

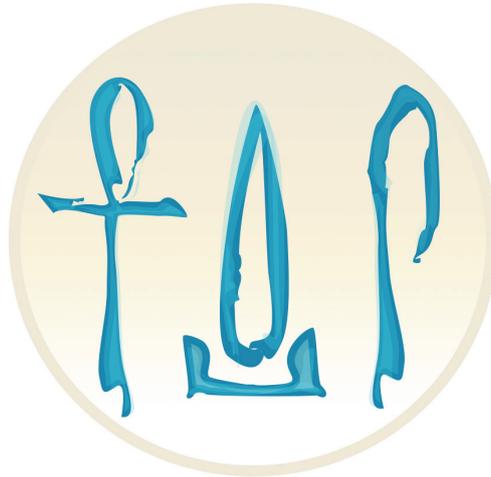


Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

# Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Newsletter

Issue: 5  
May  
2020

## 78 Hotels in Egypt Receive the Hygiene Safety Certificate



### LIFE, PROSPERITY, HEALTH

In May, 78 hotels in various governorates of Egypt, including the Red Sea, South Sinai, Alexandria, Suez, Greater Cairo, and Matrouh, received the Hygiene Safety Certificate, approved by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Ministry of Health and Population, and the Egyptian Hotel Association. This ensures that they fulfil all health and safety regulations required by the Egyptian Cabinet according to World Health Organization guidelines.

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has approved a Hygiene Safety Sign, that must be visible in all hotels as a prerequisite for them to receive guests. This sign shows the sun, characteristic of Egypt's warm weather and its open-air spaces, encompassing three hieroglyphs "Ankh, Udja, Seneb" meaning Life, Prosperity and Health. The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has formed operations centres in its offices in tourist governorates to inspect hotels that acquired the Hygiene Safety Certificate, to ensure their continued commitment and application of the regulations. The Ministry also formed joint committees to inspect hotels in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Population, the Egyptian Hotel Association, and representatives from the concerned governorates. In the same context, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities posted a video in both Arabic and English, highlighting the most important information about the Health and Safety regulations.

Former Minister of Antiquities, Dr. Zahi Hawass posted a video to the world explaining the Hygiene Safety Sign that must be available in all hotels. In a related context, it was decided to start operating hotels that received the hygiene safety certificate starting 15 May 2020 as an experimental stage of operation with a maximum occupancy rate of 25%, including the day-use, and with an occupancy rate of 50% as of 1 June 2020.

For more details on health and safety regulations, visit the following link:

<https://twitter.com/TourismandAntiq/status/1265614244235612162?s=08>



**Visits of H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities in governorates p. 3**



**H.E. the Prime Minister visits Tahrir Square P. 4**



**New discoveries in the mummification workshop, Saqqara P. 6**



**Feast cake is an ancient Egyptian custom p. 8**

## Tourism and Antiquities Faces the "Coronavirus"

### H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Follows up on the Implementation of the Hygiene Safety Regulations in Hotels



#### H.E. the Minister visiting a hotel

During the month of May, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities visited the governorates of South Sinai and Red Sea, to follow up on hotels' implementation of the regulations set by the Ministry, as a prerequisite for them to receive domestic tourism with a maximum occupancy rate of 25%.

In South Sinai Governorate, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities and the Governor of South Sinai visited a number of hotels in Sharm El-Sheikh. The Minister also met with a group of tourism investors in the governorate. The Minister also visited Sharm El-Sheikh International Airport, Sharm El-Sheikh General Hospital, and Sharm El-Sheikh Archaeological Museum project.

In a related context, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities made another visit to the Red Sea Governorate, where he met with the Red Sea Governor, and a group of investors in the governorate, to discuss latest developments in the return of tourism to hotels. He also visited hotels and medical clinics within hotels there.

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities also visited El-Galala Project upon an invitation from the Engineering Authority of the Armed Forces, and was accompanied by the Executive Director of the project.

