

# Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Newsletter

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Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

August 2021 Issue 20

### Khufu's First Boat Successully Moved to the GEM... and Russian Flights Resume to Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada





This August, two major events in the tourism and antiquities sector in Egypt took place; on 7 August, Khufu's First Boat was successfully transferred from the Giza Plateau to the Grand Egyptian Museum, where it will be displayed (p.15 -12), and Russian flights resumed to the Egyptian resorts of Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada on 9 August (p. 17-16).



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The PM during one of the meetings

During the month of August, the Prime Minister (PM) held a number of meetings, attended by the Minister, to follow up on the development projects taking place in various tourist destinations. This included: a meeting to follow up on the development work underway in Sharm El-Sheikh; the progress in Fustat Gardens project; and the development project in the site of "The Great Transfiguration" in St. Catherine, which is one of the most important national projects to promote this city internationally. In this context, the Minister and the Minister of Environment met on 11 August to discuss promoting sustainable tourism and measures to preserve natural resources in St. Catherine. On August 1, the Prime Minister held a meeting to review the implementation of a strategic plan to revive luxury yacht tourism in Egypt; in this context, the Minister, and the Minister of Transport, introduced this strategy, during the Cabinet meeting on August 5.

### **Egypt to Launch New Domestic Flights Linking Tourist Destinations**

The Egyptian Cabinet approved decisions of the Ministerial Committee for Tourism and Antiquities, which included: extending the period granted for the reduction of aviation fuel prices (by 15 cents per gallon) until 30 April 2022, and for the reduction on landing, housing and ground handling fees in touristic airports from 1 November 2021 until 30 April 2022. Decisions also included launching a new Incentive Program for domestic flights between Red Sea Cities (Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada) and Upper Egypt (luxor and Aswan). The Prime Minister had chaired the sixth meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Tourism and Antiquities on August 23.

### The Cabinet Approves the Transfer of the Tourism Development Authority to The Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities

In August, The Egyptian Cabinet approved the draft resolution of H.E. the President to transfer the affiliation of the Tourism Development Authority from the Ministry to the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities.

## .. And Agrees to Contract A Company to Provide and Operate Services in Archaeological Sites and Museums

In August the Cabinet approved, the request of the Supreme Council of Antiquities to contract a company to provide and operate services at a number of archaeological sites; namely the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir, two rest houses in Saqqara, the garden of Muhammad Ali Palace in Shubra El-Kheima, and the area around Farouk Corner Museum This is part of the Ministry's endeavor to upgrade services provided to tourists and visitors in various archaeological areas and museums and hence improve the visitor's experience.

### The Prime Minister Conveys to the Young Restorers the Greetings of H.E The President



On August 25, the Prime Minister visited Luxor, to follow up on the preparations for the opening of the Sphinx Avenue, after its restoration, which will take place on Luxor's national day, in November. He was accompanied by the Minister, the Minister of Local Development, the Governor of Luxor, and the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. He visited Karnak Temple and saw the restoration in the Great Hypostyle Hall of the temple. He met the restorers and conveyed to them the greetings of H.E the President and his appreciation for their meticulous, hard work. The restoration team of the Ministry, in cooperation with graduates of the restoration departments at Luxor and South Valley Universities and the Institute of Restoration in Luxor, completed 60 % of the restoration work of the first column in the Great Hypostyle Hall in Karnak Temple. During his visit, the Prime Minister met with tourists at the temple.

### A New Central Administration for Marketing at the ETPB

After 40 years of its establishment, the Central Agency for Organization and Administration approved the new organizational structure of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board (ETPB). New departments were established and others merged. This included merging the two central departments of international and domestic tourism into one central administration for tourism offices and the establishment of a new central department for marketing, for the first time since the establishment of ETPB, among others.

