



Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Newsletter

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The Pyramid of Djoser «the Oldest Stone Building in the world» is open for Visit



On Thursday 5 March 2020, H.E. the Prime Minister, accompanied by the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, inaugurated the restoration project of the step pyramid of Djoser, and the development of the surrounding area. Ambassadors of various countries, members of the Egyptian Parliament, the Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation, and heads of tourism chambers, all attended the inauguration. The project, which lasted for nearly 14 years, and cost 104 million EGP, included external and internal restoration of the pyramid, the development of visiting routes leading to the pyramid, the internal corridors leading to the burial well, and the restoration of the sarcophagus. In addition, the walls were carefully restored, and a modern lighting system installed. Groups of tourists visited the Pyramid of Djoser, which is considered the oldest stone building in the world, after its inauguration.



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Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities faces the Coronavirus

The Egyptian government took immediate actions to combat the spread of the Coronavirus (Covid-19), and mitigate the negative impact it had on a number of sectors. The tourism sector is one of the most affected, and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has taken several measures to help elevate the impact it has on this vital sector.

The precautionary measures taken by the Egyptian government included, the suspension of all international flights to and from the country until April 15, 2020. After this decision, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, H.E. the Minister of Civil Aviation, the Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation, and the Chairman of the Egyptian Travel Agents Association met to discuss the implementation of the decision. The two Ministers affirmed that the Egyptian airspace, remains open and is restricted to inbound charter or regular flights arriving on an empty leg to carry outbound passengers to their destinations, should tourists, already in Egypt, wish to continue their program.

H.E. the Prime Minister held a meeting with the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, the Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation and the Chairman of the Egyptian Travel Agents Association, to discuss the economic repercussions on the tourism sector. H.E. the Prime Minister instructed the concerned authorities to gather accurate statistics regarding numbers of affected casual workers in the tourism sector, and putting a clear mechanism for registering the affected workers.

The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities chaired the Ministry's Crisis Management Committee to discuss the measures taken by various sectors of the Ministry to confront the implications of the Coronavirus on the sector.



H.E. the Prime Minister chairs a meeting to discuss measures to face the Coronavirus

Measures taken by the The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities



Sanitizing museums, archaeological sites, hotels and touristic establishments



The Minister during the sanitization of the Giza Plateau

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities held a meeting with the Chairman of the Tourism and Aviation Committee of the Parliament, the Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation, the heads of tourism chambers, and the heads of sectors of the Ministry to discuss the implications of the Coronavirus on the tourism sector and to address the necessary and precautionary measures to deal with the crisis.

The Ministry implemented preventive measures in cooperation with the Egyptian Hotel Association to combat the spread of the virus. Hotels and resorts all over Egypt are undergoing a mandatory sanitization and disinfection process. Infrared thermometers were placed in hotels to constantly check the temperature of both guests and employees.

In line with the Government's instructions to reduce social gatherings, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities issued directions to close all restaurants, swimming pools, nightclubs and spas in all hotels, keeping limited services to in-house guests, and reducing the daily presence of workers in Cairo and Giza hotels was by 50%. Hotels in the 4 touristic governorates; Aswan, Luxor, the Red Sea, and South Sinai are not allowed to receive new guests, until instructed otherwise and workers of tourism establishments in those four governorates were asked to remain in their establishments for 14 days (the incubation period of the Coronavirus) from the date of departure of the last tourists from the governorate. This is to ensure that all workers are free of the virus before returning to their families.

Museums and archeological sites across Egypt have been closed from 23 March until 15 April, 2020, and a thorough sanitization and disinfection process is taking place during this time. The Ministry's buildings have been also disinfected and sterilised.

Before the decision was taken to suspend international flights, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities accompanied by H.E. the Minister of Health and Population, H.E. the Minister of Civil Aviation, and the Governor of Luxor visited the Karnak Temple to check the tourism movement in the archaeological areas of Luxor Governorate, and to meet workers in the tourism sector, on March 8.