### The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Releases a Promotional Film on Precautionary Measures intended for Airports and Hotels

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, in cooperation with the Egyptian Tourism Federation, launched a promotional film on the precautionary measures taken by the Egyptian airports and hotels to receive domestic tourism, as hotels started their first phase of operation, on an experimental basis, on 15 May with a maximum occupancy rate of 25% of the total hotel capacity.

### The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Suspends a Hotel in Marsa Alam

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities issued a decision to suspend the activities of a hotel in Marsa Alam in the Red Sea Governorate for a period of six months. The decision followed complaints against the hotel from Egyptian guests who were spending a quarantine period in Marsa Alam after their return. Those guests were transferred to another hotel, and the Ministry instructed hotels to follow regulations for receiving Egyptians upon their return to spend the quarantine period before going home.

### The Ministers of Tourism and Antiquities and Electricity Meet to Discuss Decisions to Support the Tourism Sector

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, H.E. the Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy, and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Egyptian Tourism Federation met to discuss how to implement the decision of the Cabinet postponing the payment of overdue electricity bills of hotels and tourism establishments in light of the Coronavirus crisis. The payments were postponed until October 2020.

### ..And H.E. the Minister of Finance Announces an Initiative to Support the Tourism Sector

H.E. the Minister of Finance announced a new initiative supporting the tourism sector. This initiative would enable tourism and hotel establishments to fulfil their salary obligations, and meet basic employment requirements.

The Ministry of Finance provides EGP 3 Bn-worth guarantees to the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) allowing tourist and hotel establishments to take out loans over three years from national banks at an annual interest rate of 5%. The loans will have a general grace period starting from 1 May without guarantee, and can be repaid in monthly instalments to distribute the burden over two years, ensuring spending on the operations' basic needs does not exceed 15% of the value of the loan granted to the facility. H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities explained that tourism and hotel establishments will provide the lending banks with statements of their employee names and their bank account numbers. This will ensure that salaries are directly transferred from the bank to the employees.

## Tourism and Antiquities Faces the "Coronavirus"

### The Ministry of Manpower Disburses Emergency Aid to Workers in the Tourism Sector

The Minister of Manpower announced that the Ministry's Emergency Benefit Fund has completed the disbursement of EGP 129, 986, 529 for 119, 901 workers in the tourism sector, in 880 establishments, who were affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. The aid represents 100% of the workers' basic wages, with a minimum of EGP600.

This support is in line with H.E. President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi's directives to ensure that regular workers in the tourism sector, who have been affected by the global pandemic, receive salaries.

### H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Chairs the Fourth Meeting of the Crisis Committee



H.E. the Minister during the crisis committee meeting

In May, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities chaired the fourth meeting of the Crisis Committee at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. This committee was formed in the aftermath of the Coronavirus crisis. It includes the Deputy Minister for Tourism Affairs, the Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation, the heads of tourist associations, representatives from the Ministry of Information, the Cabinet, security and surveillance authorities, and a number of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

During the meeting, H.E. the Minister praised the efforts exerted to follow up on hotels to ensure their application of the health and safety regulations set by the Ministry. He mentioned that foreign ambassadors and international tour operators commended the hygiene safety regulations set by the Egyptian government, and that they stated that Egypt is a destination that tourists want to visit once international travel resumes.

### H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities holds a video call with TUI International

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities had a video conference call with officials of TUI International, one of the largest tour operators in the world, in the presence of the supervisor of the Tourism Office in Berlin. During the meeting, H.E. the Minister highlighted the efforts of the Egyptian government to support the tourism sector, and the measures taken to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus.

### A Draft Law to Support the Workers in the Tourism Sector

In May, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities drafted a law to establish a fund to support workers in the tourism sector in times of crisis, and sent it to the Egyptian Tourism Federation of Tourist Rooms.

In that respect H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities met with the Deputy Minister for Tourism Affairs, the Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation, the Chairman of the Egyptian Travel Agents Association, and the Legal Adviser to the Ministry, to discuss the bill, and the proposed resources for financing the fund.