### Launching A Project to Automate Services of the Central Administration for Hotels, Shops and Tourism Activities

On August 25, the Minister oversaw the launch of a project to automate the services of the central administration for hotels, shops and tourism activities in the Ministry. The project provides new mechanisms to enable the Ministry's inspectors to better perform their tasks, and ensure the quality of the services provided to tourists. The project includes automation of 120 services. Automated services will be launched successively over a period of 9 to 10 months.

### **Ingreasing Inspection Committees and Re-evaluating Hotels**

During the month of August, the Ministry continued sending committees to hotels all around the country to re-evaluate them according to the new hospitality criteria put forward in coordination with the UNWTO, and to ensure the correct implementation of the hygiene safety measures. It was according to the new hospitality criteria that minimum accommodation prices for hotels were set last April according to a Ministerial decree and effective next November.

### ..And Committees to Follow Up on Travel Companies in the Red Sea

During the month of August, the Ministry dispatched committees to follow up on travel agencies in the Red Sea Governorate and ensure their compliance with laws regulating their work. The committees followed up on those companies' transportation activities, the efficiency of their means of transportation, reviewed their liscences, and the excursions they organize for tourists within the governorate.

#### **Tourism Promotion**

### Fam Trips to An Arab Media Delegation and Arab Influencers



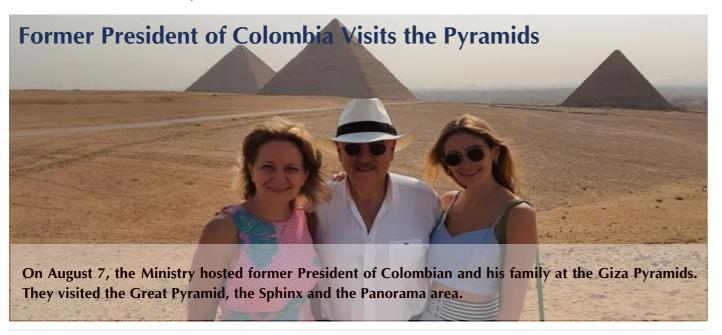


Arab Influencers visiting tourists attractions

During this month, the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board (ETPB) hosted a media delegation from Arab publications, news agencies and televisions, on a fam trip to Egypt. They visited Sharm El Sheikh, Dahab, Hurghada, Cairo, the New Administrative Capital and New Alamein. ETPB also organized a fam trip to a group of Arab Influencers to Cairo, Alexandria and the Red Sea. They all saw Egypt's diversity of offerings, and witnessed first hand the hygiene safety measures implemented in tourists destinations. They also visited Egypt's major national projects.

### **Egypt's Tourism Brand Strategy is Complete**

On 18 August, the Minister received Egypt's tourism brand starategy that was prepared by an English-Canadian coalition. Based on this strategy a 3 -year promotoion campaign will be launched by the end of 2021. Preparing this strategy took 6 months and indepth studies of tourism in Egypt, its key markets, as well as its competitors, were conducted.



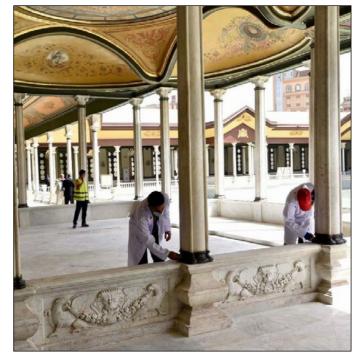
# Openings and Visits The Opening of Wekalet Al-Geddawy in Esna

On August 29, the Minister opened Wekalet Al-Geddawy in Es n a, after a restoration project that lasted for two years. This project was funded by the United States Agency for Internationa | Development "USAID". The Governor of L uxor, the American Ambassador in Cairo, Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, Assistant Minister for Projects and General Supervisor of the Historic Cairo, Head of the Islamic, Coptic and Jewish Antiquities and members of the Parliamen t and Senate in Luxor attended the event. To encourage people to visit it, the minister announced that Wakalat El Gedawy will receive the visitors of Esna Temple for free.