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities lights up the Pyramid of Khufu in a Message to Egyptians and to the World to Stay at Home and Stay Safe

On Monday evening, 30 March, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities lit the pyramid of Khufu with a message addressed to the Egyptian people and to the people around the world to stay at home and stay safe. It also honoured and thanked those working on the frontline to protect everyone and fight the Coronavirus. The message read «Stay at home, Stay safe, Thank you to Those keeping us safe».



Lighting Khufu Pyramid with a message to the world

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Meets Ministers and Officials to Discuss Ways to Support the Tourism Sector

In March 2020, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities held a number of meetings with ministers and officials to discuss ways to support the tourism sector. H.E. the Minister met with H.E. the Minister of Manpower to set up mechanisms to support workers in the tourism sector, also H.E. held a meeting with H.E. the Minister of Agriculture to discuss solving the accumulated problems of touristic ports and speeding the licensing procedures. The two Ministers also discussed delaying fines and scheduling accumulated debts to the ministry of agriculture. H.E. the Minister also met with a delegation from the General Administration of Civil Protection and the National Centre for Housing and Building Research, to develop a regulatory mechanism to work on issuing a code for civil protection from fire hazards in hotels and touristic establishments.

H.E. the Minister also met with H.E. the Minister of Communications and Information Technology, and it was agreed to activate a hotline to receive complaints and inquiries of the workers in the tourism sector.

H.E. the Minister and H.E. the Minister of Transport discussed ways to enhance cooperation and coordination to serve the tourism sector, including the study of operating touristic night trains between Luxor and Hurghada connecting beaches with cultural tourism.

In a related context, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities met with H.E. the Minister of Local Development to discuss strengthening means of cooperation between the two ministries during the upcoming period, including postponing administrative detentions, for a period of two years, on all those who defaulted in activities related to tourism.

... And meets with the Heads of the Supreme Council of Antiquities to Discuss the implications on the archaeological sector

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities met with the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities and the heads of the Council's sectors to discuss the implications of the Coronavirus on the cultural and archaeological sectors, and to take the necessary measures and precautions to deal with the matter. During the meeting, H.E. the Minister emphasized the importance of the continuation and the completion of the projects, especially those scheduled to be opened soon, such as the Baron Empain Palace in Heliopolis, the Royal Vehicles Museum in Bulaq, the National Museum of the Egyptian Civilization in Fustat, Sharm El-Sheikh Museum, Kafr El-Sheikh Museum, the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, the avenue of Rams «Kebash» road in Luxor, and the development of the area of the Tree of the Virgin Mary, which is one of the stops of the Holy Family's journey in Egypt.

The Supreme Committee for Umrah and Hajj Protects Rights of Citizens

The Supreme Committee for Hajj and Umrah took decisions to protect the rights of citizens who were going for Umrah, as well as the rights of touristic companies providing Umrah programs, in light of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's decision to temporarily suspend Umrah. The Committee stipulated that the Egyptian Travel Agents Association in coordination with the Saudi agents in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia determine the procedures for Egyptian touristic companies to retrieve the amounts paid for accommodations and services, and that those companies bear full responsibility towards the citizen in case of cancellation, postponement or refund of the Umrah programme. In addition, the Egyptian Travel Agents Association will act to resolve any dispute that may occur between the companies and the citizens, in coordination with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Inspects a Number of Archaeological Sites

After heavy rains and winds hit the country on the 12th and 13th of March, H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities inspected a number of archaeological sites in Cairo Governorate, on the 14th of March, to check on their condition after the work of sweeping the rain water that accumulated in some of them. H.E. the Minister visited the Baron Empain Palace in Heliopolis and Al-Moez Street in the historical Cairo as well as the Pyramids archaeological site, where he encountered a group of tourists who was visiting the area.



