

## Dadabhai Travel named Bahrain's top Travel Agency

TDI | Manama

For the third year in a row, Dadabhai Travel has been awarded as Bahrain's Leading Travel Agency 2019 at the World Travel Awards.

The award was presented at the 26th Annual World Travel Awards Middle East Gala Ceremony 2019 held at Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Established in 1993, World Travel Awards aims to acknowledge, reward and celebrate excellence across all sectors of the tourism industry.

Adnan Gilitwala, Dadabhai Travel's director, commenting on the win, said, "Once again

it is a tremendous honour to receive this award as it shows us that our valued clients, partners, and supporters continue to have faith in our ability to deliver the highest level of service in the industry. We promise to continue to repay their faith in us and will strive to maintain both their trust and our place as Bahrain's leading travel agency for many years to come."

Dadabhai travel offers services including corporate, retail and group travel as well as offshore and marine services, hotel and apartment bookings, cruise and rail bookings, and more.

## G20 energy ministers to collaborate to keep stability



Japan's Industry Minister Hiroshige Seko

Japan | Karuizawa

Energy ministers from the Group of 20 major economies have shared concerns over attacks on tankers in the Gulf and will collaborate to maintain stability in the oil market, Japan's Industry Minister Hiroshige Seko said yesterday.

Two tankers, one operated by a Japanese shipping company, were attacked on Thursday. The United States blamed Iran for the attacks, raising concerns about a confrontation and driving up oil prices.

"The most important thing was that we have shared an understanding among energy ministers that we need to work together to deal with the recent incidents from energy security point of view," Seko told reporters at a meeting of G20 energy and environment ministers being held this weekend in Karuizawa.

"Same thing happened at our

bilateral meetings," he said, referring to talks with officials from several countries including Saudi Arabia and the United States.

Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih told Seko in their bilateral meeting that it took recent events, including a May 12 attack on four tankers off the United Arab Emirates, "very seriously."

The recent attacks were more harmful than physical damage to the ships as they affected global confidence in energy supply security, he said. "The Kingdom is committed to ensuring stability of global oil markets," he added.

Dan Brouillette, US deputy secretary of energy, also condemned the attacks.

"We stand firmly with Japanese and everyone else," he told a news conference on the sideline of the G20 ministerial meeting.

A G20 summit is to be held in Osaka on June 28-29.

## Sudan's Bashir to appear in court on graft charge

Khartoum, Sudan

Ousted Sudanese leader Omar al-Bashir is to appear in court next week to face charges of corruption and illegal possession of foreign currency, the acting prosecutor general announced yesterday.

The announcement came more than two months after the military overthrew Bashir following mass nationwide

protests against his 30-year iron-fisted rule.

Bashir "will appear in court next week following charges of corruption and possessing foreign currency", Al-Waleed Sayyed Ahmed told reporters, without specifying the day. Bashir was facing charges including "possessing foreign funds, acquiring suspected and illegal wealth, and ordering the (state of) emergency".

# Back to the Hanfu-ture

Young Chinese revive ancient fashion



Women wearing "hanfu" - traditional Chinese clothing - in a street after attending a gathering of hanfu devotees in Beijing.

Beijing, China

Dressed in a flowing long robe adorned with beaded floral embroidery from a bygone era, stylist Xiao Hang looks like she surfaced from a time machine as she strides across the bustling Beijing metro, attracting curious glances and inquisitive questions.

China has embraced Western fashion and futuristic technology as its economy boomed in recent decades, but a growing number of young people like Xiao are looking to the past for their sartorial choices and donning traditional "hanfu", or "Han clothing".

These historic costumes of the Han ethnic majority are enjoying a renaissance in part because the government is promoting traditional culture in a bid to boost patriotism and national identity.

Period dramas have also contributed to the surge in interest for traditional Chinese garb -- "The Story of Minglan", a TV series set in the Song Dynasty, garnered more than 400 million viewers in three days when it debuted earlier this year.

There is no uniform definition of what counts as hanfu since each Han-dominated dynasty had its own style, but the outfits are characterised by loose, flowing robes that drape around the body, with sleeves that hang down to the knees.

"When we were little, we would also drape sheets and duvets around ourselves to pretend we were wearing beautiful clothes," Xiao said.

Xiao, who used to work at a state-owned machine manufacturing company, now runs her own hanfu business, where

she dresses customers for photo shoots and even plans hanfu-style weddings.

**Ancient style, new fashion**

In modern China, the hanfu community spans the gamut: from history enthusiasts to anime fans, to students and even young professionals.

Yang Jiaming, a high school student in Beijing, wears his outfit under his school uniform.

"Two-thirds of my wardrobe is hanfu," he said, decked out in a Tang-style beige gown and black boots at a hanfu gathering, adding that his classmates and teachers have been supportive of his style.

A government-supported revival in Chinese culture has given the hanfu community a boost: since he entered office in 2012, President Xi Jinping has supported the idea of promoting a Han-centric version of heritage.

In April, the Communist Youth League of China launched a two-day conference for traditional Chinese garb, including hanfu.

A live broadcast of the event drew some 20 million viewers, alongside a visceral outpouring of emotions.

"Chinese people have abandoned their own culture and chosen Western culture. The red marriage gown has now become a wedding dress," wrote on user on Bilibili, a video streaming platform popular among young anime, comic and gaming fans in China.

Clothes are the "foundation of culture," said Jiang Xue, who is part of Beijing-based hanfu club Mowutianxia, which has received funding from the Communist Youth League.

"If we as a people and as a

country do not even understand our traditional clothing or don't wear them, how can we talk about other essential parts of our culture?" she said.

**'Strange clothes'**

There is some way before the style reaches mainstream acceptance in China.

In March, two students in Shijiazhuang Medical College in northern China were reportedly threatened with expulsion for wearing the outfits to school.

Others say they're deterred by the odd looks they get when wearing hanfu in public.

"I used to be very embarrassed to wear (hanfu) out,"

screenwriter Cheng Xia

told AFP.

The 37-year-old said she overcame her reservations after going out dressed in a full outfit last year.

Meanwhile, the movement to revive Han ethnic clothing is raising questions about nationalism and Han-ethnocentrism -- a sensitive issue in China where the government is wary of any inter-ethnic conflict.

For instance, within the hanfu community, there is long-running opposition towards the qipao, the high-collared, figure-hugging garment that used to be a staple of women's wardrobes.

Also known as cheongsam in Cantonese, the qipao -- meaning "Qi robe" -- began as a long, loose dress worn by the Manchus or "Qi" people who ruled China from the 17th century to the early 1900s.

Its popularity took off in 1920s Shanghai when it was modified into a fitted must-have, favoured by actresses and intellectuals as a symbol of femininity and refinement.

"Some people... think that the cheongsam was inspired in the Qing Dynasty, which is not enough to represent China. There are nationalist undertones in this issue," said Chinese culture scholar Gong Pengcheng.

"It is a good trend to explore traditional culture and clothing culture... There are many things we can talk about, and we need not shrink to nationalist confrontation."

Yang, the high school student, is more upbeat.

He said: "At the very least, we can wear our own traditional clothes, just like the ethnic minorities."