Wekalet Al-Geddawy

### **Mohamed Aly Palace in Shubra Set to Open Soon**





From the Minister's visit to the Palace

Work is underway in the restoration project of Mohamed Aly Palace in Shobra in preparations for its opening. The Minister visited the Palace on August 4 to follow up on the progress of work there. Modifications are now being done to improve visitors services and make the museum accessible for visitors with special needs.

### Completing Restoration Work in a Number of Sabils in Historic Cairo

On August 21, the Minister visited a number of archeological buildings in historic Cairo and Fustat, where restoration work in Al-Amir Sheikho Al-Nasiri's Sabil in Al-Hataba area, the Sabils of Ruqayyah Dodo, Mustafa Sinan, Hassan Agha Koklian, and the portal of Hammam Bishtak on Souq El-Silah Street, was complete. This is part of the Ministry's project to restore and preserve 100 ancient buildings in Historic Cairo.

### Salah El-Din Citadel's International Music Festival Takes Place in August

On August 15, the Minister participated in the opening of the 29<sup>th</sup> edition of Salah El-Din Citadel International Music Festival, held by the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the Ministry. The aim of the festival is to showcase Egypt's culture and promote domestic and cultural tourism.

### The Deputy Minister Visits Hurghada and Sharm El Sheikh

During the month of August, Deputy Minister of Tourism and Antiquities for tourism Affairs visited a number of hotels, companies and tourist buses in Hurghada and Sharm El Sheikh, to follow up on their compliance with the set precautionary measures and hygiene safety regulations. She also visited the PCR tests centers for departing tourists in the two cities.

In the related context, Deputy Minister, Deputy Governor of Cairo for the Eastern Region and Head of the Islamic, Coptic and Jewish Antiquities Sector at the Supreme Council of Antiquities visited the Virgin Mary's Tree in Al-Matareya, Cairo, to follow up on the progress of work there. Considered one of the points along the Holy Family's journey in Egypt, Virgin Mary's Tree is due to open for visits soon.

### **Archeological Discoveries**

### Discovering the Remains of a Residential and Commercial Suburb in Alexandria

The Egyptian archeological mission from Alexandria archeological area succeeded in discovering the remains of a residential and commercial suburb dating back to the Greco-Roman era. This discovery sheds light on the various activities that took place at the outer walls of the Egyptian capital in the Roman era. Work is currently underway to complete the documentation of the site using three-dimensional imaging and modern topographical lifting techniques. It is scheduled to transfer the archeological finds to the restoration laboratories of the Ministry to carry out the necessary restoration work.



### **Miscellaneous News**

### **Issuing A Silver Coin to Commemorate A Parade of Royal Mummies**

To commemorate the Pharoah's Golden Parade, where 22 Royal mummies were transferred from the Egyptian museum in Tahrir to the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Fustat, on 3 April 2021, the Ministry of Finance issued a commemorative silver coin of LE100 bearing the ceremonial logo in both Arabic and English to document this extraordinary event. It also issued circulating coins of one pound and fifty piasters, bearing the same design.





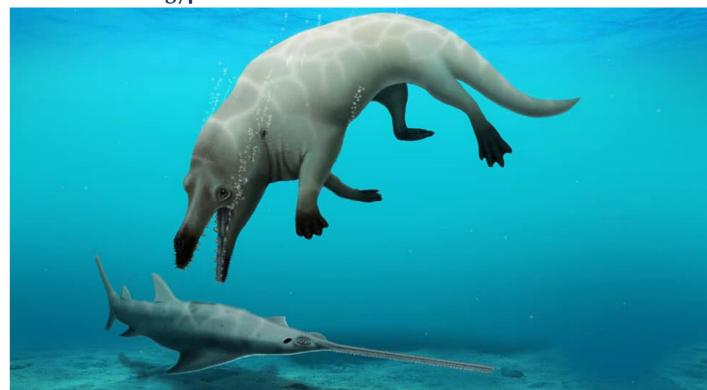
The Silver coin

### 'Ramses and the Gold of the Pharaohs' Exhibition Set to Open in the US

On 13 August, The Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities accompanied by the Consul General of the Egyptian Consulate in Houston, and Minister Plenipotentiary there, visited the hall that will hold "Ramses and the Gold of the Pharaohs" antiquities exhibition at the Houston Museum of Natural Sciences in Texas, USA to follow up on the ongoing preparations for its opening in November.

