

# ABSENCE OF SECURITY IN EGYPT BEGINS TO POSE THREAT TO TOURISM



The shortage of police presence around Egypt's numerous attractions along with increasing cases of violence and vandalism are factors that are threatening further development of tourism in Egypt.

It is no secret that Egypt has not been enjoying the most stable of times. Mubarak has been the name in most newspapers for the wrong reasons and political instability has been on the rise. This has led to hotels in Egypt being forced to slash their rates as the straws of desperation were being clutched from a variety of angles.

Better rates for accommodation and Mubarak's trial in Cairo did inject new confidence into Egyptian tourism, yet now there is a greater challenge in the form of police shortages and increasing violence.

**Tourists are now often being harassed in the streets without the knowledge that the police can intervene.** The recent looting at the Karnak Temple was not overseen by large amounts of policemen, as it should have been. Indeed, the service for the protection of temples, historic sites and monuments is either very poor or non-existent. Nowadays, the situation is at its worst since the shooting incident at Queens Hatshepsut in 1997 when 6 gunmen killed 62 people.

A rise in xenophobia in Cairo has had an effect on tourism and is linked to the outbreak in vandalism. **Many monuments are being targeted in a bid to purposefully put tourists off and the plan is working.** Centers such as Luxor are really feeling the strain and many see increased police presence as the only reasonable solution. Tourists may just turn a blind eye to vandals as long as they know they are safe.

Date: 2011-09-12

Article link:

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