



Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Newsletter

Issue: 8
August
2020

Egypt is the First Country the Secretary-General of UNWTO Visits outside of Europe since the COVID-19 Pandemic



The Secretary-General of the United Nation’s World Tourism Organization chose Egypt to be the first country to visit outside of Europe since the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the resumption of travel and aviation in Spain. This visit was upon an official invitation from the ministry from 22 to 25 August. He headed a delegation that included officials from the organization in charge of international and technical cooperation and the Middle East region. The Minister accompanied the Secretary-General of the UNWTO on a visit to Hurghada, during which he saw the hygiene safety measures at the airport, hotels, diving centers, the Hurghada Antiquities Museum and Hurghada General Hospital. He praised the effectiveness of the regulations implemented by the Egyptian government. He said that the measure he saw surpass hygiene safety regulations implemented in some European countries. He invited the world to visit Egypt and enjoy its picturesque beaches and Egypt's warm sun. After visiting Hurghada, they headed to Cairo. His Excellency the President of the Republic of Egypt received him at the Federal Palace in the presence of the minister. Then they met the Prime Minister. The Secretary-General stressed, during these meetings, the organization's full support to Egypt to regain inbound tourism.

During the visit, a series of meetings were held with officials from the ministry, the Egyptian Tourism Federation and tourism investors. He also visited the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Fustat, and the Egyptian Museum at Al- Tahrir, where the ministry held a dinner in his honor, attended by a number of ministers, parliamentarians, ambassadors and representatives of the Egyptian Tourism Federation. He concluded his visit with at the Giza pyramids and the Grand Egyptian Museum, where he and the Minister unveiled two royal statues in the museum's atrium during an international press conference, where the Secretary-General confirmed that Egypt is a safe country. He said that Egypt is ready to resume tourism and expressed his happiness to be in the GEM (scheduled to open in 2021). He said “very proud to be part of history of world tourism which started in Egypt”.



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Positive Results of "A Tourist's Trip in Egypt" Video Launched by the Ministry

As part of the international promotional campaign launched by the ministry in late June, "Same Great Feelings", the promotional video "A Tourist's Trip in Egypt" gained positive results on various social media platforms, which coincided with the resumption of inbound tourism to Egypt. The Video has had 77 million views on Google, 80 million views on Facebook, 4 million views on Twitter, in addition to 3.6 million views on TikTok, and about one million views on Snapchat, which contributed to improve significantly the perception of Egypt for those who watched the film in our main source markets, it improved by 45% in Germany, 43% in Poland, and 39% in Italy during the month of July. The search rates for Egypt as a tourist destination on the Internet and social media platforms increased in these countries, with an average of more than 60% compared to the previous month.

Meetings and visits

Opening "Kings of the Sun" Exhibition in Prague



The opening ceremony



Part of the exhibition

The Minister, the Czech Prime Minister and the Czech Minister of Culture opened the archaeological exhibition "Kings of the Sun" at the National Museum in the Czech capital Prague, which is the first exhibition displaying Egyptian artifacts in the Czech Republic. It is the first time the artifacts in this exhibition traveled outside Egypt to be displayed in a temporary exhibition. The inauguration of the exhibition, which includes 90 artifacts from excavations of the Czech mission in the Abu Sir archaeological area, comes in conjunction with the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the archaeological work of the Czech mission in Egypt. The exhibition is scheduled to continue until February 2021. The exhibition organizers expect to receive more than 300,000 visitors. Prior to the opening of the exhibition, the Minister held an international press conference. During his visit, the Minister met with the Czech Minister of Culture, the President of the Federation of Tourism Companies in the Czech Republic, and representatives of a number of major tour operators and airline companies there.

