

Reap tourism benefits by bringing heritage to light

Experts call for more action to explore heritage tourism potentials



Bahrain has many heritage sites, but not getting the right attention.

TDT|Manama
Mohammed Zafran

Bahrain has the highest potential to emerge as a culture and heritage based tourism hotspot in the region due to its rich history and well-preserved heritage sites, according to heritage experts.

Bahrain can take advantage of its rich history and heritage to transform itself into a tourism hub, international heritage expert and Adviser to Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities Dr Britta Rudolff told Tribune.

According to her, Bahrain is unique in the region thanks to its magnificent history such as from the Tylos and Delmon period as well as the well-preserved archeological sites.

“Bahrain, compared to other countries in the region has a tremendous amount of heritage resources although it is slowly disappearing. The country can really use these resources to become a prime culture tourism destination in the region.

“This is a decision that needs to be made now; with developments projects increasing many resources are getting lost. If this



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situation continues, Bahrain will face the same situation as the UAE has today where cultural heritage has been lost.”

“Bahrain is by far the strongest in the GCC in heritage terms. Bahrain has historic cities and villages in their architectural fabric, and also has amazing archeological sites, the burial mounds field which used to be the whole of the Island are still present. There are historic temples and sites like Qalat al Bah-

rain. Undoubtedly, Bahrain is a stronghold of cultural heritage.”

“Oman is perhaps the only country in the region that could even compete with Bahrain. But Bahrain has still some advantages such as its small size which gives it a stronger density.”

“This could be something that could be marketed in a bigger way because culture tourism is high quality tourism; it brings in a lot of revenue.”

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of an emphasis point on the government agenda. Although it is being recognised and appreciated, it is still not given the importance and attention it deserves.”

Heritage sites in the GCC face a lot of challenges as infrastructure and housing development takes place, she said.

“Challenges are different in different sites, many sites now-a-days face issues such as infrastructure and housing issues, for instance sky scrapers popping

up next to archaeological sites. In historic neighbourhoods, large housing project coming in could make a change in the structure and identity of the local community.”

Site managers also face many challenges, she said. “The main challenges are the tremendous work they are tasked with. They need to have different skills in different areas, administrative skills, financial skills, marketing, negotiating and the specific

skills required for conservation and preservation of the historic sites. It is far too much for a person to handle, the situation is the same all around the world but they need more support.”

Tim Badman, Director of World Heritage programme at International Union for Conservation of Nature, said that he was happy to see Bahrain’s efforts for heritage conservation. He said that Bahrain has strong heritage and cultural sites, recommending the strengthening of culture-nature linkage at heritage sites.

“What I would like to see in Bahrain is for it to bring a linkage between nature and culture. So more attention would need to be placed on ecological aspects around the cultural sites and how the sites show the people’s relationship with nature has evolved over time.

“The whole story of Bahrain from Delmon period onwards is a very compelling story of how people had to live in a challenging environment and how they have adapted to their conditions. So what this means is that we need people with nature conservation and cultural heritage skills on the ground.”



Indian Ambassador Alok Kumar Sinha attended a yoga session organised by Prop Yoga and Therapy Centre yesterday at Marassi Beach as part of International Yoga Day celebrations. The session was held under the guidance of yoga instructor Ehsan Asghar.



The Shri Krishna Hindu Temple - Manama and the Thattai (Bhatia) Hindu Community celebrated the fourth edition of International Yoga Day by organising a talk on the benefits of “Yoga for a Healthy Lifestyle” with a simultaneous demonstration of yogic postures by yoga expert Anil Kumar Singh. The event was attended by Indian Embassy Second Secretary (Consular) P K Chowdhury, joined by 102 yoga enthusiasts in performing the various asanas.