

## Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Newsletter



**July 2021** 

Issue 19

# 1 Year on The Resumption of Inbound Tourism to Egypt After the Coronavirus Crisis



On 1 July last year, inbound tourism to Egypt's coastal cities resumed and our borders haven't been closed to tourism since then. With strict hygiene safety regulations in place, tourists flocked to our destinations and now we receive around 500,000 tourists per month. This came after months of lockdown because of the Coronavirus Pandemic that is one of the most pressing global health problems that affect to a great extent all aspects of life, having a huge impact on the travel and tourism industry worldwide. (1 Year on the Resumption of inbound tourism to Egypt in the annex).



Egypt Permits 74 Nationalities to Obtain E-Visa p. 2



Cairo is Among Time Magazine's top 100 travel destinations p. 3



EU Ambassadors in Cairo Promote Egypt in 20 Videos p. 4



Egypt to Revive Yachting Tourism p. 7

## **Egypt Adds 28 New Nationalities to Growing Tourist E-Visa List**

Egypt has added 28 new countries to its list of nationalities able to obtain a tourism visa electronically as part of the country's efforts to drive more visitors to the country. The country now permits 74 nationalities to obtain tourism e-visas. The online e-visa portal supports 8 languages. It also answers many tourist inquiries and features secure electronic payment. An Egyptian tourist e-visa costs US25\$ for one entry or US60\$ for multiple entries. The visa is issued in a maximum of 7



days. Tourists can apply for an e-visa via this link: https://www.visa2egypt.gov.eg/

### **Putin Lifts Ban on Charter Flights to Egypt**

On July 8, President Vladimir Putin scrapped Russia's ban on charter flights to and from the Red Sea and South Sinai governorates six years after suspending them. Putin's decree lifting the ban to Egypt's year-round resorts in Sharm al-Sheikh and Hurghada which attracted large numbers of Russians for years, was positively received by the tourism sector in Egypt.

## The PM Inspects Restoration Project of Sphinx Avenue in Luxor and Amr Ibn Al-As Mosque in Cairo

On 6 July 2021 Egypt's Prime Minister, inspected the restoration project of the Sphinx Avenue in Luxor, and the work progress in Karnak and Luxor temples, in preparation for the opening ceremony. He was accompanied by the Minister, the Ministry of Housing, Utilities & Urban Communities, the governor of Luxor and the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. During his tour of Karnak Temple, he oversaw the restoration work of the statue of Thutmose II, which has been in ruins for more than a thousand years. He also visited the Corniche of Luxor. On that day the PM also visited Aswan to follow up on the progress of work in many projects including the tourists market. In a related context, the PM visited the project of developing the yards of Amr ibn Al-Aas Mosque, which is part of Old Cairo's Fustat Park project. He was accompanied by the



The PM in Karnak with a group of tourists

Minister, and the ministers of Local Development, Housing, Utilities & Urban Communities, along with Cairo governor. The project is planned to mirror Egypt's long history and restore Cairo's status as an international and regional tourist destination and hub.

# Hotels' Occupancy Rates Raised to 70% and Inspection Committees Increased in Touristic Governorates

This July, the Prime Minister announced easing coronavirus restrictions in Egypt by raising occupancy rate in hotels to 70 % during the Higher Committee for the Management of the Coronavirus Crisis. The Ministry increased the number of inspection committees of hotels and resorts in the Red Sea governorate and the North Coast ahead of the summer vacations. Inspection committees had completed their work in hotels and resorts of South Sinai earlier. The Ministry also inspected 4 new hotels in preparation for issuing their operating licenses.

## Re-Counting Stars: Revisiting Hotel Rating According to New Criteria

This July the Ministry started 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. 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. Re-evaluation started in hotels and resorts in the Red Sea governorate, then work will continue in South Sinai then the rest of the governorates will follow.