Visiting Sharm El-Sheikh Antiquities Museum and Ras Mohammed Reserve



The minister visits Sharm El-Sheikh museum



...and meets tourists in Ras Mohammed reserve

On August 15, the Minister visited South Sinai Governorate, during the visit, he followed up on the latest developments of work in Sharm El-Sheikh museum to prepare for its imminent opening. The minister checked on the outdoor exhibition area, the fountain area, bazars, and the museum exhibition halls. He changed the display scenario of some artifacts to add more pieces, especially those that were recently discovered in some archaeological sites, to be displayed for the first time. The Minister also went to the Visitor and Tourism Services Center in the Ras Muhammad reserve to follow up on the quality of the tourism services provided to visitors. There he met a group of tourists. This reserve is considered one of the most important natural aquatic reserves in Egypt and the world.

Resumption of Inbound Tourism to Egypt

For the First Time, the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Chairs the Board of Directors of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board

On August 18, 2020, the minister chaired, for the first time, the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board. This meeting was held after the decree of the Cabinet of Ministers to amend the former decree of the establishment of the Egyptian Tourism Promotion Board, to make its board of directors headed by the Minister. This came in light of the efforts of the ministry to improve its organizational structure and its affiliated bodies to ensure the efficient performance and effectiveness in implementing policies and achieving goals. During the meeting, many issues related to the general plan and executive policies of the ETPB were discussed.

Resumption of Cultural Tourism to Egypt As of September 1

In August, the Minister met with officials from the ministry and heads of the Egyptian Hotel Association and the Egyptian Travel Agents Association, to approve hygiene safety regulations for resuming cultural tourism activities in Egypt as of September 1, 2020. Egyptians and tourists will be allowed to move among touristic cities, archeological sites and museums, while all the precautionary measures and health safety regulations are implemented. Nile Cruises of floating hotels however, are postponed until the month of October 2020. On August 27, the Ministry published the approved hygiene safety regulations and uploaded it on this link: egypt.travel/en/files.

Hurghada and Sharm El Sheikh Receive More than 160,000 Tourists since the Resumption of Tourism to Egypt

Since the resumption of inbound tourism to Egypt, starting 1 July 2020, to South Sinai, the Red Sea and Matrouh governorates as a first stage, the cities of Hurghada and Sharm el-Sheikh received more than 160,000 tourists from Belarus, Ukraine, Switzerland, Hungary, Serbia and Macedonia.



Tourists arriving at Sharm El-Sheikh airport

More Hotels and Tourism Establishments Receive the Hygiene Safety Certificate

So far, 664 hotels in 21 governorates have received the approved hygiene safety certificate since mid-May 2020; 1022 restaurants and cafeterias have also received this certificate; and the total number of yachts, diving centers and marine activities that have received the certificate reached 374 yachts and centers for diving and marine activities (these include 198 diving centers, 92 marine activities centers and 84 safari yachts). The inspection committees of the ministry continue to inspect more hotels and tourism establishments that have applied for the certificate.

....And Three Hotels in the Red Sea Governorate Get their Licenses Back

During the month of August, the Minister issued three decisions to give three hotels in the Red Sea Governorate their licenses back. This was after these hotels had reconciled their positions, settling the financial dues of their workers, avoiding the reasons for revoking licenses and resolving the complaints received against them on the Ministry's hotline.

Issuing Operating Licenses to Five Hotels in the Red Sea and Matrouh Governorates

The Technical Secretariat of the Permanent Committee for Licensing Hotel and Tourism Establishments has issued operating licenses for five hotels in the cities of Hurghada and Marsa Alam in the Red Sea Governorate; the North Coast area in Matrouh Governorate; and Ras Al-Bar in Damietta Governorate. It is noteworthy that, the Permanent Committee for Licensing Hotel and Tourist Establishments has been formed upon a decision by the Prime Minister last February to be, for the first time, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities to research and study hotel and tourism projects and resolve the problems and obstacles they face.

