

Local

High touristic prices



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Tourism is an important source of income for any country to support the local economy, but it comes with inconvenience for the local population. Although a tourist might not mind spending some money for a certain period of time until he returns to his country, the high prices remain throughout the year, which make the people of the city suffer. This issue has become a matter of concern in places like Italy and Spain. These two countries are known for being preferred destinations for people around the globe, including the Arab world.

Some countries are trying to attract more tourists to benefit their economy, which is acceptable, but several European cities have recently been looking for a suitable way to control the number of visitors while making good profits. According to the French *Le Pen* newspaper, Venice in Italy is preparing a draft law to impose a levy on every tourist entering the city during the peak tourist season. The idea was introduced into the Italian finance law in December at the request of the city's mayor Ligi Brugnaro.

This proposal came after claims of residents that their lives are "no longer bearable" due to tourists' noise, property rentals, commodity prices and neighborhood hygiene, while they used to enjoy a quiet life in the past. Of course, imposing a fee on visitors in Venice will play an important economic role and generate between 40 and 50 million euros a year, according to Italian newspaper *La Repubblica*, which said this money will contribute to cleaning the city that is visited by one million people every year.

The residents of the Italian city are not the only ones being harassed. In Spain too, there have been some angry voices in Barcelona amid calls for restrictions on the construction of new tourist facilities due to high rent values. Angry Spaniards say that the influx of tourists has inflated prices in the city center, so many people are moving to the suburbs to rent houses at affordable prices.

Park Guell in Barcelona has imposed a fee on visitors, and the current system allows only a certain number of visitors to enter the famous touristic site. I think they are right, because in 1984, Park Guell was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It's really worth visiting.

I like to go to Dubai several times a year, but I find the prices are too high. I wonder how people can afford to live with the high prices there, but I know from some that despite what they spend, they enjoy a good lifestyle and various entertainments. They don't object to spending large amounts of money for a good meal and a fun time.

I think that people today have many pressures in life, so paying some money for entertainment is not difficult, especially for Arabs, because they are paying for their own amusement. But I think it is necessary to define policies to deal with the high prices that affect people living there throughout the year.

We in Kuwait do not rely on tourism, and most visitors are from the region. Prices at hotels and restaurants are still high however for the average income. I believe that the United Nations organizations concerned with tourism should take this issue seriously and ensure that the high touristic prices benefit the population and not only the country's economy, through policies and decisions that take into account the conditions of residents.

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Camel racing is a popular winter sport in Kuwait and the rest of the khaleej. Visitors from near and far regularly attend the weekend races. Kuwait's Camel Racing Club in Kabd holds races every weekend during the season from November through April. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Driver provocateurs: New scam for big payouts



IN MY VIEW

By Nawara Fattahova

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Drivers of luxury vehicles and residents in general should be careful of strangers who try to provoke you or get your attention, as a new method of swindling people has been observed. Some criminals only want to make money and don't care if their victims get injured or even killed. On the other hand, this phenomenon can be a lesson for people, especially those who are nervy, to always keep calm.

Various celebrities and other ordinary folks have experienced this kind of behavior. A popular social media influencer spoke about his experience while he was driving, where some guys were chasing him. "They kept calling my name in a very annoying way and were continuously shouting. I guess they were trying to provoke me to insult them so they could spoil my reputation. When I stopped looking at them and didn't respond, they made an offensive gesture with their hands and drove away slowly, hoping I would follow them to fight. But I was really tired, so I just ignored them and changed my course," he posted on his account.

Another man experienced a similar situation. While he was driving his expensive vehicle, a man he doesn't know drove so closely to him that he almost hit him. When he looked at the reckless driver in shock, the reckless driver made vulgar gestures. This did enrage the motorist, who forced the provocateur to stop, then got out of his car with

his cousin and hit the guy, who didn't even defend himself.

After a few hours, the motorist received a call from the police station asking him to come to the station, as someone had filed a complaint against him. When he arrived, the injured reckless driver was waiting for him with a medical report of the injuries he had suffered. The police officer advised the defendant to resolve the case amicably instead of filing a case in court, which could even result in imprisonment. The complainant demanded KD 3,000 to drop the case, so the defendant chose to pay up instead of being sentenced to jail.

It seems that the reckless driver might have had the payoff in mind all along. He may have been deliberately provoking the man so he could get beaten and then extort an out of court settlement. Drivers should be aware of this trick and not let strangers provoke them for any reason.

Another older man also recalled facing such a situation when he was driving with his family recently. He said a stranger was harassing him with his vehicle, trying to provoke him by making lewd gestures with his hands to make him angry. But this driver didn't want to fight in the middle of the road, especially since his family was with him. He also realized the case would reach the police, so he kept ignoring the provoker until he lost hope and drove away.