## Luxor Receives First Charter Flights From Spain, France Since Resumption of Tourism in July 2020

On 31 July, Luxor received the first charter flight from Spain since the resumption of inbound tourism on 1 July 2021. The plane coming from the Spanish capital Madrid was carrying 114 tourists. Spain is scheduled to operate two chartered flights per week from to Luxor until October of this year.

On the same day, Luxor also received the first charter flight from Paris, France carrying 178 French tourists. Acharter flight is scheduled to operate once a week from France to Luxor until November of this year.

## **Preparing A Grand Event for The Sphinx Avenue Reopening**

The Minister visited Luxor, on 31 July ahead of Sphinx Avenue reopening, to follow up on the progress of work in the ongoing project there, as the Ministry is preparing for a grand event on this occasion. He was accompanied by the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. They visited Karnak temples, to follow up on services provided to visitors, in addition to the ongoing restoration of the statue of King Thutmose II in front of the Eighth Pylon. During his visit, the Minister met tourists from Brazil, Germany, France, Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia.



The Minister with tourists in Luxor

## Cairo Appears Among Time Magazine's Top 100 Travel Destinations for 2021

Time Magazine, in its annual classification, added Cairo to its list of the top 100 exceptional destinations in the world for 2021. A number of major cities were on the list including Athens, Berlin, Cannes, Las Vegas, and Madrid. Cairo was selected, according to the magazine, due to the construction of the Grand Egyptian Museum, which will be inaugurated soon, as well as the "Ahl Masr" (People of Egypt) Walk on the Nile Corniche and a number of luxury hotels. In related news, Tripadvisor, the largest travel platform in the world, chose Cairo and the tourist resorts of Marsa Alam among the most popular tourist destinations in the world for 2021.





On 13 July, the Giza Plateau hosted Egyptian, Greek and Cypriot youth of the 'Nostos -The Return' Presidential initiative, participating in its fourth edition. On July 27, the archeological site also hosted, the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on the sidelines of their current visit to Egypt.

In a related context, the Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development in Libya visited Al-Azhar Mosque, on July 4 during her visit to Egypt to attend the opening of the Cairo International Book Fair.

## **Tourists From All Over The World Promote Egypt**

On July 27, the Ministry launched two new promotional videos shot with tourists talking about their experience in Egypt, on social media platforms in the most important markets exporting tourism to Egypt The tourists said they enjoyed Egypt's picturesque beaches and warm sunny weathers. They all praised the strict hygiene safety regulations implements, which made them feel safe during their stay in Egypt. They also praised the quality of services they received.

## **EU Ambassadors in Cairo Promote Egypt in 20 Videos**

Under the title 'Egypt in the eyes of European Union ambassadors', the ambassadors of European Union countries in Cairo published more than 20 videos to promote the various Egyptian tourist, archaeological and cultural sites on their social media platforms and those of their embassies. Each Ambassador chose to shoot and talk about their favorite place in Egypt. This initiative was carried out in coordination between the European Union, the Ministry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and posted on the Ministry's social media platforms.

## Contracting An International Company to Manage and Develop Social Media Platforms Sites and Website of The ETPB

In July, the Ministry contracted an international company develop and manage the promotional social media platforms of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board (ETPB), as well as its website. On July 10, the Minister met with them. This is part of the Ministry's plan to update and modernize its marketing and promotion tools to be in line with international trends as digital marketing has now become the most popular and most engaging marketing tool worldwide, attracting diverse segments of travelers.

#### **International Cooperation**

# The Minister records Speeches for the French-Egyptian Antiquities Day and the Annual Conference of German Egyptologists

The Minister recorded a speech for the French-Egyptian Archeology Day in its fifth edition, which was broadcast on social media platforms on the eve of France's National Day on July 14. He spoke about the close French-Egyptian cooperation in the field of antiquities.

The Minister also recorded a speech that was broadcast at the opening session of the Permanent Annual Conference of Egyptology Scholars (SÄK) held in Mainz, Germany from 9 to 11 July. The conference was held virtually for the first time this year under the title 'Egyptology 2021'.