The Egyptian cabinet had previously agreed on holding this exhibition in four cities, including two in the USA then Paris in France and Sydney in Australia. The exhibition includes 181 artifacts, showcasing distinctive characteristics of ancient Egyptian civilization, especially from the middle to late Kingdom.

## New Species of 43 Million Year Old Ancient Semi-Aquatic Whale Discovered in Egypt



For the first time in the history of Egyptian vertebrate paleontology, an Egyptian team of scientists lead a documentation of a new genus and species of a semi-aquatic four-legged whale. The fossil was first found by a team of Egyptian environmentalists and Paleontologists from Mansoura University in 2008 in an area that was covered by seas in prehistoric times, The species has been named after the ancient Egyptian god Anubis as its skull resembles the jackal-headed god of the dead and Fayoum oasis, the place from which its fossils were extracted.

### **Seizing 34 Antique Coins before Smuggling them Outside of Egypt**



The Antiquities unit, in cooperation with the Customs Administration at Terminal 2 at Cairo International Airport, succeeded in seizing 34 original coins, which were in the possession of a passenger attempting to smuggle them. The seized coins date back to different historical eras; including the Abbasid, the Ottoman, the era of Sultan Hussein Kamel, in addition to a gold coin struck in Egypt in 1255, and 8 coins dating back to the reign of King Fuad I, and another dating back to the era of King Farouk.

### The Most Popular Egyptian Dishes in an Educational Symposium in Montreal, Canada



Under the title "Live Cooking for Egyptian Cuisine: From the Heart of Hotels in Egypt", the Egyptian Cultural and Educational Office in Montreal, Canada, organized, via video conference, a symposium on Egyptian cuisine, which is considered one of the most ancient kitchens. This is part of the activities of the Egyptian Heritage Month in Ontario.

### **Meetings**

### **Enhancing Domestic Airtravel to Combine Beach with Culture Tourism**

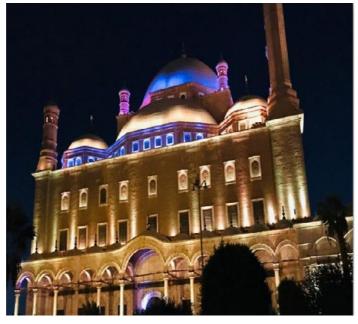
The Minister met with the Minister of Civil Aviation, on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, to discuss enhancing domestic airtravel between coastal cities like Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada, and Nile Valley cities, like Luxor and Aswan as a first stage. This developes a new tourism offering combining beach and leisure tourism with cultural tourism.

### Reviewing the Final Preparations in Egypt's Participation in Expo 2020

This August, the Minister and the Minister of Trade and Industry met to review the final preparations for Egypt's participation in Expo 2020 in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates for a period of 6 months, starting this October. They talked about the touristic and archaeological content that will be showcased during the Expo. They also discussed the logistics of securing and shipping an ancient Egyptian coffin that will be on display in Egypt's pavillion throughout the Expo, in addition to a number of replicas of ancient Egyptian artifacts.

### .. And the Progress in Upgrading Tourism Facilitiess in Archeological Sites





On August 24, the Minister met with the Supervising Committee for the Development of Services in Archaeological Sites and Museums headed by the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. The meeting reviewed the progress of work done to upgrade tourism facilities in some archaeological sites, to improve the visitors experience. It also reviewed activating the services contracts signed by the Supreme Council of Antiquities; namely in the Citadel of Salah El-Din in Cairo, the Giza Plateau, and the archeological site in Beni Hassan, Minya.

