

# Abu Dhabi will only allow vaccinated people in some public spaces from Aug. 20

Mon, 2021-06-28 22:04

ABU DHABI: Abu Dhabi has announced that a wide range of public places will soon be accessible only to those vaccinated against the coronavirus in a bid to encourage more people to get shots.

The Emirati government on Monday said that starting August 20, authorities will begin restricting access to shopping malls, restaurants, cafes, sporting activities, museums, gyms, schools and universities, the emirate's media office said in a tweet on Monday.

The decision doesn't apply to those who are unvaccinated because of an exemption, nor to children aged 15 and below, the media office added.

The Abu Dhabi Emergency, Crisis and Disasters Committee has approved allowing only those vaccinated to enter some public places, after vaccinating 93 per cent of target groups in the emirate and to preserve public health. [pic.twitter.com/KUGz9YWqTa](https://pic.twitter.com/KUGz9YWqTa)

– مكتب أبوظبي الإعلامي (@admediaoffice) [June 28, 2021](#)

The unvaccinated will effectively be barred from entering any business in the UAE capital except for supermarkets and pharmacies.

Abu Dhabi has already rolled out a “green pass” system that limits public access to those who have either received the shot or can show a negative virus test.

It comes as the country looks to economic reopening helped by its speedy vaccination campaign. The government says at least 93% of Abu Dhabi’s population has received at least one dose of the vaccine.

The neighboring travel hub of Dubai also has introduced some vaccination restrictions on mass entertainment and sporting events. However, malls and other businesses remain open to the unvaccinated.

The UAE boasts one of the world’s fastest inoculation campaigns, with 15.1 million doses administered to its population of some 9 million.

\* *With AP and Reuters*



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Abu Dhabi approves use of EDE scanners to detect COVID-19 infections  
Abu Dhabi COVID-19 app removes vaccine option for visitors

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## [US announces normalization of relations with Sudan](#)

Mon, 2021-06-28 21:53

LONDON: US relations with Sudan have returned to normal, according to an embassy spokesperson in Khartoum.

Amber Baskett, the Chargé d'Affairs at the American embassy in the Sudanese capital, confirmed the decision came as a result of the achievements of the interim transitional government.

Sudanese Foreign Minister Maryam Al-Sadiq, who hosted Baskett on Monday, welcomed the American move, which she said was deserved for the progress the country had made since the ousting of Omar Bashir in 2019.

She added that the US decision would support Sudan's democratic transition efforts and address its challenges.

American relations with Sudan have been on an upward trajectory since 2019, and included the removal of the African country from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism in 2020.



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## [Israeli settlers agree to leave flashpoint West Bank outpost](#)

Author:

AFP

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Mon, 2021-06-28 15:52

JERUSALEM: Jewish settlers agreed Monday to leave a new outpost in the occupied West Bank that has stirred weeks of Palestinian protests following a deal with Israel's government, officials said. Under the agreement, confirmed by settler leaders and the interior ministry,

the settlers will leave the Eviatar outpost within days but their mobile homes will remain and Israeli troops will establish a base in the area. According to a statement from regional settler leader Yossi Dagan, the defense ministry has agreed to study land claims to assess the prospect of a future recognized settlement.

Dagan said the agreement had been approved by Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked.

Shaked's office confirmed the deal, but spokespersons for Bennett and Gantz were not immediately available to comment.

About 50 Jewish families moved to Eviatar last month, erecting huts, tents and caravans – in defiance of international and Israeli law – on land near Nablus in the occupied West Bank, which Palestinians claim for a future state.

Palestinians in the nearby community of Beita responded with nighttime protests, flashing horns, burning tires and shining laser beams to keep the settlers awake.

Moussa Hamayel, the deputy head of the Beita municipality, told AFP that the Palestinian community had "completely rejected" the purported compromise. In unrest sparked by the protests, four Palestinians including a teenager have been killed by Israeli troops.

Eviatar is named after a settler fatally stabbed near Beita in 2013.

An earlier version of the outpost was evacuated by Israeli authorities.

Israeli families returned to the outpost in May after a yeshiva student was shot dead by a Palestinian gunman nearby.

Gantz ordered the settlement removed, but Benjamin Netanyahu – who served 12 unbroken years as prime minister, before he was unseated on June 13 – froze the decision.

Bennett, who ousted Netanyahu by joining a broad coalition including left-wingers and an Arab party, is the former head of the Yesha Council, a settlers' lobbying group.

All Jewish settlements in the West Bank, occupied by Israel since 1967, are considered illegal by most of the international community.