## **Deputy Minister for Tourism Affairs Visits Kiev**

In July, Deputy Minister for Tourism Affairs paid a visit to the Ukrainian capital, Kiev. She held a number of meetings and media interviews, to discuss enhancing cooperation in the tourism field between the two sides. She met with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade, the head of the Ukrainian Tourism Promotion Agency, President of the Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In a related context, the CEO of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board met with a number of tour operators and representatives of tourism companies in the Ukrainian market.



The meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Ukraine

#### .. And Participates in The Regional Meeting of The World Travel and **Tourism Council**

In July, the Deputy Minister also participated in the regional meeting of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). The meeting was attended by the acting CEO of the Council, the Executive Vice President for the Middle East, the Council's ambassador for Africa and the Middle East, the CEO of the Moroccan National Tourism Office, and the Vice President of Commercial Operations at Emirates Airlines. She talked about the importance of tourism for the Egyptian national economy, and highlighted the measures taken by Egypt to resume inbound tourism on 1 July 2020.

### The CEO of the ETPB Participates in the International Tourism Recovery **Summit in Kenya**

On July 16, the CEO of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board, on behalf of the Minister, participated in the International Tourism Recovery Summit, held in Nairobi, Kenya, at aninvitation of the Kenyan Minister of Tourism. A number of ministers, officials and decision-makers in the tourism sector participated in this summit, including the Minister of Tourism of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and of Jamaica among others.

### **Repatriated Artifacts**

#### Repatriating A Statue of The Priest 'Ni Kao Ptah' From The Netherlands

The Ministry in coordination with the ministry of Foreign Affairs succeeded in retrieving a legless statue of the priest "Ni Kao Ptah" dating back to the Old Kingdom, which was on sale at the annual European Fine Art Exhibition 'Tefaf' in the city of Maastricht, the Netherlands. This took place in cooperation between the Egyptian Embassy in the Hague and Dutch authorities.

Egypt proved that this statue was smuggled illegally out of the country. This is part of Egypt's continuous efforts to repatriate its antiquities that were smuggled abroad.



The repatriated statue



Archaeologists have found rare remains of a military vessel and a Greek funerary complex at Thonis-Heracleion in an ancient sunken city that once served as Egypt's main Mediterranean port.

The find was made during underwater excavations at Thonis-Heracleion, a one-time bustling metropolis that sat on the edge of the Nile river where it meets with the Mediterranean sea. Thonis-Heracleion was for centuries considered Egypt's largest port in the area until Alexander the Great founded the coastal city of Alexandria in 331 Before Christ (BC). The city, submerged following a series of earthquakes and tidal waves, was discovered in 2001. stone blocks contributed to preserving the ship Below the deep channel now filled with temple debris.

### **Greco-Roman Pottery Workshop Discovered In Egypt**

A Greco-Roman pottery workshop has been discovered in Egypt, at a site also bearing evidence of use since the Early Dynastic period. The Egyptian mission of the Ministry working at the site of Tell Kom Aziza in Abu Hummus, Beheira governorate in the Delta unearthed remains of a pottery workshop dated to the Greco-Roman period. The workshop has structures dated to the period between the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC and the 1<sup>st</sup> century. The formation area where some tools were found including metal tools and parts of the pottery wheel and formed clay parts. The drying area which is the space where the clay used to be left to get direct sun before burning in the ovens to become pottery.

