

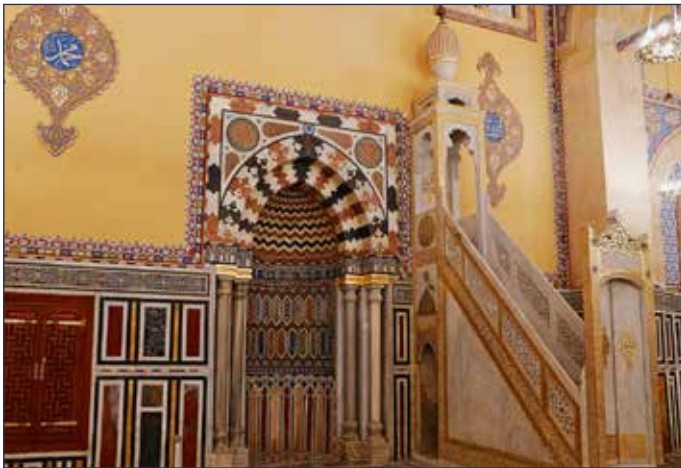


Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

# Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Newsletter

Issue: 1  
January  
2020

## The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities inaugurates a historical mosque in Cairo, a Jewish synagogue in Alexandria, and visits a Church



**On the same day**, the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities inaugurated Al-Fath historical mosque in Cairo, then visited St. Mark's Cathedral on the occasion of Christmas celebrations and inaugurated the Eliyahu Hanavi Synagogue in Alexandria. These three visits resembled a message to the whole world that Egypt is a great civilization of diversity and acceptance.

The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities inaugurated Al-Fath mosque in the presence of the Minister of Endowments and the Governor of Cairo and the Friday prayer took place there. The mosque's restoration began in 2017, at a cost of around 16 million EGP. The royal mosque was founded by Abdeen Bek in 1931. After this visit, the Minister went to Alexandria where he visited St. Mark's Cathedral, in celebration Christmas. On the same day, he inaugurated the Eliyahu Hanavi Synagogue, which had undergone restoration works that began in 2017, at a cost of 68 million EGP. This synagogue was built in the mid-nineteenth century, after the Pope at that time donated a piece of a church's land to the Jewish community. The Governor of Alexandria, the director of the Library of Alexandria attended the inauguration, as well as several foreign ambassadors, members of the Egyptian Tourism Federation and public figures. The event received wide coverage from international and local media (10 January).



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# Archaeological Discoveries

- 370 coins, dating back to the Greco-Roman and Islamic periods, were discovered in linen wrappings in the Abu Fana Church, Minya. The coins were buried two metres deep and were found during an infrastructure project. (3 January) (→)



- (←) • Salvage excavations in Kom-Ishqaw, Sohag, revealed five limestone fragments of different sizes. The discovery took place during the Supreme Council of Antiquities' salvage excavations in the area (7 January).

- The Supreme Council of Antiquities began salvage excavations on a site containing the remains of fortification walls and water tanks, all of which were discovered during infrastructure operations east of al-Tafri'a, North Sinai (12 January). (→)



- (←) • As part of a project to document rock inscriptions in South Sinai, the Supreme Council of Antiquities' archaeological mission completed the recording of coloured inscriptions in a historical cave that lies approximately 60 km south-east of Serabit Al-Khadim and 30 km north of Saint Catherine. The cave is the first of its kind to have been discovered, as it holds diverse illustrations dating back to 10,000 BC. The discovery received wide local and international media coverage (22 January).

- The scientific expedition in Ghorifa, Tuna Al-Gabal district, Minya, discovered several family tombs belonging to priests of Thoth. Some of the tombs belong to Senior staff working in the fifteenth region of Upper Egypt, with its capital Ashmunein. The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities announced the discovery in an international press conference in the presence of the Governor of Minya and the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (31 January). (→)



## International Exhibitions

- The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities participated in the International Diving Exhibition «Salon International de la Plongée Sous-Marine», which took place in Paris. The exhibition is one of the most important tourism exhibitions that takes place in France every year (16 January). (→)
- The temporary antiquities exhibition «Tutankhamun ... The Golden King» that is taking place in Saachi Art Gallery in London from November 2019 until April 2020, featuring 150 artifacts from the collection of King Tut, continues successfully and has so far welcomed 400,000 visitors.