## Tourism and Antiquities Faces the "Coronavirus"

### H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities calls a number of Ministers of European Countries

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities called several of his counterparts in European countries. H.E. the Minister discussed with the Spanish Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, and the Greek Minister of Tourism, ways to enhance cooperation between their countries and Egypt in the Tourism sector, as well as the preparations and precautionary measures done in both countries to receive visitors. Indeed both Spain and Greece have announced the resumption of tourism activities in the beginning of July 2020.

H.E. the Minister also held a video conference call with 20 ambassadors from various countries, among which Belgium, Germany, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Greece, Mexico, Japan, Chile, Singapore, Argentina, Hungary, Lithuania, and the Dominican Republic. During the meeting, H.E. the Minister informed them about the health and safety regulations set by the Egyptian Government, in accordance with the guidelines of the World Health Organization as a prerequisite for hotels to operate and receive guests.

### Hotels that acquired the Hygiene Safety Certificate Receive Guests during the Feast of Eid

Hotels that acquired the hygiene safety certificate received Egyptians during the holiday of the Feast of Al-Fitr. Average occupancy rates for hotels reached 8% in South Sinai, 13% in the Red Sea Governorate, 25% in Ain Sukhna in Suez Governorate, 25% in Alexandria, 4% in the North Coast and Matrouh Governorate, and 9% in Greater Cairo. Hotels are not allowed to operate at more than 25% of their total occupancy until 1 June 2020.

## Miscellaneous News

### The Four Ram-headed Sphinxes now adorn Al-Tahrir Square ... and The Lighting for Al-Moez Street has been improved



The development works of Al-Tahrir Square

The transfer of the four ram-headed sphinxes to Al-Tahrir Square in central Cairo was successfully completed in May, after their restoration was done during previous months. The four sphinxes were placed around the obelisk of Ramesses II from Tanis, which was restored and erected in the middle of the square. The four ram-headed sphinxes were covered with wooden boxes until the inauguration of Al-Tahrir Square development project.

In a related context, the Ministry started a project to develop and improve the lighting system in Al-Moez Street in Al-Gamalia district.

### .. And H.E. the Prime Minister Visits Al-Tahrir Square Development Project

In May, H.E. the Prime Minister visited Al-Tahrir Square to follow up on the development project, accompanied by H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, H.E. the Minister of Local Development, H.E. the Minister of Public Business, H.E. the Minister of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Communities, the Governor of Cairo, and the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. The development of the square includes raising the efficiency of the garden and the fountain placed at the entrance of the Cairo Egyptian Museum, as well as a new lighting system for the facades of the museum and the buildings surrounding the square.

## Restoration of the Ram-headed Sphinxes of the First Pylon of Karnak Temple

In May, the Supreme Council of Antiquities began work on a large restoration project. The project includes the restoration of a group of ram-headed sphinxes found behind the first Pylon of the Temple of Amun-Re at Karnak in the town of Luxor. Those ram-headed sphinxes were in a poor condition of conservation as a result of wrong restoration work in the 1970's; they were thus suffering from breaks and loss of parts. The Permanent Committee of the Egyptian antiquities in the Supreme Council of Antiquities decided to start a comprehensive restoration project on these statues immediately.

## Grand Egyptian Museum receives 10 statues of King Senusret I



Statues of King Senusret I

The Grand Egyptian Museum received 346 artefacts from the Egyptian Museum at Al-Tahrir, the most important of which are ten statues belonging to King Senusret I of the 12<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. Those statues were left in the Grand foyer, before placing them at their permanent place of display in the museum. In a related context, the Egyptian Grand Museum received 42 wooden pieces from the second Khufu Solar Boat, after extracting them from their pit near the pyramid of King Khufu at the Pyramids area in Giza, where they underwent restoration work in the archaeological laboratory located on the site.

The Grand Egyptian Museum continued sterilization and disinfection of its entire construction site within the framework of sterilization and disinfection works carried out by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, as part of the precautionary measures against the Coronavirus.

