

# BIG STORY

## big story

# Cruising to record

128,900 passengers and 52 cruise vessels expected to arrive at Khalifa Bin Salman Port this cruise season



Luxury cruise ship, Azamara Quest, arrives at Khalifa Bin Salman Port

● Expects 10pc passenger growth and four maiden vessel calls

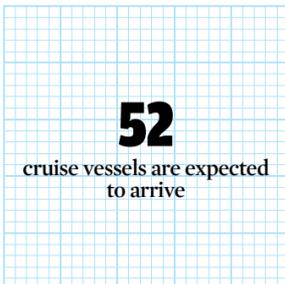
● Sees a 5pc growth in vessel calls

● Season from November 2018 – April 2019

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Bahrain during this cruise season will witness a record number of passengers, with 52 cruise vessels expected to arrive at Khalifa Bin Salman Port.

“We are looking forward to welcoming 10 per cent more passengers than last year, which will



be a significant contribution to our business at the Port, as well as Bahrain’s tourism economy,” Mark Hardiman, CEO/Managing Director of APM Terminals Bahrain said.

He also revealed that a majority of cruise lines are returning to the Kingdom during this season, which is expected to be a “record year”.

“This will be the highest on record in terms of passengers till

date, which witnessed a 33pc increase in the previous season, resulting in 105,271 cruise visitors and a 5pc growth in vessel calls,” a report by APM Terminals said.

Khalifa Bin Salman Port (KBSP), operated by APM Terminals Bahrain, marked the beginning of the 2018-19 Cruise Season recently as the first luxury ship of the year, Mein Schiff 4 recently docked at the port to a traditional Bahraini welcome.



Luxury cruise ship, Mein Schiff 4 arrives at Khalifa Bin Salman Port carrying over 2800 passengers



Passengers were given a traditional welcome

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APM TERMINALS

As per the report, 52 cruise ships are set to arrive in the Kingdom during this season from November 2018 – April 2019, which is expected to attract more tourism business for Bahrain. Four new cruise vessels, led by AIDAprima with its 3,300 passengers with 900 crew members, will be making its maiden call to the Kingdom with 18 scheduled trips planned for the season. This will be followed by MSC Lirica with eight trips and other vessels including the TUI Discovery and Thomson Celebration, also marking their debut in Bahrain.

Amongst the cruise vessels making their yearly call at KBSP, MSC Splendida will be returning to the Kingdom for the 2nd season, with six scheduled visits, each carrying ap-

proximately 3,900 passengers with a crew team of 1,313, making it the biggest vessel to call this season.

Mein Schiff also has repeated calls at KBSP with its ten trips, each carrying 2800 passengers. The cruise season will also witness docking of two cruise ships on the same day, over certain weeks of the scheduled season.

To meet the increased demand, the port operator said it has taken steps to speed up processes such as pre-approved gate passes for entry into the port, port shuttles to transport passengers to the gate, increased capacity for free WiFi at the cruise terminal, allocated gates for tourist buses as well as booths for tour operators and taxi services at the passenger terminal.