- (←) • The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities participated in the «Fitur» tourism exhibition, which took place in Madrid (22-26 January). In parallel to the Exhibition, Egypt won the chair of the UNWTO Committee on Tourism and Sustainability for two years starting from January 2020. The Governor of South Sinai and the Deputy of the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities attended the exhibition, as well as representatives of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board (24 January).

## National Exhibitions

- The Egyptian Textiles Museum in Mu'zz street organized an art Exhibition in cooperation with the High Institute for Tourism, Hotels and Monument restoration, Alexandria University. The exhibition, titled «Qabati», was held in celebration of Christmas (5 January). (→)



- (←) • Sohag National Museum organized an exhibition titled «Campaign of the Torchbearer». It included 67 objects that were the result of excavations in Sohag (22 January).

- The Museum of Islamic Art held a temporary exhibition under the name of «Wakeful Eyes», in celebration of Police Force Day. The exhibition displayed 32 objects used by Egyptian police, including rifles (25 January).

## Ministry Events

• The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities celebrated the 14th annual Archaeologists Day in the grand hall of the Cairo Opera House. The Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities attended the celebration, as well as the chairman of the Tourism and Aviation committee of the Parliament. The celebration was attended also by members of the committee for Culture, Archaeology, and Media of the Parliament; the head of the Egyptian Tourism Federation and its chambers; foreign ambassadors; representatives of Egyptian and foreign universities; directors of archaeological institutes and public figures. The celebration included a film about the most notable archaeological discoveries in 2019 and an award ceremony for archaeologists. The Ministry of Culture presented a series of artistic performances during the event (14 January). (→)



(←) • The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities hosted the 20th «Connect» conference held in Al-Gouna resort. The conference takes place annually in a different country and brings together tourism and travel agencies working in the French market (25 January).

## Miscellaneous News



• The Giza Plateau hosted a football match that brought together more than thirty international football stars. The match was part of the African Union's «The Best» celebrations in 2019, which took place in Hurgada. The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities attended the match. The Minister of Youth and Athletics, the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, and the President of the International Football Federation also attended this match (7 January).

- The Grand Egyptian Museum received 356 objects from the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir and from the Pyramids area, including 30 wooden pieces from Khufu's boat, 57 objects belonging to The Golden King Tutankhamun, and 11 colossal fragments to be displayed on the grand staircase (13 January). (→)



- (←)• The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities welcomed a high-level church delegation from the National Christian Pilgrimage Association in France and a group of French media reporters who visited several stations that marked the Journey of the Holy Family in Egypt as well as several historical sites. The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities held a dinner for them at the Coptic Museum. The dinner was attended by representatives of the Egyptian church (14 January).

- The Ministry of Education and the University of Helwan launched a project to decorate walls in Cairo that will be on the path of the royal mummies' parade that will take place soon from the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir to the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Fustat. (18 January) (→)



- Luxor welcomed forty fashion models from around the world, as part of the World Model's Competition that took place in Hurghada (20 January).

## City visits and meetings

• The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities inspected the renovation work carried on the tree of Virgin Mary and the surrounding area in Matariya. This is one of the places that mark the Holy Family's journey through Egypt. The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities was accompanied by the Minister of Local Development and the Governor of Cairo (2 January). (→)

They also visited the religious complex in Old Cairo, the Hanging Church, the Church of St. Sergius and Bacchus, and the Church of Virgin Mary (6 January). The Minister of Tourism and antiquities also inspected the latest developments of project of the Greco-Roman Museum (10 January).



(←) • The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities invited the artist Farouq Hosni, former Minister of Culture, Dr. Zahi Hawass, the former Minister of Antiquities and Director of the Library of Alexandria Dr. Mustafa Al-Fiqi to a visit to the Grand Egyptian Museum (13 January).