Extending the Exemption Period of Rental Fees to all Cafeterias and Bazaars in Museums and Archaeological Sites

In continuation of the Ministry's efforts to mitigate the economic effects resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Directors of the Supreme Council of Antiquities decided in its meeting on August 25, chaired by the Minister, to extend a complete exemption of rental fees to all cafeterias and bazaars in museums and archaeological sites affiliated to the Council until the end of September 2020.

Discovery of a Statue of a Priest in the Mit Rahena area

Archaeologists of the Supreme Council of Antiquities discovered, in August, a black granite statue of a priest of the goddess Hathor. This discovery was made during the work of rescue excavations inside a piece of land owned by a citizen while establishing a project in the area, about 2 kilometers southeast of the Mit Rahina area. The rescue excavation mission found this statue made of a single block of black granite on which hieroglyphic writings were engraved on the back.



The discovered statue

The Ministry Re-employs the Palace of Sultan Hussein Kamel at Heliopolis District

The Permanent Committee of Islamic and Coptic Antiquities approved a project for the restoration and adaptive reuse of the Sultan Hussein Kamel Palace, known as the Sultana Malak Palace, in Heliopolis. This project is implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology within the social responsibility program of the Egyptian Telecom Company. The project aims at the adaptive reuse of the palace to become a center for the development of creativity and youth entrepreneurship. The Palace is part of the panoramic view of the iconic Baron Empain Palace facing it.



Sultan Hussein Kamel Palace

The Royal Carriages Museum is ready for Inauguration



Reservation work in the museum

The countdown is on for the inauguration of the Royal Carriages Museum. Final preparations are on the way; and during the month of August the museums sector of the Supreme Council of Antiquities is doing the final touches on the display scenario of the museum to further enrich it. The museum includes rare artifacts that illustrate the different means of transportation and carriages that were used in various occasions during the Mohamed Ali dynasty. The Royal Carriages Museum was established during the reign of Khedive Ismail (1879-1863), and is considered one of the rare museums, as it is the fourth of its kind in the world after the museums of Russia, England and Austria.

For the first time, a Transparent Barrier to Protect the Pulpit of Sultan Abu Al-Ela Mosque ... and Three Monasteries Inaugurated in Qena



On August 26, the Ministry, represented by the Supreme Council of Antiquities, completed the installation of the first transparent barrier around the pulpit of the Sultan Abu Al-Ela Archaeological Mosque, as part of a project to protect archaeological mosque pulpits dating back to the Mamluk era. On another note, on August 19, the Ministry inaugurated three archaeological monasteries in the city of Naqada in Qena governorate; namely the Monastery of the Archangel Michael, Monastery of Abbot Pisentius, and the Monastery of Saint George, after completing their restoration project, which took three years.

Transparent barrier around the pulpit One of the monasteries

Meeting Investors in Marsa Matrouh and the North Coast

In line with various meetings the Minister holds with tourism investors in the various touristic governorates to discuss their proposals to support and increase inbound tourism to Egypt, the Minister met on August 5 with a number of hotel investors and CEOs in Marsa Matrouh and the North Coast, to discuss a number of important issues for the tourism sector in Marsa Matrouh Governorate. The Minister also held a meeting, on August 12, at the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization, with the President of the Egyptian Tourism Federation, Associations of Tourism Investors, a group of tourism investors and the officials from the Ministry, to exchange visions, review ways to support the sector and discuss the challenges facing the tourism industry. During the meeting, they discussed the importance of joint cooperation between the Ministry and the private sector to promote Egypt in various tourism markets.

A Videoconference with Easy Jet

On August 10, the Minister held a meeting via videoconference with the director and officials of Easy Jet, which is the second largest airline company in Europe, to discuss ways of cooperation with the company to boost incoming tourism to Egypt during the upcoming period. During the meeting, they discussed precautionary measures and the hygiene safety regulations that Egypt has implemented to resume tourism, starting the first of July 2020, to the governorates of South Sinai, the Red Sea and Matrouh. The Company officials praised the precautionary measures implemented by Egypt, and the efforts made by the Egyptian government to support the tourism sector.

