

Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Turkey tourism join hands

The Tourism Ministers of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Turkey recently discussed the need to establish a free trade zone among these countries. An initiative was taken to launch a quadripartite mechanism for tourism.

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According to the Lebanese Tourism Minister, **Fadi Abboud**, the meeting had showed the means available for cooperation to achieve common tourism goals. The summit was organised as a part of meetings that the "the Higher Council for Strategic Cooperation" set out to strengthen ties between the four countries.

During the meeting in Istanbul on June 2010, delegations from foreign ministries of the respective countries jointly declared 'to develop a long-term strategic partnership' and 'to create a zone for free movement of goods and people among the countries.'

The Syrian Minister of Tourism, **Saad Allah Agha al-Qala'a** emphasised on the importance of this meeting in choosing four main sectors

Significant changes

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The Turkish Minister of Tourism, **Ertugrul Gunay** said that these four countries are the distinguished tourism powers because of the events

that took place in the region during the past years, stressing on the fact that tourism is directly linked to achieving peace and communication with other people.

"Based on all our data and calculation, international tourism will grow at a considerable pace in 2011. Thus, the Middle East is expected to achieve growth at a faster pace, given the fact that everyone needs to work together," said the Jordanian Tourism Minister **Zeid Jamil al-Qasous**.

The World Tourism Organization's data showed that Turkey has attracted 25 million tourists, Syria and Jordan attracted six million while Lebanon attracted two million tourists in 2009. This showed the importance of cooperation and developing the relationship among these four countries to duplicate these figures in future.

Yemeni General Company founded

The recently established Yemeni General Company aims to construct, run and operate hotels and tourist villages in the country.

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The establishment of the Yemeni General Company for Tourism Development was approved by the Cabinet under the tourist development plan. The company is a joint venture between Tourism Ministry, represented by Tourism Promotion Fund, and the General Holding Corporation for Real Estate & Investment Development (Shibam). The ministry has 40 per cent share in the company.

Apart from tourism activities, the company carries out all other works that lead directly or indirectly to achieve tourism services proposed and approved by the ministry.

After debating the legal and institutional aspects of the company's establishment, the cabinet ordered to draft the foundation contract and the company's statute.

Promoting Yemen

Yemen Airways is planning to organise a tourism promotion campaign for next summer. The campaign will take place in cooperation with the Tourism Promotion Board of Tourism Ministry. The programme will organise visits for Gulf delegations to historic sites.

The General Holding Corporation for Real Estate and Investment Development (Shibam) is a Yemeni holding organisation headquartered in Sana'a. It serves as the investment arm of the Yemeni government for all investment projects where strategic partnership with a foreign investor is required to create a joint venture.

IN BRIEF

Arabian Adventures global offices

The Middle East based destination management company has appointed PillowMINT in Australia and Brazil Experts Bureau in South America as its official representatives for these markets. The new representatives will provide a range of services to help promote the UAE as an exciting destination offering a variety of opportunities and experiences. These appointments bring the number of Arabian Adventures' global representation to 11. The offices are in China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Spain, United Kingdom and the United States.

Arabian Adventures provides professional, high quality, destination management services to the world's foremost tour operators, incentive houses, meeting and convention organisers and cruise lines.

Glimpses

TUI Cruises and DTCM discuss cruise tourism potential



The delegates from TUI Cruises led by Richard J. Vogel, Chief Executive, TUI Cruises met Khalid A Bin Sulayem, Director General, Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM). The visit was aimed at getting a deeper understanding of the development of cruise tourism in Dubai and the facilities that Dubai offers for cruise ships.

Travel Designer and FAL Travelmart sign agreement



Operating in India and the UAE, Fal Travelmart will act as the office for RezLive.com, a B2B global reservation system, in Qatar. The office will provide assistance and support to travel agents.

SCTDA eyes world sports tourism market

Registering remarkable success in 2010, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority (SCTDA) is keen to promote the Emirate as a unique tourist and cultural destination.

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In line with innovative campaigns and promotions, SCTDA has sponsored 11th 'Sharjah International Show Jumping Competition'.



Mohamed Ali Al Noman
Director General,
SCTDA

'Jumping Competition' organised by Sharjah Equestrian and Racing Club from January 20-22, 2011. Speaking on the occasion, **Mohamed Ali Al Noman**,

Director General, SCTDA said, "It was obvious for 'Sharjah International Show Jumping Competition' to become the centre of attention for the Equestrian International Championship."

The upcoming World Cup Football Championship

2011 is to take place in Germany on April 20, 2011 with more than 15 Arab and international countries participating in the championship.

The Sharjah Water Festival 2010 was a successful event for the fourth con-

secutive year that was held at Al Majaz Waterfront and Khaled Lagoon in December," informed Al Noman.

The board of directors has discussed the development plan for 2011 recently. It covered the strategies to promote Sharjah's vital tourism sector in response to the ongoing regional and global competitiveness.

They also discussed some innovative methods for overall development of the industry. The board also evaluated SCTDA's efforts to organise tourism exhibitions and events, designing promotional roadshows, strengthening emirate's position on the world map and targeting new markets to promote it as leading tourist destination.

Sharjah unveils Light Festival 2011



The light festival helps Sharjah to position itself strongly on the global tourism map. The Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority (SCTDA) launched 'Sharjah Light Festival' on February 2,

2011. It is scheduled to take place from February 10 to 18. During the festival, Emirate will be decorated with spectacular lights. The historical buildings, museums and official buildings will be decorated with unique architectural designs along with light and music shows. Sharjah Tourism Authority has also launched an official website for this event, www.slf.ae. The travel trade and interested tourists can log on to this website to get information in both English and Arabic languages.