### Commercial, Advertising and Cinematographic Photography Regulations in Archeological Sites

On August 31, the Board of Directors of the Supreme Council of Antiquities chaired by the Minister, met. They discussed regulationg filming and photography at archeological sites and museums, to create packages to motivate local and international producers. The meeting also discussed promoting the city of Esna, to put in the limelight after the opening of Wekalet Al-Geddawy and the Old Market this August.

### The Ministry's Electronic Portal

On August 23, the Minister held a meeting to discuss the latest progress in the official electronic portal of the Ministry; reviewing all its details, design and development strategy, in order to launch it soon. The Minister also held two meetings to review the website of the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir.

### The Board of Directors of the ETPB Discusses International Exhibitions

On August 30, the Minister chaired the meeting of the board of directors of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board (ETPB). The meeting reviewed the plan set for international tourism exhibitions of the fiscal year 2021/2022. They also discussed organizing major annual events in coastal cities in coordination with the private sector. They reviewed promoting sustainable tourism by puting eco-tourism in the limelight and highlighting environmental initiatives, like reducing the use of plastic bags in Egypt's tourism destinations.

### **The Tourism Promotion Experts Committee**

On August 23, the Minister participated in the meeting of the "Tourism Promotion Experts" committee. They reviewed Egypt's Brand Strategy formulated by a British-Canadian alliance. The meeting also reviewed prommoting Egypt's destination and diversified offerings on social media platforms.

In another context, the Minister held, on August 22, a meeting with the new gency in charge of managing ET-PB's social media platforms to follow up on their work and to discuss their posting calendars in light of the new brand strategy.

### **Meetings with Officials and Ambassadors**

In August, the Minister received officials and ambassadors from a number of countries to discuss ways to enhance cooperation in the field of tourism and antiquities. He received the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Sierra Leone during his official visit to Cairo. He also met the German ambassador to Cairo, who recently assumed his position and discussed the project of the Akhenaton Museum (Al-Atony) in Minya, one of the aspects of cooperation between the two countries. He also received the Ambassador of Japan in Cairo, where they discussed increasing inbound tourism to Egypt from Japan, especially with the opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM).

### 



Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark, invited the Minister meet with around 200 young men and women from all over Egypt, on their visit to the historical Abdeen Palace. They were the participants of the "Logos Youth Forum 2021", which was held in Cairo in August, to bolster the sense of belonging and national pride among young people under the slogan "Celebrate your Roots".

### **Outstanding Students from North Sinai Visit Cairo**

"Know Your Country" is an initiative launched by the Ministry last December to promote domestic tourism and raise tourism and archaeological awareness among citizens. The ETPB office in Areesh, North Sinai organized, in August, a 3-day trip to 25 academically outstanding students from North Sinai to Cairo, as part of this Initiative. They visited the Pyramids, Baron Empain Palace, the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir, the Religious Complex in old Cairo, among others.

### **Children with Special Needs Visit Farouk Corner Museum**

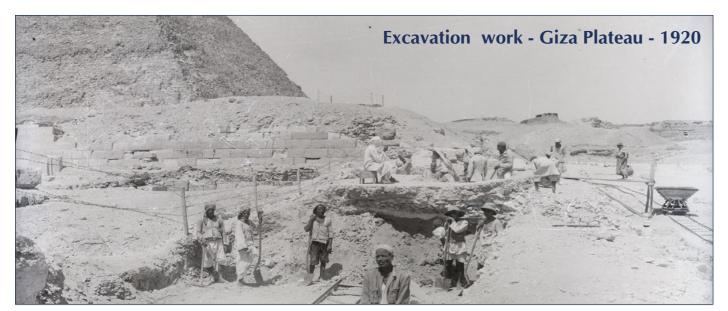


In August, the Department of Cultural Development and Social Responsibility at the Ministry organized a guided tour for a group of 20 children with special needs, at the Farouk Corner Museum in Helwan, in cooperation with the Ability Center for Studies and Training. This is part of the "Your Right to Know" program launched by the department in 2017 to raise tourism and archaeological awareness.