A Meeting to Enhance Cooperation between the Ministries of Tourism and Antiquities and Transport

On August 19, the Minister and the Minister of Transport held an expanded meeting in the presence of officials of the two ministries, and both the Chairman of the Roads and Bridges Authority and the Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation to review the projects of the Ministry of Transport to support the tourism sector, since the transport sector is one of the main pillars for the development of tourism sector.



The two ministers during the meeting

Receiving the Ambassador of Hungary in Cairo

On August 18, the Minister received the Hungarian ambassador in Cairo, who was keen to meet the minister to bid him farewell before the end of his term as his country's ambassador to Egypt. The ambassador praised the ministry's efforts to preserve Egypt's archaeological heritage and promote tourism, and thanked the minister for the fruitful cooperation and the activities that were organized by the Ministry that the Ambassador attended. He said that this enabled him to see and learn about the beauty and uniqueness of the Egyptian civilization, as well as the various and distinct tourist destinations in Egypt.

Miscellaneous News

The Ministry Organizes a Tour for Young Egyptians living Abroad to the Baron Palace



The Ministry, in cooperation with the Ministry of State for Immigration and Egyptians Affairs Abroad, organized a visit for a delegation of young students studying abroad who are currently in Egypt to the Baron Palace in Heliopolis. Such events are organized to connect Egyptians living abroad with their motherland, in addition to promoting the Egyptian destination since these young students are considered the best ambassadors for Egypt.

Restoration of all Tutankhamun Artifacts



The Grand Egyptian Museum's Conservation Centre has completed the conservation of all the artifacts of the collection of King Tutankhamun's treasures that have been transferred to the museum. An estimated 5200 artifacts were found in Tutankhamun's tomb when it was discovered back in 1922. Some of those treasures were too delicate to risk their display before at the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir. Thanks to the amazing work of GEM Conservation staff these artifacts are now ready to be displayed for the first time in the Tutankhamun Galleries at the Grand Egyptian Museum.

CNN International Launches a Promotional Film about the Grand Egyptian Museum

Under the title "Inside the Grand Egyptian Museum", CNN International has launched a promotional documentary film about the Grand Egyptian Museum. The initiative is part of a partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to promote Egyptian tourism through CNN's television channels, websites and communication platforms throughout Latin America, Europe and Asia. Within days of being released, the video generated 164 million likes.

King Khufu's Boat Transfer Project Begins

Steps are underway to transfer King Khufu's solar boat to the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM). The General Director of the GEM Project met with the project team at the Giza Pyramids and discussed a number of important issues regarding its transfer; namely the scientific methods used to ensure the complete safety of the boat during the transfer process.

As one of the most important projects carried out by the GEM, the transfer of King Khufu's boat is being undertaken with the aim to preserve the largest, oldest and most important organic monument in history.



The reasons for bringing King Khufu's boat to the GEM are multifaceted; the Giza Solar Boat Museum, established in 1985, it obscures the southern side of Khufu's pyramid creating a visual barrier. In addition to that this museum is not equipped with services for accessibility. A new museum is currently under construction separate from the main GEM building to display both of King Khufu's boats.

Artifacts of Tutankhamun Exhibition Return from London...20 will be Displayed for the First Time in Hurghada and Sharm El Sheikh

On August 28, 166 artifacts of the "Tutankhamun ...The Treasures of the Golden Pharaoh" exhibition, returned back from London. London was the third stop of the exhibition which started in 2018 in Los Angeles, the United States of America, and then Paris, France. The exhibition was a great success in all three cities. Upon their return, the Supreme Council of Antiquities decided to temporarily display some of the artifacts in coastal cities for the first time ever. 10 of these pieces will be displayed in Hurghada Museum and 10 in Sharm El Sheikh Museum, which will be inaugurated soon. After that the artifacts will go to their permanent display place among the complete collection of Tutankhamun in the Grand Egyptian Museum scheduled to open in 2021.



