

Czech Republic to resume flights to Egypt

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Sun, 2020-09-27 23:12

CAIRO: The Czech Republic will resume tourist flights to Egypt from Oct. 1. Jan Fulik, the Czech ambassador to Egypt, confirmed the move during a meeting with Egyptian Tourism Minister Khaled Al-Anani.

Al-Anani is visiting Sharm el-Sheikh with aviation and environment ministers, along with 30 foreign envoys, to celebrate World Tourism Day.

Fulik said this decision to resume tourist flights follows Al-Anani's visit to the Czech capital Prague last August for discussions with government officials on boosting tourism in Egypt.

Flights will operate from Prague to the cities of Sharm El-Sheikh, Hurghada and Marsa Alam, and reservations for trips have begun on online booking sites.

Al-Anani said he appreciated the efforts of Said Hindam, the Egyptian ambassador to Prague, to improve links between the two countries, and offered an assurance that Egypt would take precautionary measures in tourist governorates to protect visitors.

Several countries have relaunched tourist visits to Egypt after a halt due to the coronavirus.

France will resume trips to Egyptian coastal cities from October.

Germany is considering resuming flights, with one official saying Egypt has "special priority" because of the country's popularity with German tourists.



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Egyptian ministers, foreign ambassadors participate in bike marathon in Sharm El-Sheikh
Egypt launches campaign to promote nature reserves and ecotourism

[Iranian chess referee seeking asylum reveals second reason she can't go home](#)

Author:

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Sun, 2020-09-27 22:23

LONDON: The Iranian chess referee forced to seek asylum in the UK after letting her hijab slip during a match in Shanghai this year has revealed another reason she may never be able to return to her country – her secret

Jewish heritage.

Shohreh Bayat told [The Daily Telegraph](#) that she had to conceal her family background in her native Iran.

“If they knew I had Jewish background, I would never be general secretary of the Iranian chess federation,” Bayat told the British newspaper.

The leading referee said she had heard anti-Jewish remarks made by chess officials in Iran.

Bayat was declared a public enemy by Iranian hard-liners and received death threats after photos of her emerged from the Women’s World Chess Championship in January with her red headscarf around her neck rather than covering her head.

“All my life was about showing a fake image of myself to society because they wanted me to be an image of a religious Muslim woman, which I wasn’t,” Bayat said, speaking about the Iranian regime.

The 33-year-old said she is not a fan of the hijab, but felt she had to comply – even if that meant covering only a tiny amount of hair.

Women are required to wear the hijab in public in Iran, and those who refuse can face prison.

After being photographed at the world championship match with her hijab around her neck, Bayat said she was warned by family and friends not to return home.

“My mobile was full of messages saying: ‘Please, don’t come back, they will arrest you’,” she told the newspaper.

“I woke up the following day and saw that the (Iranian) federation removed my picture – it was like I didn’t exist,” she said.

Despite death threats, Bayat continued refereeing the second leg of the tournament in Vladivostok, ignoring calls from Iranian officials for a public apology.

At the end of January, she changed her return ticket and traveled to the UK – the only Western country where she held a valid visa – and applied for asylum. She is waiting for her application to be processed.

Bayat’s paternal grandmother was Jewish and moved to Iran from Azeraijan’s capital Baku during the Second World War.

Last week, Bayat celebrated the Jewish New Year for the first time in her life.

“It was amazing. It was a thing I never had a chance to do,” she said.



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Iranian chess referee fears government retribution after hijab uproar
Iranian chess referee fears arrest if she returns

[**Egyptian ministers, foreign ambassadors participate in bike marathon in Sharm El-Sheikh**](#)

Author:

Sun, 2020-09-27 21:16

CAIRO: Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Khaled Al-Anani, Minister of Civil Aviation Mohammed Manar, and 30 ambassadors of foreign countries in Egypt participated in a bike marathon organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in Sharm El-Sheikh to celebrate World Tourism Day.

The marathon began in front of the ministers' and ambassadors' residence and lasted for nearly an hour, passing through the beaches, tourist attractions, and streets of Sharm El-Sheikh.

The ambassadors enjoyed the marathon, with the German ambassador in Cairo

suggesting that an international bike competition be held in Sharm El-Sheikh.

The ambassador of Cameroon won first place in the marathon, and Al-Anani promised him that he would be the first to see the new archaeological discovery in the Saqqara antiquities area early next month, when it would be announced.

Al-Anani and Minister of Environment Yasmine Fouad accompanied the foreign ambassadors on a private cruise during their visit to Sharm El-Sheikh.

During this trip, the ambassadors were able to take in the nature and sunny atmosphere of the city, also experiencing the rich marine life characteristic to the Red Sea waters in a snorkeling excursion. They also toured a number of nature reserves in the city and visited both the Sharm El-Sheikh Museum and Sharm El-Sheikh International Hospital.

The ministers and ambassadors also inspected the precautionary measures in place at the Sharm El-Sheikh Airport and the safety controls applied in one of the city's hotels.