#### **Meetings** -

## **Board Meeting of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board**

In July, the Minister chaired the meeting of the board of directors of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board. The meeting discussed inbound tourism to Egypt, as tourist numbers are steadily rising and have almost doubled since January and February 2021. The number of tourists who arrived to Egypt in January was 15 % of the same period in 2019 and 46 % of the period of March to May 2019 and in June it reached 56 % of June 2019. This indicates the confidence of tourists in Egypt as a tourist destination and their confidence in the hygiene safety regulations implemented

### Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Supreme Council of Antiquities

On July 27, the Board of Directors of the Supreme Council of Antiquities was held under the chairmanship of the Minister. The meeting discussed amending regulations governing filming in museums and archaeological sites to be more attractive to Egyptian and international film makers. It also discussed the procedures for transferring the artifact, which the Council of Ministers agreed on its display in the Egyptian pavilion participating in Expo 2020 Dubai, which begins next October and will last for 6 months.



### **Launching the Updated National Strategy for Tourism**

The Minister and the Minister of Civil Aviation witnessed, in a meeting held on July 5, the launch of the updated national strategy for tourism, done by the same Italian expert house that prepared it in 2009. This strategy was not implemented due to circumstances that faced the tourism sector in recent years. The decision to update this strategy is part of the sector's efforts to promote responsible and sustainable tourism. The strategy is scheduled to be complete in less than a year, and is done in coordination with the Egyptian Tourism Federation.

### **Upgrading Tourism Experience at key Attractions**

On July 3, the Minister held a meeting to discuss the progress of work carried out in archeological sites and museums to raise the standard of services provided to visitors to improve the their experience. The meeting reviewed the recent updates in the work done to upgrade services in 30 key attractions. On July 11, the Minister met with the committee in charge of developing and upgrading tourism services in museums and archaeological sites. The committee presented what has been done so far to improve the services provided to visitors in the Baron Palace in Heliopolis, the Citadel in Cairo, and the Pyramids of Giza, which is scheduled to be complete before the end of October.

## The International Canadian-English Alliance to Deliver The Media **Strategy End of August**

10 July, the Minister, via videoconference, met with the international Canadian-English alliance contracted by the Ministry in January to prepare an integrated media strategy in preparation for the launch of an international promotional campaign for Egyptian tourism for a period of 3 years, that will start in the last quarter of this year. The final version of this media strategy is scheduled to be delivered before the end of August.

## Meeting the CEO of Operations in the Middle East at Marriott International in EMEA



From the meeting

On July 13, the Minister met President of Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) at Marriott International, Vice President of Marriott in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, and Senior Advisor to Marriott Hotels in Egypt. They discussed a number of topics related to tourism and hospitality, identified investment opportunities in new resorts and talked about increasing investments in hotels, in new cities such as El Alamein, El Galala, the North Coast, among others.

#### .. And the Ambassadors of the EU and Switzerland

In July, the minister also met the Swiss ambassador in Cairo, to discuss enhancing tourism and archaeological cooperation between the two countries, with Egypt removed from Switzerland's mandatory quarantine list. They also discussed cooperation in the field of hospitality, training and capacity building of tourism staff. They also talked about working together to continue to combat illegal trafficking of cultural property, as the two countries signed a cooperation agreement in 2010 in this regard.

## Discussing Digital Transformation and Electronic Payments in the Ministry

On July 26, the Minister held a meeting to discuss work progress in the digital transformation and electronic payment system at the Ministry. The company in charge of developing the electronic promotional portal for Egypt presented the progress in the work done on the portal which contains information of interest to tourists about Egypt and its tourist destinations. The meeting discussed the first consolidated and unified database for workers in the tourism sector. It reviewed work done to link the automation of notifications of tourism programs and trips using an advanced system which informs all concerned parties and links them to the tourist insurance system. Electronic points of sale, allowing tourists to pay using credit cards, will soon be in all archaeological sites. The Ministry is now working on developing of a mobile application for tourists' services.

### **Meeting The Steering Committee of The Syndicate of Tourist Guides**

In July, the Deputy Minister for Tourism Affairs met with the steering committee of the General Syndicate of Tourist Guides. They discussed the database of licensed tourist guides and holding the elections as soon as possible.