### **Educational Programs for children at The Egyptian Museum in Tahrir**

On August 29, under the title 'Linking the Curriculum to the Museum', the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir organised an educational program for children during their summer vacation to link the school curricula with the artifacts displayed in the museum. This program targets primary and preparatory school students, and held every Sunday. In a related context, under the title 'The Language of the Ancient' the Museum organised, another program for children during the month of August targeting students from 6 to 8 years.

### From the Archive of the Center of Documentation .





### **The National Museum of Egyptian Civilization**

### **Showcasing Costumes and Accessories of the Pharoahs' Golden Parade**



### **Spanish Betrothed Couple Enjoy Free Visit to the NMEC**

In Luxor, the Minister met a spanish couple who chose the enchanting city of Luxor to announce their marriage. The Minister invited them to a visit to the Museum as a marriage gift. They flew to Cairo to enjoy their unique wedding present.



The Spanish couple in the garden of the Museum

### The Board of Directors of the Museum of Egyptian Civilization Meets

On 16 August, the Board of Directors of the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization was held under the chairmanship of the Minister. A number of topics were reviewed; including the progress of work at the temporary exhibition hall in preparation for its opening.



### The Grand Egyptian Museum -

### 6 Statues of King Senusret to be Transferred to the Museum Soon

6 statues of King Senusret I and an offering table belonging to King Mentuhotep II will be transferred to the Museum from the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir soon. Logistics and preparations of the transfer were discussed in a meeting held on August 31.

### A Lengthy Workshop on the Strategy of Operating Services in the Museum

On August 17, the Minister attended a lengthy workshop that included members of the GEM's board of directors, officials and representatives of the Hassan Allam coalition -which won the provision and operation of services in the Museum. The workshop's aim was to review and discuss the strategy of operating the services at the Museum. It also discussed various tools to promote the Museum; including the website, social media platforms and a mobile application, in addition to organizing cultural and educational activities within the GEM.



#### The Transfer of the First Khufu Boat

After 48 hours crossing the streets of Giza on a smart vehicle, the first boat of king Khufu, discovered in 1954 at the southern corner of the Great Pyramid, has terminated its long journey to the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM).

The aim of the transportation project is to protect and preserve the biggest and oldest organic artifact made of wood, in the history of humanity for the future generations. The -4600year-old boat was exhibited inside the a museum that bearing its name at Giza Plateau which was not equipped with the latest technological equipment to house and display this magnificent artifact. The transportation of Khufu's first boat is considered one of the most important, challenging, and unique archaeological and engineering project. The team exerted all its effort to the success of the transportation procedures which took almost a year of study, planning and good preparation. It was carried out accurately to ensure the safety and protection of the boat which was transported as a single piece inside a metal cage lifted on a smart remote-control vehicle especially imported from abroad for such process.

### The Epic Khufu Boat Successfully Installed at the GEM

On 7 August, a team from the Grand Egyptian Museum successfully installed the metal structure containing Khufu's first boat in its final display place; at a building dedicated to the King's boats at the GEM. The boat will be preserved inside the metal structure until this building is complete. A tight environmental control system has been placed inside the structure to monitor temperature and humidity.