## The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities highlights Islamic Monuments during Ramadan through virtual tours



Hall of the Gayer Anderson Museum in Cairo

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities launched virtual and guided tours shedding light on a number of unique Islamic artefacts displayed in the Museum of Islamic Art at Bab Al-Khalq on its websites and social media platforms. The Ministry also revealed a number of virtual tours inside Islamic archaeological sites, including Muhammad Ali Mosque in Salah Al-Din Al-Ayyoubi Citadel, Al-Fateh Royal Mosque in Abdin, and the Gayer Anderson Museum, or what is known as the Bayt of Critiliah.

## The Egyptian Embassy in Canada Promotes Cultural Tourism Destinations in Egypt

An initiative by the Egyptian embassy in Canada highlighted archaeological sites in Egypt. The embassy chose 14 of the virtual tours of archaeological sites launched by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities on its websites and social media platforms as part of its campaign "Experience Egypt From Home", sharing Egypt's wonders with people around the world staying at home as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. The Embassy sent those virtual tours to the Canadian Senate President, Canadian Parliament President, members of the Canadian government, and ambassadors of different countries in Canada, in addition to the Egyptian community in Canada.

## H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Addresses the World on International Museum Day



### The Egyptian Museum at Al-Tahrir

With the Egyptian Museum at Al-Tahrir as backdrop, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities addressed the world on International Museum Day, on 18 May. The Minister said "The Egyptians and the whole world are celebrating today the 18<sup>th</sup> of May, the International Museum Day. I am addressing a message from downtown Cairo, from one of the oldest and most prestigious museums in the world, the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir square, after its renovation with a beautiful fountain and a new lighting system. I am sending from here a message of peace and a sincere wish of health to the whole world, and I am looking forward to having millions of visitors coming back to Egypt very soon. For now, Stay Home. Stay Safe".

## The Museums' Week Chooses the Egyptian Museum in Al-Tahrir as the Second most Influential Museum in Africa

The Egyptian Museum at Al-Tahrir ranked second as the most influential museum on "Twitter" in the continent of Africa, according to the statistics of the international cultural celebration "Museums' Week".

## Archaeological Discoveries

### Unique Tombs Dating to the Saite Period Uncovered in Minya

The Egyptian-Spanish archaeological mission affiliated to the University of Barcelona working in Bahnasa, Minya governorate uncovered unique tombs dating to the Saite period known as the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

Excavations in the area also revealed eight Roman period tombs, containing tomb stones, bronze coins, small crosses, and clay seals impressions.

### New Discoveries in the Mummification Workshop at Saqqara

During excavation work at Saqqara carried out by the Egyptian-German mission of the University of Tübingen, a new burial chamber was uncovered at the bottom of a communal burial shaft 30 metres deep connected to the mummification workshop dating to the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (664-525 BC). It was discovered along a large tomb complex with five burial chambers already uncovered in 2018. The mission discloses the preliminary results of the studies and chemical analyses of the embalming oils and materials found in the workshop.

An international team of archaeologists and chemists from the University of Tübingen, the University of Munich, and the Egyptian National Research Centre in Cairo carried out chemical testing on the residue of oils and resins preserved in cups, bowls, and pots found in the mummification workshop. Early results of these tests list mummification substances, including bitumen (tar), cedar oil, cedar resin, pistachio resin, beeswax, animal fat, and possibly olive oil and juniper oil. The team is currently finalising the report for scientific publication.



Part of the excavation

## Meetings

### H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Holds a Number of Important Meetings

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities held a number of important meetings in May. H.E. the Minister met with specialists in the Ministry of Military Production to discuss ways of joint cooperation between the two ministries in the implementation of the digital transformation project in the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. He also met with the President of the National Food Safety Authority to discuss ways of cooperating to intensify controls on the health and safety of food preparation in hotels and restaurants. H.E. the Minister also met with the Head of the Central Agency for Organization and Management to discuss various issues, including merging of the Ministries of Tourism and Antiquities, in addition to contracted employees in the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

To follow up on the progress of work within the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, H.E. the Minister met with the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, the Assistant Minister for Museum Display Affairs, and the head of the museums sector. They discussed the latest development of the new Administrative Capital Museum. H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities and the Director of Archaeology of the Grand Egyptian Museum met to discuss the latest developments regarding the museum's display scenario and the signage for the artefacts in the exhibition halls of King Tutankhamun's treasures, in addition to the display scenario of the second stage of the main halls of the museum.