H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities while visiting the Pyramids archaeological site after the bad weather

Miscellaneous News

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and UNESCO Celebrate the Rescue of the Monuments of Nubia

On 10 March, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, in cooperation with the UNESCO Regional Office for Sciences in the Arab Countries in Cairo, celebrated the 40th anniversary of the completion of the International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia, at the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Fustat. The celebration was attended by 30 ambassadors, more than 20 members of the Egyptian Parliament, the director of the UNESCO Regional Office in Cairo, the Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation, the Chairman of the Egyptian Hotel Association, heads of the Ministry, as well as some representatives of international organisations. The International Campaign to Rescue the Egyptian Antiquities in Nubia is considered the most important and largest archaeological rescue operation in the history of UNESCO. It started in 1960 and ended successfully on 10 March 1980, during which important monuments, the most famous being the temples of Abu Simbel and that of Philae, were rescued and transported.



A group photo during the celebration

Haitian-French Actor Jimmy Jean-Louis Visits a Number of Archaeological Sites



Jimmy Lewis at the Pyramids of Giza

Jimmy Jean-Louis, the Haitian-French actor, visited many archaeological sites in the governorates of Aswan, Luxor, and Cairo; he visited Tutankhamun's tomb, the temples of Karnak, Luxor, Hatshepsut and Philae and Elephantine Island and the Pyramids of Giza. During his visits he, invited the world to come to Egypt and enjoy its civilisation and its warm weather, through his social media accounts.

Restoring the Palace of Sultana Malak in Heliopolis

As part of the set plan of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to preserve historical buildings, the ministry has put forward a project to restore the Palace of Sultana Malak, wife of Sultan Hussein Kamel.

This palace, which faces the Baron Empain Palace in Heliopolis, was built by the Belgian engineer Edward Empain to be given as a gift to Sultan Kamil, who refused to take it as a gift and insisted on buying it. However, Sultan Kamil died before paying the price of the palace, so its property was transferred to the Heliopolis Housing and Development Company. It was agreed that the palace would be rented to the Sultana Malak, the second wife of Sultan Hussein.



The Palace of Sultana Malak, the wife of Sultan Hussein Kamel

Helwan University Students design murals on the route of the Royal Mummies parade



One of the murals designed by students of Helwan

A grand event is currently under preparation, where the Royal Mummies will be transferred from their current place in the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir to the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Al-Fustat. Students of the Faculties of Fine Arts, Applied Arts, and Art Education at Helwan University, under the supervision of their professors, are participating in this big event by designing artistic pharaonic wall murals along the way of the parade.

Retrieving Gold Coins and some Parcels at Cairo Airport

In its efforts to combat illicit trade of cultural properties, the Egyptian customs authorities, in cooperation with the Central Administration for Ports and Archaeological Units in the Egyptian Ports of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, successfully retrieved 5 gold coins dating to the Byzantine era, at Cairo Airport. They also stopped the exportation of 16 parcels, which contained replicas of ancient artefacts, casting moulds, and suspected archaeological objects, including heads of pharaonic statues of individuals, kings, and deities made of granite, basalt, and limestone, and a number of artefacts dating back to different periods of ancient Egyptian history.



Gold coins and a group of heads of pharaoh statues seized in Cairo Airport

Meetings

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Discusses Developments of the Grand Egyptian Museum Project

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities met with members of the Grand Egyptian Museum's board of directors, to discuss the latest developments in the project and the work plan during the upcoming period in light of the preventive measures taken against the Coronavirus. The Board of Directors approved a number of decisions: granting Egyptian visitors over the age of 60 a 50% discount on the price of the museum entry ticket, exempting Egyptian and foreign visitors with special needs from paying entrance ticket fees, issuing a special ticket valid for two successive days to visit the museum with 20% discount on the price of the two tickets. The Museum administration set specific dates and times to receive free trip visits from government schools.



GEM's Board of directors meeting

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities also held a video conference from the Ministry's headquarters in Zamalek with the Microsoft company team responsible for creating and designing the website of the Grand Egyptian Museum, to review the site's content and sections.

designing the website of the Grand Egyptian Museum, to

... Meets the President of Samsung Electronics in Egypt

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities received the President of Samsung Electronics in Egypt, to discuss ways of updating tourists services in archaeological sites and museums, through smart screens showing educational, promotional, and archaeological contents to visitors.

