the most searched.





Watch Luxor Event..Sphinx Avenue