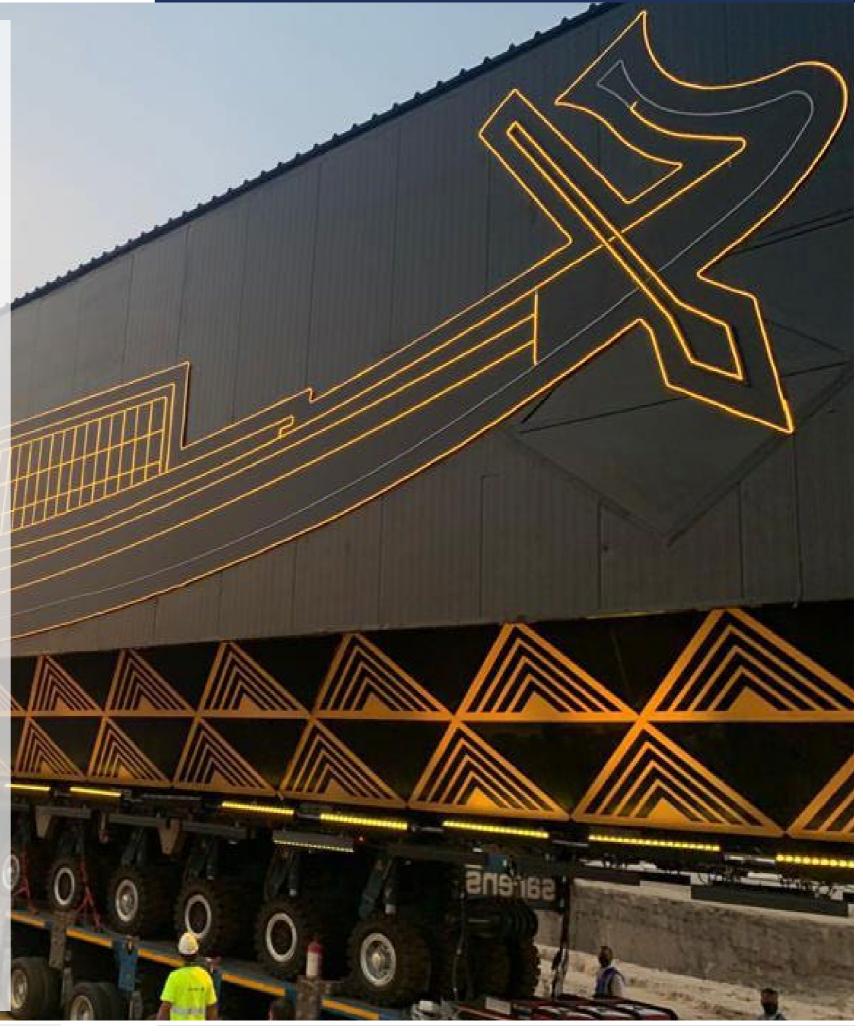
#### The vehicle

The vehicle has a superior ability to overcome any obstacles that may be encountered on the road, and the ability to maneuvering in curves and coils as well as absorbing any vibrations while moving. The smart vehicle has proven its ability to carry out the task assigned to transport the boat successfully, Numerous simulations were carried out during the preparation for the transfer, the vehicle proved success as it made the same trip loaded with the same weights and dimensions of the boat, which is 42 meters long and weighs 20 tons, with the installation of special measurement devices to test the performance of the vehicle, the stability of the metal cage and the inclination of the road, to ensure that the boat arrives safely.

### **Before the Transfer**

The transportation process was carried out after the approval of the Permanent Committee of the Ancient Egyptian Antiquities in accordance with the Antiquities Protection Law to protect the boat from its outdated old exhibition museum which marred the beauty of Khufu pyramid, the only surviving wonder of the ancient world, for decades. In August 2020, the old boat museum was closed and preparation work for the transfer began. Khufu's first boat was then packed with special scientific foams and put inside a metal cage to protect it during transfer. Before the transfer a radar survey for the ground under the old museum and along the eastern paved road in Giza Plateau was carried out to guarantee its ability to support the weights of the vehicle loaded with the metal cage and the boat as well as all the equipment used during the process.