Al-Anani's visit to Sharm El-Sheikh began on Thursday.



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Grand Egyptian Museum receives 2,000 artifacts
COVID-19 kills an entire Egyptian family after a wedding

Jordan reopens trade gateway with Syria after month-long COVID closure

Author:

Sun, 2020-09-27 21:01

AMMAN: Jordan on Sunday resumed its land border traffic with Syria, following a more than month-long closure, after applying new rules to prevent truck drivers spreading the novel coronavirus into the kingdom, officials and businessmen said.

They said authorities imposed back-to-back handling of goods to ensure Syrian, Lebanese truck drivers and others entering the kingdom maintain a social distance from Jordanian customs officials.

Officials said in mid-August they had to close the crossing, the main gateway for goods from Lebanon and Syria to the Gulf, after dozens of infections among border officials linked to a spike in cases in neighboring Syria.

Before the decade-old conflict in Syria, the Nasib-Jaber crossing was also a transit route for hundreds of trucks a day transporting goods between Europe and Turkey and the Gulf in a multi-billion dollar annual trade.

The closure hit trade that had already shrunk because of the impact of COVID-19 and the Caesar Act – the toughest US sanctions yet that came into force in June and prohibited foreign companies trading with Damascus.

“We have had millions of dollars of losses as a result of the closure,” said Mohammad al Daoud, the president of the Jordanian Truck Owners’ Association that represents over 17,000 trucks.

The country’s other land crossings with Saudi Arabia, Israel and the Palestinian territories have been only open for commercial goods since a lockdown in March to stem the pandemic.

Syrian authorities said 70 trailers carrying, mostly fresh produce, entered Jordan on Sunday, including transit cargo heading to Gulf markets and Iraq. While the crossing was closed, Syria’s only normally operating frontier crossing had been with Lebanon, which itself has no other functioning land borders.

Lebanon was also hit hard by the closure. It relies on the crossing for overland connections to all other countries because its only other frontier is with Israel, with which it has no ties.

“This crossing is an economic lifeline for all our land exports,” said Ibrahim al Tarshishi, the head of the Lebanese farmers’ association.

(Reporting by Suleiman Al-Khalidi; editing by Barbara Lewis)



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Jordan COVID-19 cases at highest daily count since pandemic began
Jordan to stop isolating coronavirus infected buildings

[UAE confirms 851 new COVID-19 cases, one death](#)

Sun, 2020-09-27 20:34

DUBAI: UAE on Sunday recorded 851 new cases of COVID-19 and one death, bringing the total to 91,469 and 412 respectively.

The Ministry of Health and Prevention said 868 cases had recovered in the previous 24 hours, bringing the total to 80,544 since the pandemic emerged. The ministry also said it had conducted 106,034 new coronavirus tests during the past 24 hours.

Meanwhile, during its daily inspections, Dubai Economy said it issued 22 fines and two warnings to commercial establishments for not adhering to anti COVID-19 measures.

Dubai Economy emphasizes on the importance of following the precautionary measures and report any violation through the Dubai Consumer app. [#Dubai](#) [#DubaiEconomy](#) [#DubaiDED#We_Are_All_Responsible](#)

– اقتصادية دبي (@Dubai_DED) [September 27, 2020](#)

Dubai Economy, in cooperation with Dubai Sports Council, said it also issued six fines and 10 warnings to sports facilities and sporting events in various regions of the emirate. The council had earlier issued detailed and precise instructions for each sporting facility and stadium.

The council said that the number of violations have decreased since previous weeks after it increased its efforts and renewed its call to training and fitness centers, academies and event organizers to fully adhere to instructions and apply preventive measures during their operational hours throughout the week.

Dubai Sports Council has been closing facilities and issuing penalties due to COVID-19 violations and last week it closed three facilities, issued nine fines and gave warnings to 35 other facilities

Elsewhere, Kuwait recorded 345 new COVID-19 cases, bringing the total to 103,544, while the death toll stood at 601 after four new deaths were registered.

تعلن [#وزارة_الصحة](#) عن تأكيد إصابة 345 حالة جديدة، وتسجيل 718 حالة شفاء، و 4 حالات وفاة جديدة بـ [#فيروس_كورونا_المستجد](#) COVID-19 ، ليصبح إجمالي عدد الحالات 103,544 حالة pic.twitter.com/2zsE5VcUZm

– وزارة الصحة - الكويت (@KUWAIT_MOH) [September 27, 2020](#)

Oman's health ministry said the the total number of cases recorded in the sultanate has reached 97,450, with 909 death, since the pandemic emerged.

[#Statement](#) No. 194

September 27, 2020 pic.twitter.com/xe9nCDPttw

– وزارة الصحة - عُمان (@OmaniMOH) [September 27, 2020](#)



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UAE resumes issuing visas to foreign visitors Saudi Arabia announces further drop in new COVID-19 cases