In a related context, the Deputy Minister convened with Ambassador of Sri Lanka in Cairo, and they discussed enhancing means of cooperation between the two countries in the field of tourism.

### **Meeting with Wizz Air**

In July, the CEO of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board met with representatives of the international airline company, Wizz Air. They talked about enhancing cooperation in and marketing Egyptian destinations and reviewing development plans for the operation of current flights organized by the company from countries around the world to Sharm El Sheikh, Hurghada, Burg Al Arab, Luxor and Sohag airports.

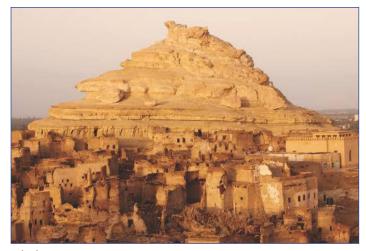


initiative by the Egyptian Embassy in Canada, for the second year in a row. In a related context, on the occasion of World Liver Day, July 28, The Great Pyramid and the Castle of Muhammad Ali, were lit in blue and orange to celebrate the elimination of Hepatitis C in Egypt. This is part of the cooperation between the Ministry and the Ministry of Health and Population.



On July 11, the Minister participated in the inaugural session of the annual conference of Al-Ahram Al-Iqtisadi magazine in its fifth edition, titled "Sustainable Development and Digital Transformation... Opportunities and Challenges". The Minister shed light on the strategy of the Ministry for Sustainable Development - Vision 2030. He reviewed tourism statistics to Egypt during the years 2020, 2019 and 2021, indicating that the average number of tourists who came to Egypt from March to June was more than 500,000 tourists. This indicates their confidence in Egypt's destinations.

## The Egyptian Museum, Shali city, Baron Palace on ISESCO's Heritage List





The Egyptian Museum in Tahrir

In its recent meeting in Rabat, the Heritage Committee of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) approved registring the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir, the city of Shali in Siwa Oasis, and the Baron Palace in Heliopolis on the ISESCO heritage list. This came after the Ministry submitted integrated files regarding the archaeological and cultural aspects of these sites, alongside their architectural elements and state of preservation.

### Allocating EGP 300,000 to Support Horse Carriages in Luxor

In coordination with the Ministry, the Egyptian Hotel Association allocated an amount of LE 300,000 to support owners of horse carriages in Luxor Governorate, providing food to animals through the Brooke Charitable Foundation. Coordination is currently underway with the Giza Governorate to allocate an amount of LE 200,000 to support the owners of horse carriages in it, by providing food to the animals and training their owners.

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





**The National Museum of Egyptian Civilization** 

## The Museum Holds Events .. and Receives Ministers and Public Figures from All Over The world



From one of the official visits to the Museum

From the puppet-operetta

During the month of July, the museum received ministers, officials and public figures from Egypt and many countries around the world; including: the Serbian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and Information, the Libyan Minister of Culture, the Minister of Housing and Infrastructure of South Africa, the Iraqi Minister of Labor, and the Syrian Minister of Endowments

A number of cultural events were held in the Museum during the month of July; including a Harp performance in the Roman theater, and the "El-Leila El-Kebira" puppets-operetta in the theatre

# Honoring Students of The Faculties of Fine Arts, Applied Arts and Art Education at Helwan University

On July 14, the Museum honored a number of students from the Faculties of Fine Arts, Applied Arts and Art Education at Helwan University, in appreciation of their efforts in participating in the "Pharaohs' Golden Parade".



#### **The Grand Egyptian Museum**

#### The Prime Minister Follows up on the Progress of Work at the Museum



From the PM's visit to the GEM

On July 5, the Prime Minister visited the Museum to follow up on the progress of work there and the ongoing development in its surrounding area. The PM asserted that HE the President gave clear directives to the government to finish this project and all others related to renovating archeological and historical sites nationwide. He was accompanied by the Minister, the Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities, the Governor of Giza, the General Supervisor of the Museum Project and the surrounding area, the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, and assistant Minister for Archaeological Affairs at the Museum.