... And Receives the CEO of Orascom Investment

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities received the Chairman of the Executive Board of the Orascom Investment Company to discuss recent updates in the project of upgrading services in the area of the Pyramids of Giza. They also discussed using environmental friendly electric buses and vehicles for transportation within the archaeological site, and providing the area with mobile toilets. Services include providing fast food and beverages outlets in locations specified and approved by the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

Decisions

Regulatory Decisions by H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities

H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities issued several regulatory decisions including appointing Ms. Yomna Al-Bahar, as an Assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities for Technical Affairs for a year, Mr. Ahmed Ebeid was appointed Assistant to the Minister for Minister's Sector Affairs also for a year. H.E. the Minister assigned Dr. Osama Talaat, Professor and Head of the Department of Islamic Antiquities at the Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University, to occupy the position of the head of the Islamic, Coptic and Judaic Antiquities Sector at the Supreme Council of Antiquities for one year, succeeding Dr. Gamal Mustafa who was assigned to be the Deputy Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities for Islamic and Coptic Antiquities Affairs. H.E. the Minister also assigned Dr. Suha Bahgat to be the spokesperson of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in addition to her original work as the Minister's Advisor for Training.

Activities of the Ministry

Celebrating the International Day of Down Syndrome



«Special needs» Art Show

On 15 March, the Royal Jewelry Museum in Alexandria organised an artistic celebration for children with special needs, on the occasion of celebrating the International Day of Down Syndrome. The celebration included theatrical performances of the «Special needs Arts» group, in addition to giving certificates of appreciation to the participating children. The ceremony concluded with a tour of the museum halls.

"Soft Hands" Exhibition for Art Works at the Museum of Islamic Art

The Museum of Islamic Art held an exhibition of works of art and traditional crafts under the title «Soft Hands», in conjunction with the museum's celebration of International Women's Day on 8 March. The exhibition included 300 products of handicrafts, made by 30 women who participated in educational workshops organised in the museum.

The "Ancient Egyptian Writing" Programme in School Libraries and National Institutes

The Cultural Development and Community Communication Department of the Office of the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities organised an outreach activity titled «Ancient Egyptian Writing» in cooperation with the schools, affiliated with the National Institutes. The programme was conducted in public and school libraries, in order to invite students to visit libraries and urge them to acquire knowledge and do scientific research.



A group of students during the workshop of learning ancient Egyptian language

Prevention from Diseases by Ancient Egyptians

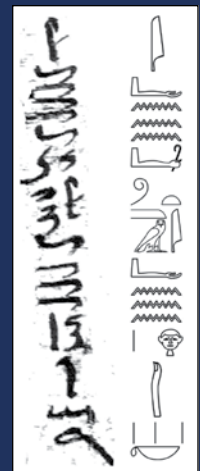


Part of «Edwin Smith» Medical Papyrus

The ancient Egyptians excelled in medical science. They succeeded in diagnosing many diseases and in finding treatments for some of them. Ancient Egyptians suffered from diseases that we still suffer from today. Infectious diseases were common, especially the plague and smallpox. There are important medical papyri that describe treatments of ailments, such as the Ebers papyrus, the Edwin Smith papyrus, the Hurst papyrus, the Cahon papyrus, and the London papyrus. The Ebers papyrus is the largest medical file ever found, containing descriptions and treatments for about 870 diseases, ranging from infections affecting the teeth, eyes, skin, and bones, female health, and heart disease. It also describes how to remove the poison of a snake bite.

Ancient Egyptians, whether rich or poor, washed regularly, and maintained body cleanliness, as much as they could. They considered purity as a necessity in their daily life, and its absence was considered a curse from the Gods. It was a condition for entering temples and holy places.

Washing hands and purity was demonstrated in many selected scripts. The papyrus No. 1115 «Shipwrecked sailor» found in the St. Petersburg Museum, clearly states «Wash up, place water on your fingers. Spell No. 125 of the Book of the dead also says «I am pure of mouth, pure of hands». In the Tale of Amasis and the Skipper, it is said of a man that «He went to his house, He washed himself for a meal with his wife». Washing hands was clearly an important aspect of the daily life of all, kings and commoners.



Sentence from «Shipwrecked sailor» papyrus

Ayat Haseeb, Curator at The GEM



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