### ...And Visits the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization and Holds a Meeting with the Supreme Committee for the Museum's Display

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities visited the various halls of the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization at Al-Fustat, to follow up on the progress of the project and its work plan in the upcoming period, in preparation for its soon-to-be opening.

In a related context, H.E. the Minister met with members of the Supreme Committee for Museum Display and the Display Committee of the National Museum of the Egyptian Civilization, in order to follow up on the selection process of artefacts that will be displayed in the museum, and the museums that



H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities inside one of the exhibition halls of NMEC would be inaugurated soon, such as the Sharm el-Sheikh Museum, the Administrative Capital Museum, and Kafr El-Sheikh Museum.

During the meeting, the company in charge of the project of the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization presented the work progress in the main hall and the Royal Mummies Hall. It was agreed to choose a number of artefacts from the stores of archaeological sites and the Egyptian Museum garden at Al-Tahrir to enrich the display scenario in the Sharm Sheikh Museum, the New Administrative Capital Museum, the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization, the Grand Egyptian Museum, and Luxor Museum.

## Internal Decisions

### H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Appoints new Consultants

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities aims to acquire fresh new talents and expertise to enhance the workflow in various fields within the Ministry. In that context, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities issued a decision to hire a consultant for strategic studies and a consultant for economic studies.

## Organizational Decisions

In May, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities finished drafting a new regulatory decree for the Ministry, and completed the preparation of the organizational structure of the Ministry, after merging the two ministries of Tourism and Antiquities, and sent it to the Central Agency for Organization and Administration.

## Feast Cakes "Kahk El-Eid"

The manufacture of cakes is one of the oldest customs known to the ancient Egyptians. The wives of kings in ancient Egypt used to offer cakes on festivals as a sacrifice. The ancient Egyptians, as well, used to offer cakes among the sacrifices intended to the dead to be with them in the afterlife.

The manufacture of the Feast cakes was not that different from its present production, and the evidence is seen in the depictions of funerary chapels, especially those of Vizier Rekhmire of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. These scenes illustrate the stages of cake making in detail and show how the ancient Egyptians excelled in creating and decorating cakes of various shapes. The custom of making cakes during the feasts remained in Egypt even after the Islamic era, especially with the emergence of countries independent of the Abbasid Caliphate, such as the Tulunid and Ikhshidid state. The Tulunid state gave the cake special attention and made engraved moulds with Islamic decorations, in addition to beautiful sayings such as "Eat and Thank". These moulds are displayed in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo.



The Ikhshidid state was famous for the cakes of Vizir Abu Bakr al-Madrani. Al-Maqrizi used to say that Abu Bakr al-Madrani stuffed his cakes with gold dinars instead of pressed dates, and called these cakes "Pay attention" for people to pay attention to their content.

The Fatimid period continued this tradition to earn the loyalty and love of the Egyptians. A special governmental administration known as "Dar Al-Fitrah" was designed for the Feast cakes and huge sums were allocated for it. Large numbers of bakers worked on it from the middle of the month of Rajab until the Feast. The caliph then supervised the manufacture and distribution of cakes to the Egyptians. The custom of making Feast cake continued in the Mamluk and Ottoman eras, as their rulers distributed it to the poor, the Sufis, and the clergy.

With time, the Feast cakes manufacture moved to every Egyptian home, where its members gathered to make the most beautiful cakes in a spirit of familiarity, love, and cooperation among family members. Despite the huge demand today to buy ready-made cakes from the shops, it is still one of the most beautiful customs in the great heritage of Egypt and a source of joy for its people to prepare it together

Alaa Khairy (Curator in the Child Museum, Grand Egyptian Museum)



MoTA Newsletter



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