## Discussing the Action Plan of Hassan Allam Coalition at the Museum's Board of Directors Meeting

On July 13, the meeting of the Museum Authority's Board of Directors was held under the chairmanship of the Minister to discuss a number of topics. Representatives of the Hassan Allam coalition that won the provision and operation of services in the museum, were invited to present and discuss its work plan in the coming period. They discussed the strategy for operating the services in the museum to ensure its readiness upon opening. The Board agreed to hold a series of workshops, starting August, between members of the board of directors and specialists in the Ministry with representatives of the Hassan Allam coalition to discuss all aspects and details of their action plan and service operation strategy.

Excavating Project of second Khufu Boat Complete and 1,343 of its Pieces **Transferred to the Museum** 

The Egyptian-Japanese archaeological mission, headed by the President of Japan's Higashi Nippon International University and Honorary Professor at Waseda University, completed the excavation of the second Khufu Boat from the pit in which it was discovered beside Khufu pyramid in the Giza plateau. Nearly 1,700 wooden pieces were extracted from 13 layers inside the pit, and the registration and documentation of all pieces have been done, as well as the initial restoration of most of these pieces was completed. So far, 1343 pieces of them have been transferred to the Museum, where preparations are



Restoration work on the wooden pieces of the second Khufu Boat

underway for starting the second phase that include the final restoration work, as well as conducting the necessary studies for assembling and re-installing the boat that will be displayed next to the first Khufu Boat inside the new building dedicated for King Khufu's boats, which is now being constructed at the GEM.

## 222 Years on the Discovery of the Rosetta Stone

The famous Rosetta stone was discovered in July 1799 in the the fort of Sultan Qaitbay (Fort of Julien) (1496-1468 A.D) in the city of Rashid (Rosetta) in Nile Delta, 222 years ago. While repairing its defenses, Lieutenant Pierre-François Bouchard, an officer of the French expedition (1801-1798) uncovered the famous Rosetta Stone at the fort, apparently it was brought in to the site from elsewhere, to be used as a filling stone during the Mamluk period. It was the first Ancient Egyptian bilingual text recovered in modern time. The Rosetta Stone is a fragment of a larger granodiorite stela, it is 114 cm high it is inscribed in three scripts of a decree issued in Memphis, Egypt during the Ptolemaic period on behalf of King Ptolemy V (204-181 B.C) The stela was erected after the coronation of King Ptolemy V and was inscribed with a decree that established the divine cult of the new ruler. The decree was issued by a congress of priests who gathered at Memphis, the decree records that Ptolemy V gave gifts to the temples. In return the priesthood pledged that the king's birthday and coronation days would be celebrated annually and that all the priests of Egypt would serve him alongside the other gods. The decree concludes with the instruction that a copy was to be placed in every temple, inscribed in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs



(14 lines), and Demotic (32 lines) scripts, and translated to the Greek language (53 lines). It is believed to have originally been displayed at one of the temples close to the city of Rashid possibly at nearby temple of Sais, in the city now known as Sa Al-Hajar. It was probably moved during the Mameluk period, and was eventually used as building material in the construction of the fort of Sultan Qaitbay near the town of Rashid (Rosetta) in the Nile Delta. The stone was transferred from Rashid to Cairo in 179 and when the French left Egypt, the British stipulated that they hand over their archaeological discoveries in Egypt to them, including the Rosetta Stone. The Rosetta stone was transferred to England in February 1802, where it was displayed in the British Museum in London. After attempts by several scholars to decipher the incantations of the ancient Egyptian language, Jean-François Champollion succeeded in deciphering the ancient Egyptian hieroglyph 170 on September 1822. The name of the stone is still closely linked to the city of Rashid (Rosetta), the deciphering of the ancient Egyptian language engraved on the stone marked the beginning of Egyptology.

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