



Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Newsletter

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Resumption of Tourism to Egypt on 1 July with 147 Flights arriving to Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada



Egypt started resuming inbound tourism to the coastal touristic governorates of South Sinai and the Red Sea. Tourists flocked to Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada during this month, as the two cities received 147 flights coming from Ukraine, Belarus, Switzerland, Hungary and Serbia. The two governorates received 26,000 tourists during the month of July.

A lot of the tourist groups have returned to their countries after finishing their trips on the picturesque beaches of Egypt, enjoying the warm and sunny weather. No cases of COVID19 have been reported since the resumption of tourism to Egypt in those governorates. Tourists praised the precautionary measures and hygiene safety regulations applied in hotels in Sharm El Sheikh and Hurghada and stated that this did not have any effect on them enjoying their time in those cities and their beautiful beaches.



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International Meetings and Visits

The Minister on an Official Visit to Ukraine and Belarus to Promote Egyptian Tourism

The Minister paid an official visit to both the Ukrainian capital Kiev and the Belarusian capital Minsk from 15 to 18 July heading an official delegation that included the Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation, the Chairman of the Travel Agents Association, and the heads of the Red Sea and South Sinai investors' associations. During the Minister's visit to Ukraine, he held several official and professional meetings, including a meeting with the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs, his deputy and the head of the tourism agency in Ukraine, to discuss increasing tourism from Ukraine to Egypt. H.E. also met the mayor of Kiev and representatives of major tour operators in Ukraine.



The Minister with the Belarusian Minister of Sports and Tourism

The Minister participated with the Ambassador of Egypt in Ukraine, the President of the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the President of the Ukrainian Association of Tour Operators, in a round table discussion organized by the Egyptian Embassy in Ukraine at the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. After Ukraine, the minister and the delegation headed to the Belarusian capital Minsk, where he held a number of official meetings; including a round table discussion with the Belarusian Minister of Sports and Tourism, representatives of the private tourism sector and major Belarus tour operators to discuss inter-tourism movement between Egypt and Belarus, showcasing tourism potentials in both countries. The Minister and his accompanying delegation also visited the Museum of Natural History of Belarus. The Minister concluded his visits to Ukraine and Belarus by doing media interviews with representatives of major news agencies, newspapers, magazines and TV channels in both countries.

Phone Calls between the Minister and his Counterparts in Albania and Jordan

In light of his keenness to communicate with his counterparts in Arab and foreign countries exporting tourism to Egypt, the minister made a number of phone calls, to the ministers of tourism in Albania and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan during the month of July to enhance joint cooperation and exchange of experiences in the field of tourism and management of hotel and hospitality establishments, and the promotion of investment in the tourism field.

...And Meetings with Heads of Missions of European Union Countries in Cairo and the British Ambassador

On 10 July, the Minister met, via video conference, with heads of missions of 24 out of 27 European Union Countries represented in Cairo. The Minister reviewed the precautionary measures and procedures taken by Egypt to resume inbound tourism. The European side reviewed the criteria for allowing citizens of countries outside the European Union to enter their territories. For their part, European Union officials stressed that there are no obstacles preventing European citizens from traveling to Egypt, noting that the travel advice in its legal definition is merely an advice and not an obligation for the European citizen, and therefore there is nothing to prevent European citizens from traveling to Egypt.

The Minister also communicated, via video conference, with the Scandinavian ambassadors in Cairo to discuss means of joint cooperation in the field of tourism.

In a related context, the Minister received the British ambassador to Cairo to discuss ways of cooperation in the field of tourism and the promotion of inbound tourism from the UK to Egypt.

Egypt and Greece Issue a Joint Statement for Tourists Coming to Both Countries

The Minister and his Greek counterpart issued a joint statement on 6 July regarding mutual care of tourists coming to both countries, within the framework of cooperation between the two countries in the field of tourism. The statement included stressing on the common interest in the resumption of travel and tourism between the two countries, whether for work or leisure, as soon as possible.

Egypt Chairs the Fourteenth Meeting of the Tourism and Sustainability Committee of the World Tourism Organization

On 13 July, the Deputy Minister for Tourism Affairs chaired, via video conference, the fourteenth meeting of the Tourism and Sustainability Committee of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). This is the first meeting that Egypt chairs as a head of this committee since January 2020 and for a period of two years. During the meeting, the final report, prepared based on the data provided by the member states of the committee, was approved in preparation for submitting it to the United Nations General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. This session will be held next October. The report includes ways of enhancing ecotourism in order to eradicate poverty and preserve the environment.

Resumption of Inbound Tourism to Egypt

The Ministry Launches a testimonial Video of a Group of Tourists during their Visit to Egypt



On July 10, the Ministry launched a Video with live shots taken with a group of tourists during their visit to Egypt. In the Video, tourists expressed their happiness to be in Egypt and enjoy its picturesque beaches and warm sunny weather.