Before the transportation, the boat was scientifically and archaeologically examined and a detailed report on its conservation condition was prepared. Its weak areas were consolidated and cracks repaired. Before its installation inside the metal cage, the boat was wrapped with special papers and foams as well as surrounded with special padded frame that was then fixed to the cage in order to prevent any movement during transportation. Monitoring devices were also installed to monitor minute by minute the temperature and the humidity percentage within the boat as well as the vibration rate during transportation.





Moving the Boat from the Giza Plateau



The first Khufu boat preserved in the metal structure in its final display place at the GEM



The team responsible for the transfer



### Russia Resumes Flights to Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada



After 6 years of suspension, Russia resumed flights to popular Egyptian Red Sea resorts of Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada on 9 August. The flights from the Russian capital Moscow were welcomed by a ceremonial "water salute" on touchdown and Russian tourists, were greeted with flowers and balloons upon disembarking. Russian tourists said they were thrilled to be back in their favourire resorts of Hurghada and Sharm El-Sheikh.

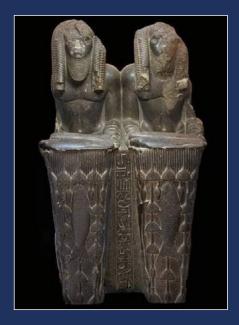
The coastal cities also received two delegations representing major Russian media outlets in August. They witnessed firsthand the hygiene safety regulations implemented in Egypt's hotels and resorts. The Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board hosted the two delegations to help promote Egypt in Russia and highlight the resumption of flights from Russia to Egypt's Red Sea resorts. The delegation featured hotel managers in Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada. They also featured Russian tourists who came to the two sunny coastal cities to spend their vacations. The Media delegations also flew to Cairo and visited its main attractions.

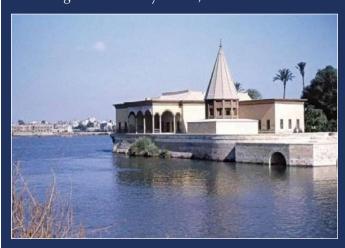


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#### Wafaa Al- Nile ... Tribute to the Nile

When Herodotus said his famous quote "Egypt is the gift of the Nile", it reflected the major role and the great impact of the River Nile in the ancient Egyptian life, a role that still continues today. The Ancient Egyptian religion was always influenced by the details of the daily life of the people and their natural habitat; plants, animals. The Nile to Egyptians resembled a symbol of fertility. Every aspect of life in Egypt depended on the Nile. It provided food, resources, and land for agriculture. It was a means of travel, and was critical in the transportation of materials for building projects and other large-scale endeavors. It was a critical lifeline that literally brought life to the desert, changing the red land (Deshert) to the black rich muddy soil (Kemet). As a sign of tribute to the Nile, Egyptians celebrate the Nile on 15 August every year "Wafaa Al- Nile". August is considered the month of flood and fertility that come over the land of Egypt. The level of the Nile level is at its lowest in the month of May of every year, then increases in August until it reaches its peak in September. Egyptians celebrated their magnificent artery of life, the Nile.





Ancient **Egyptians** monitored the flood levels of the Nile, and based on the flood agricultural outcome of the land is estimated, and then accordingly the taxes. The monitoring continued with Nilometers; like the Nilometer in Elphantine Island in Aswan and the one in Manial Al-Roda which dates back to the Abbasid Era. The ancient Egyptians dug canals and channels and built dams to control the powerful flood of the river. In modern times Egyptians built the High Dam in Aswan and dug the Suez Canal. This month the Ministry organized "On the Banks of the Nile" art exhibition at the Baron Empain palace

to celebrate the international Day of Photography on August 19th of every year and to commemorate the celebrations of the Nile flood on the 15th. The exhibition showcased photos of 23 children who were part of the photography workshop held at the Manasterly Palace.

Reham M. Zaki, Inspector, The Central Administration of Upper Egypt Antiquities





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