Some of the artifacts of the exhibition

Training Workers at the Coptic Museum in Old Cairo

Within the framework of the ministry's training and capacity building plan for workers in the tourism and antiquities sector; in addition to raising tourism awareness among those dealing with tourists, the ministry has organized a training course for workers in the Coptic Museum in Old Cairo. The training course aims at providing staff with the know-how of dealing with visitors, in light of the hygiene safety regulations in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.



The National Museum of Egyptian Civilization

The First CEO of the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Fustat

On August 8, the Prime Minister issued a decree to assign Dr. Ahmed Ghoneim, Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University, to be the first CEO of the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization Board. On August 9, the minister met with the museum's board of directors and visited the halls of the museum to follow up on the progress of work there in preparation for its inauguration.

The Museum Receives a Jug from the Mamluk Era

In August, the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization received the ewar and basin of Prince Al-Tabtab El-Ashrafy (Mamluk period) from the Museum of Islamic Art. They are made of copper with silver nillo bearing his name and titles.

NMEC also received four ceramic dishes with metallic lustre dating back to the Fatimid period decorated with stylized animals to be exhibited among Islamic collection in the core exhibition of NMEC.



The ceramic dishes



The ewar and basin

The Prophet's Migration

Muslims all around the world celebrate the first day of the Islamic month of Muharram, the Hijri New Year, which coincided this year with the 20th of August.

The celebration of the Hijri New Year was the focus of attention of caliphs, sultans and princes from the beginning of the Islamic era until today. A special procession was organized for them on this remarkable occasion. Among the popular customs associated with this occasion, is that women used to buy milk on the first night of the month of Muharram, as a sign of optimism that the whole year would be a happy and prosperous one.

It is worth mentioning that great events were marked by year and not by month in Islamic history. Historians used to identify the year by the name of the great event, for example the year of the heavy torrent, or the year of the elephant, as well as the Hijri "Migration" year.

So the beginning of the month of "Muharram", isn't the day on which the "Migration" occurred because it occurred at the end of the Islamic month of "Safar" and the beginning of the month of "Rabi".

Since historians agreed on linking history with a fixed event, it was agreed that the month of Muharram is the beginning of the celebration of this remarkable occasion and ends with the month of "Dhu al-Hijjah". Therefore, we always say the celebration of the new "Hijri" year and not the celebration of the Day of "Hijrah".

The memory of this very special event was linked with many stories. Through Islamic arts and pictures, the artists have written the "Hijri" date on various artworks.

On this occasion, we decided to shed light on a masterpiece of one of the most beautiful Islamic artifacts, not because it talks about this occasion, but because it relates to a very vivid description of the Prophet "Mohamed" Peace Be Upon Him. It is known as the "Honorable Jewelry" or the "Prophetic Jewelry", and this masterpiece is preserved in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo dated 1223 AH / 1808 AD, and it is one of the works of the well-known calligrapher, known as Jalal al-Din



Abd El Hamid Abd El Salam - Director of Training and Scientific Publishing Department -
Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo



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MoTA Newsletter

www.egymonuments.gov.eg

Editor: Rana Gohar
Co-editor: Mohamed Saad

Staff:
Ashwaq Mosleh
Ebtessam Yehya
Karim El-Ridy

Designer: Marwa El Shimy

Translated by Mona Rabie

Reviewed by
ARCE

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
Misr Travel Tower, Abbasseya Square,
Cairo, Egypt

www.antiquities.gov.eg
antiquitiesnewsletter@gmail.com

Telephone numbers:

(+2-02) 237356010 - 27358761 - 27365645

27371724 - 2628457 - 26828456

Fax: (+2-02) 27357239 - 26859551

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

ministry_tourism_antiquities

@TourismandAntiq

Printed by: MoTA Press