... and Activates a Hotline to Receive Tourists' Inquiries and Opinions

In light of the resumption of incoming tourism to Egypt in the coastal touristic governorates, the Ministry activated the hotline service 19654, on July 1 to receive inquiries and comments of tourists.

This Hotline was launched by the Ministry last April, to receive complaints and suggestions of workers in the tourism sector.

Hotels in Egypt Continue to Receive the Hygiene Safety Certificate

Hotels in Egypt continue to receive the Hygiene Safety Certificate issued by the Ministry and the Ministry of Health and Population, and the Egyptian Hotel Association, after ensuring that they met all hygiene safety regulations set in accordance with international health and hygiene safety standards. The total number of hotels that have received this certificate to date has reached 606 hotels in 21 governorates throughout the country. Inspection committees continue to inspect other hotels that have applied for this certificate.

In a related context, diving centers, marine activities and yachts in various touristic destinations also continue to receive the Hygiene Safety Certificate approved by the Ministry and the Chamber of Diving and Water Sports, after ensuring that they met all the health safety regulations. The total number of certified yachts, diving centers and marine activities to date reached 387 in South Sinai and Red Sea governorates.

41 Ambassadors from around the World Visit the Baron Empain Palace

Forty one ambassadors in Cairo, from different countries all over the world, visited the Baron Empain Palace on 21 July at an invitation from the Ministry. The Baron Empain Palace was opened by His Excellency the President of Egypt at the end of June after its first complete restoration project. The Palace now has an exhibition displaying the history of Heliopolis.

After their guided tour inside the palace, the ambassadors attended a dinner held by the Ministry in the Baron Palace garden.



Ambassadors in the Baron Empain Palace

Visiting Sharm El-Sheikh Archaeological Museum

During his visit to the city of Sharm El-Sheikh, the Minister visited Sharm El-Sheikh Archaeological Museum to follow up on the work progress there in preparation for its imminent opening. Billboards and advertising signs for the museum have been placed along the main roads leading to the museum; these signs were put in cooperation with Al-Ahram Advertising Agency and South Sinai Governorate.



Sharm el-Sheikh Museum

The Egyptian Museum in Al-Tahrir Reopens for the Public



Children at the Egyptian Museum in Al-Tahrir

On 1 July, the Ministry reopened the Egyptian Museum in Al-Tahrir for the public, after being closed since last March as part of the precautionary measures taken by the Egyptian government in light of the repercussions of the Coronavirus worldwide. The Museum reopened while implementing hygiene safety regulations and precautionary measures issued by the Ministry.

Inspecting Ramses II Obelisk in New Alamein and Inauguration of a Hotel in Sidi Abdel Rahman

On 24 July, the Minister inspected the obelisk of King Ramses II, which was transferred to the New City of El-Alamein last August from the Andalus Park in Zamalek. The Minister followed up on restoration work carried out by a team of the restorers of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. During his visit to the city of El-Alamein, the Minister inaugurated a new hotel in Sidi Abdel Rahman, a new addition to tourism investments in the area.

In another context, on 11 July, the Minister and the Minister of Civil Aviation visited the archeological museum of the Cairo International Airport Museum in Terminal 2, which will showcase around 70 artifacts. He also visited the Royal Carriages Museum in Bulaq on 5 July, in order to get an update on the progress of work on the two projects in preparation for their imminent opening.



Cairo International Airport Museum



The obelisk of King Ramses II

Local Visits

The Prime Minister Visits Aswan and St. Catherine

On 21 July, the Prime Minister, accompanied by a ministerial delegation, visited Saint Catherine. H.E. the Prime Minister inspected Saint Catherine's City Airport and a number of service and development projects in it. The Prime Minister also visited the residence of the late President Anwar El-Sadat there and the Monastery of Saint Catherine.

This important visit aimed at getting an on ground look on the development needs of the city of Saint Catherine, and putting a clear vision for the development plan of various sectors, in light of the directives of His Excellency the President.

On July 14, the Prime Minister visited Aswan, and during that visit the Minister inspected safety procedures at the Philae Temple in Aswan, which was reopened to visitors in early July. The Minister also visited hotels that received the Hygiene Safety Certificate in Aswan to follow up on the implementation of health safety regulations.



The Prime Minister Inside the Monastery of Saint Catherine

The Minister Meets with Investors of Dahab, Taba and Nuweiba

During the visit to the South Sinai governorate on 10 and 11 July, a meeting was held with the investors of the cities of Dahab, Taba and Nuweiba in order to listen to their problems and discuss the obstacles of tourism development in this area.