• The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities and several of the Ministry's officials inspected new hotel establishments in the Red Sea governorate and the Hurghada Museum scheduled to open soon (8 January). (→)

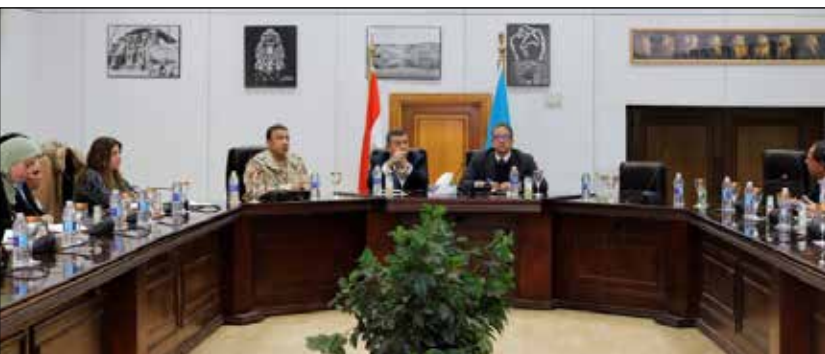
They also visited Baron Empain's palace in Heliopolis to oversee the latest restoration work, in preparation for its inauguration (17 January).



- The Prime Minister headed the first meeting of the Ministerial Committee of Tourism and Antiquities. The committee is composed of the Ministers of Tourism and Antiquities, Culture, Finance, Local Development, Health and Urban Housing, Environment, Civil Aviation, representatives of the Ministry of Interior, and the Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation. During the meeting, the recommendation by the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, to form a permanent committee for issuing permits for hotels and tourism establishments, was approved (21 January).



The Prime Minister also headed a meeting to discuss the government’s recent cooperation with the Central Bank of Egypt to assist several sectors, including the tourism sector. Moreover, the Prime Minister headed the Supreme Committee for Organizing Men’s Handball World Cup (23 January), in addition to a meeting to discuss hotel investment opportunities in the city of Al-Alamein (28 January). (→)



- • H.E. Minister of Tourism and Antiquities attended several meetings: in the process of the selection of the company that will be in charge of the ceremony of the opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum.

(←)- The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities held a meeting with the Minister of Media to discuss the promotion campaign of the opening of the museum with the company in charge of this campaign.

- The Supreme Council of Antiquities held its first meeting after the merging of the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Antiquities. Several decisions took place in the process of promoting tourism including a 50% reduction of ticket prices for foreigners throughout the months of July and August in various archeological sites and museums in Qena, Luxor, and Aswan (2 January).

- The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities met with 150 investors and representatives of the private tourism sector in the presence of the Minister of Aviation and the Governor of South Sinai, in Sharm El-Sheikh (4 January).

- The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities held a meeting with the Minister of Culture to organize the Dendera Festival in Qena, which will take place between 27 February-3 March. The festival will be held in the Dendera temple, in the Qena , and the South Valley University. Several musicians and bands will participate in the festival (14 January). (→)



- The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities held a meeting with the Minister of Communication and Technology Information to discuss the possibilities of using latest technologies in promoting Egypt in international tourism exhibitions and ways to improve internet services inside hotels and touristic resorts in Egypt (19 January).

- The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities held a meeting with the Minister of Environment to discuss methods of protecting natural reserves and promoting them (20 January).



**H.E. Minister of Antiquities met with:**

(←)- The UNESCO's ICCROM Expert in site management , to discuss technical support and the ongoing preparations of the Wadi Al-Natrun files to add the site to the UNESCO's World Heritage List (19 January).

- The Minister of Culture and Communication of Senegal to discuss opportunities for cooperation between both countries in the fields of tourism and antiquities (23 January).(→)



## Birth of Jesus Christ Icon

This icon depicts the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem, Palestine. Beside him is the Virgin Mary, who sits by the three wise men who came from the East. They came bearing gifts for the new-born, saying "We saw a star in the East which told us of the Birth of Christ. We came to present him with gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh". At the bottom of the icon we see Joseph the Carpenter. The artist depicts the devil in human form, standing in front of Joseph, persuading him to leave Mary. The angel, however, appeared to him and commanded him to take the boy and his mother and escape to Egypt. This icon dates back to the 17th century and is displayed in the Coptic Museum in Old Cairo.



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