

Help of tour guides, operators and hotels sought to counsel tourists

A gentle push for tourist dress code in Salalah

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March 16: The authorities in Salalah are trying to give a gentle push for a dress code for tourists and casual visitors at public places.

A committee comprising officials from the Ministry of Tourism, Dhofar Municipality, Royal Oman Police and some hoteliers discussed the issue after some complaints from the local residents.

The authorities are planning to implement the already existing dress code with the help of tour guides, tour operators and hotels by impressing upon them to tell their guests to be respectful to local customs by not venturing out in public places in improper costumes.

"There is nothing like proper or improper when it comes to costumes. A proper costume of Europeans may be improper in Middle Eastern countries and a vice versa. But we request our guests not to dress up scantily while going out of the hotel like shopping complexes, museums and other places of touristic interest," said a hotelier.

"Moreover, the dress code here is very simple. Women should try keep covered from their neck to lower knee in a full sleeve costume, while men are supposed to wear shorts below their knees and an upper with covered shoulders," he said.

For Sultan Qaboos Mosque or



Salalah Grand Mosque, there is a move to keep proper costumes for the visitors who somehow fail to abide by the dress code and offered proper costumes on a minimal rent.

The tour guides, operators and security guards deputed at shopping malls are to be the tools for implementing the dress codes, as they are being trained to mention politely to the visitors if they are not following the dress code.

Anissa Kirch of National Tours handles mainly the tourists from Germany. She called for well defined dress code which can be conveyed to the tourists, as most of them don't mind abiding by them.

She called upon every tourist to follow the dress code. "The dress code here is very simple to follow. The women not necessarily have to cover their head

if they are not visiting a mosque, and most important, the tourists are free to wear whatever they want inside the hotel," she said.

Calling upon the tourists to appreciate local culture, Anissa said it was culture that made countries different and special. "That is why people travel to explore and experience different cultures, new or different ways of living. To experience you have to try. It would have been boring if the whole world was the same... It is also a matter of showing respect when you travel and meet new people and follow their customs."

"Even in European countries there are dress codes for public, religious places and beaches. Also when you visit Italian churches, the simple rule is to cover your shoulders and knees... there is no point in argument," she said.

Mobile tourist vehicles launch on March 20

SALALAH: The Ministry of Tourism will launch on March 20, Sunday, at Port of Salalah the mobile tourist vehicles project under the auspices of Abdullah bin Aqeel al Ibrahim, Acting Deputy Governor of Dhofar.

The Ministry of Tourism carried out the project with funding from the Salalah Methanol Company and in cooperation with the Public Authority for the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises 'Riyada', Al Rafid Fund and Salalah Port to support tourism initiatives and small and medium enterprises that contribute to the development of tourist sites in the Sultanate and the provision of services needed by tourists and visitors to the governorate.

The mobile tourist services project includes operating 7 mobile vehicles that are designed in accordance with the specified activities; two of them are allocated for the sale of traditional craft products, two for the sale of Omani



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food and meals and two for the sale of fruit juices, in addition to one vehicle to provide information and tourism services.

It is worth mentioning that the mobile tourist vehicles will be present at Salalah port during the cruise ship season and in a number of tourist sites during the Khareef season.

— ONA

NHRC discusses rights issues with UN officials

GENEVA: A delegation from the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) headed by Mohammed bin Abdullah al Riyami, Chairman of the Commission, met Kate Gilmore, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Scheherazade Tajikistan Head of the UPR section in the Swiss City of Geneva, in the presence of a government delegation headed by Abdullah bin Nasser al Rafidi, the Sultanate's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

The meeting aimed at enhancing aspects of joint cooperation between

the High Commissioner for Human Rights and NHRC in the protection and promotion of human rights in the Sultanate, and to increase awareness about the importance of the universal periodic review mechanism by all competent authorities by highlighting their roles with respect to the implementation of the recommendations approved by the Sultanate.

The meeting also stressed the importance of cooperation between all institutions concerned in the Sultanate when drafting the action plan to implement the recommendations.

NHRC organised workshops during the last period in collaboration with the High Commissioner Office in the Sultanate for stakeholders. NHRC is considered as a link for coordination

between the various actors in the Sultanate working to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations in the field of protection of human rights, in addition to its role in the establishment of local mechanisms to supervise the conduct of work in the various human rights areas covered in the recommendations.

— ONA