A number of hotels and touristic projects in the cities of Dahab and Nuweiba were inspected, as well as one of the touristic boats in Sharm El Sheikh to follow up the application of hygiene Safety regulations issued by the Ministry, in addition to meeting a group of Ukrainian and Belarusian tourists, who praised the quality of services and the hotels' compliance with Hygiene Safety regulations.



The Minister with a group of tourists

The National Museum for Egyptian Civilization Receives 17 Royal Coffins

On 27 July and in preparation for the "Royal Mummies Parade", the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Fustat received 17 royal coffins, from the Egyptian Museum in Al-Tahrir, for restoration and preparation for display.

The process of transporting the coffins was carried out amidst high security by the Tourism and Antiquities Police and under the supervision of archaeologists and restorers of the National Museum for Egyptian Civilization. The process of transferring the royal mummies from the current place of display in the Egyptian Museum in Al-Tahrir to the place of permanent display in the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Al-Fustat is scheduled to take place soon, amid a majestic royal parade befitting the grandeur of the ancient Egyptian civilization.



One of the royal coffins

Archaeological Discoveries and External Exhibitions

The Discovery of a Number of Ancient Rooms Next to the Royal Necropolis of Abydos

On 14 July, the team of the archaeological survey operating in the desert plateau area, west of Abydos, revealed a group of openings at a high level from the mountain front dating back to the Ptolemaic period. These openings are located in the sacred valley area south of the royal necropolis at Umm al-Qa'ab, and they are found to lead to rooms cut into rock. It is likely that, it dates back to the era of the modern state and was reused in the Ptolemaic era. The preliminary study indicates that they have great religious importance.

An Archaeological Wall Found during the Arrest of a Group Antiquities Looters

The Archaeological Committee, headed by the Director General of Qena Antiquities, has finished studying a stone wall that was revealed when the tourism and antiquities police arrested four people who were illegally excavating in the "Ho" area of Nagaa Hammadi. The wall is made of sandstone and is decorated with inscriptions and cartridges belonging to the Ptolemaic era. It bears the name of King Ptolemy the Fourth.

Discovery of a Number of Carved Stone Blocks and Statues in the Mitt Rahina Area



Part of the discovery

Archaeologists of the Supreme Council of Antiquities uncovered a number of carved stone blocks and archaeological statues, during a rescue excavation that started by the Council inside a plot of land owned by a citizen, which is about 2 kilometers southeast of the Mait Rahina area.

The discovered blocks and statues are made of pink and black granite and limestone and date back to the era of King Ramses II, in addition to some blocks of limestone dating back to the Coptic era, which indicates the reuse of the area in later eras. A statue of King Ramses II accompanied by two gods and a number of different deities like Sekhmet, Battah and Hathor were also discovered.

The Opening of the Exhibition "Sunken Cities: The Enchanting World of Egypt" in Virginia

On 3 July, the Virginia Museum of Art opened the "Sunken Cities: The Enchanting World of Egypt" exhibition in its fourth station in the United States of America. The exhibition includes 293 artifacts that have been recovered from the eastern port of the city of Alexandria and the port of Abu Qir. Among the most important pieces on display are huge statues of the gods Isis and Serapis and statues of the Sphinx, in addition to some jewelry and household items. The exhibition is scheduled to continue until January 2021. The exhibition receives only 35 visitors every quarter of an hour, as part of the precautionary measures taken by the museum administration in accordance with the international health safety standards. The working hours extend from 9:00AM until 10:00PM to prevent overcrowding of visitors.



Isis statue displayed at the exhibition

Important News

Increasing the Occupancy Rate of Touristic Restaurants to 50%

As of 26 July 2020, touristic cafes, restaurants and cafeterias were allowed to increase their occupancy rate to 50% of their capacity, with an emphasis on the application of all preventive and precautionary hygiene safety measures. They were also allowed to open to the public until midnight.

The Ministry Announces the Working Hours of Museums and Archaeological Sites in Upper Egypt

On 5 July, the Ministry announced that museums and archaeological sites in Upper Egypt governorates, that were opened to the public early July, would receive their visitors daily from 9 am until 1 pm. This included the museums of Nubia, Luxor, the temples of Abu Simbel, the Philae of Aswan, Karnak, Luxor, Deir El-Bahari, and Cemeteries Valley of the Kings in Luxor.

A Meeting to Discuss the Development of Al-Tahrir Complex

On 16 July, the Minister, the Minister of Planning and Economic Development, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Egypt's Sovereign Fund, and the Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities held a meeting, via video conference, to discuss the development of Al-Tahrir complex; in the presence of the Executive Director of Egypt's Sovereign Fund. It was proposed that Al-Tahrir complex would be a multi-functional building with a variety of cultural, hospitality and commercial activities.

The Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board Organizes Visits for Citizens in Different Governorates

Within the framework of the Ministry's keenness on raising touristic and archeological awareness among citizens, the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board organized visits to a number of touristic and archeological sites in different governorates. The visits included tours to the ancient Port Said Lighthouse, the base of the De Lesseps Statue and the Church of Saint Eugene in Port Said, in addition to a tour of the Antiquities Museum in Matrouh.

In light of "Alexandria in Our Eyes" initiative, which is scheduled to continue throughout the months of July and August on the occasion of the celebration of the National Day of Alexandria Governorate, the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board organized a tour to the most important archaeological sites in Alexandria on July 21. This included the Royal Jewelry Museum, the Catacombs of Kom El-Shoqafa and the pillar of the masts in Alexandria. On this occasion, the National Museum of Alexandria organized an antique exhibition entitled "Alexandrian People" on July 26. The exhibition highlights the Abu Mina mural and the statue of Alexander the Great.

The Ministry launches a competition on "Facebook" to highlight the beauty of Egyptian beaches

On 23 July, the Ministry launched a photography competition, on "Facebook", for amateur photographers showcasing the beauty of Egyptian beaches, in cooperation with "Nomads" group for tourism and travel and the Egyptian Hotels Association.

This competition aims at encouraging photographers to take photos to highlight the beauty of the picturesque beaches of the Egyptian coastal cities, and promote them through the lenses of the Egyptians.

On 5 August, the winners who participated in the competition whose photos will get the most likes, will be awarded prizes. The prizes are 3 trips for two to spend three nights in a hotel in three touristic cities; namely El-Alamein, El-Gouna and Sharm El-Sheikh.



Educational and Guided Visits to the Baron Palace



The children of "Awladna" at the Baron Palace

The Ministry, represented by the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board in cooperation with the Foundation "Awladna" for Arts of special abilities, organized a visit for children with special abilities to the Baron Empain Palace in Heliopolis.

On 22 July, the Department of Cultural Development and Social Communication in cooperation with the "Ain Misr Association" organized a guided tour to the Baron Empain Palace in Heliopolis for a number of blind young people.

On 3 July, the Ministry published a brochure titled "The Story of Heliopolis" in Arabic and English, after the inauguration of the "Heliopolis, Sun City" exhibition at the Baron Empain Palace.

In a related context, and in light of the high turnout for visiting the Baron Empain Palace, the Ministry has extended the exceptional opening hours of the palace, from 9 am to 6 pm, until further notice.

Sunken Monuments in Egypt



Egypt is a land that embraces secrets from history that are revealed to us from time to time through archaeological discoveries that dazzle the whole world. Archaeological treasures are not only found in the Land of Egypt but in its waters as well. The first discoveries of sunken monuments in the city of Alexandria were by mere chance in 1909. During the expansion of the port of Dekheila, remains of an old dock were found. According to the 2001 UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, sunken monuments are defined as “those that are cultural, historical or archaeological and have been partially or completely submerged in water periodically or continuously for at least a hundred years”.

In Alexandria, many sunken monuments were uncovered. The remains of an old port dock were discovered in northwest ancient Pharos Island at a depth of 11 meters in 1912. In 1933 the remains of the sunken city of Canop were found, and a huge statue made of red granite for a lady, was discovered sunken east of Qaitbay Citadel in 1960. In 1995, the French Center for Alexandrian Studies carried out scientific excavations to uncover the remains of the ancient Lighthouse of Alexandria, recover and restore about 35 artifacts, the most important of which was a huge statue of King Ptolemy II. Archaeological missions, after 1995, worked on uncovering the sunken heritage of Egypt, where more than ten missions of different nationalities worked in the field of sunken monuments in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.

Due to the importance of marine heritage, the Supreme Council of Antiquities established the Central Department for Sunken Antiquities in 1996 with the aim of uncovering, protecting the underwater cultural heritage in regional waters and supervising the work of the missions. This department has a unique nature of work, as its work is limited under the waters of seas, lakes and the Nile River, where sunken monuments are located either because of the sinking of a ship or building, the change of the course of the Nile, the factors of coastal erosion, or the fall of artifacts into the water. The department also worked on excavations in the oldest seaport that dates back to the era of King Khufu of the Fourth Dynasty on the coast of the Red Sea in the Jarf Valley, as well as the fossils of the Nile River in Aswan. In view of the importance of the discoveries in the field of sunken archeology, various collections of royal jewelry and statues from different eras were exhibited in the museums of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the National Museum of Alexandria and in Matrouh and Hurghada museums. In addition to that, many external exhibitions featured and showcased Egypt's sunken heritage; such as the exhibition of "Glory of Alexandria" in France in 1998, and the exhibition of "Egypt's Underwater Antiquities" in 2006, and the "Sunken Cities: The Enchanting World of Egypt" exhibition in the United States of America, since 2015 until now.

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