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Palestinians, Jewish settlers clash in tense Jerusalem neighborhood  
Anger in East Jerusalem as settlers occupy homes

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## [Desperate Iranians turn to graverobbing as economy collapses](#)

Author:

Mon, 2021-06-28 19:55

LONDON: Escalating economic pressure combined with multilateral sanctions imposed on Iran have led to a spate of robberies from royal tombs and widespread looting of Iran's historical cultural sites.

"The graves and mausoleums of our kings are openly known and accessible for excavation," said one infamous thief, who has adopted an online persona

modelled on Agatha Christie's detective Poirot.

"How a toiling worker became prosperous through digging for gold," reads another of his Instagram posts.

These sentiments are indicative of a wider trend in Iran; desperate individuals looting the country's rich cultural past to sustain them in the present.

The UN's body for world heritage sites, UNESCO, ranks Iran seventh in the world in heritage possession – but the country, facing perennial economic decline, is now plagued by looting and site destruction, according to the UK-based Heritage Management Organization.

"Sanctions on Iran have led to the perfect storm for antiquities looting," said Leila Amineddoleh, a lawyer specializing in art and heritage.

As the sanctions bite and Iran's wider economic system breaks down, Amineddoleh explained that "opportunistic individuals turn to archaeological theft and looting."

She added: "People have treated their cultural heritage as a resource to be extracted."

According to the UN Office for Drugs and Crime, Iran is particularly susceptible to criminal gangs: "Due to its ancient history, large number of cultural sites and geographic location, the country is vulnerable to looting, trafficking, and smuggling of its cultural property, art and antiquities."

In the past four months, 22 illegal digs were discovered at Iran's heritage sites, according to an Iranian state-backed news channel, and last week five men were arrested in the southwest of the country, accused of belonging to a gang of looters.

Officials have pledged to crack down on looting activity, but experts believe that the practice is now so widespread that it is out of their control.

"Any illegal and unauthorized excavation and metal-detecting activities aimed at pillaging our country's heritage will be met with the power of the law," said one colonel.

There are now regular reports of people dying in cave-ins as they search for loot and, according to Evangelos Kyriakidis, a senior lecturer in archaeology at the University of Kent and founding director of the Heritage Management Organization, these reports are just a snapshot of the wider issue.

"We receive hundreds of reports every week on illicit excavations around the country, which to my mind means there must be thousands occurring because most of them are not reported," he said.

Referring to treasure hunters such as "Poirot" who post about their exploits for their online followers, Kyriakidis added: "People in that network are becoming audacious."



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Gazans struggle to protect antiquities from neglect, looting

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## [Basra locals float plan to display Saddam Hussein's luxury yacht](#)

Mon, 2021-06-28 18:24

LONDON: A luxury yacht once owned by former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein could be repurposed as a floating museum in Basra, Iraq.

Built in 1980 by a Danish shipyard, the 82 meter motor-yacht was, at the time, one of the largest of its kind in the world.

After Hussein's fall from grace it was abandoned, before eventually being recovered by the Iraqi government in 2008 and donated to Basra University for

use as a maritime research vessel.

But operating it as a research tool became prohibitively expensive, and now senior museum officials are reportedly seeking to feature it as part of a new exhibition.

Qahtan Alabeed, the director of Basra's Museum – housed in Hussein's former palace – wants to feature the yacht in a new project dedicated to Iraq's nautical past.

"We want to reactivate work to rebuild a number of types of boats that sailed in the (Shatt Al-Arab) river and marshes. We already have around 16," he told Boat International, a yachting website, adding that Basra's mayor backed the plan.

The ship was named Qadissiyat Saddam by the disgraced dictator, in reference to a historical battle between Persians and Arabs in which the Arabs are said to have emerged victorious against all odds. Hussein went to great lengths to draw comparisons between that ancient battle and the brutal war that took place between Iran and Iraq in the 1980s.

The vessel passed through many hands before emerging for sale in Nice in 2007. The government of Iraq, working through the French courts, then seized and repatriated it.

Now renamed Basrah Breeze, experts have warned that the museum's plan for a floating exhibit could be prohibitively expensive.

The hull alone could cost as much as \$1.5 million to restore, said one local academic, and others doubt whether anyone in Iraq has a solid and sustainable plan in place to make use of it.

Ali Douabul, the former head of the Marine Science Center where the boat was donated to, told Boat International: "If you ask me, the government has been misled to take this yacht, because they don't have the ability to use it properly or commercially.

"They thought it might be worth \$200 million – I don't know where they got their figures from."

The solution, he said, may lie outside of Iraq.

"Perhaps an international organization like the International Maritime Organization should take care of it, because Iraqis will not. Then it becomes world heritage."



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Gaddafi's superyacht to go greenYacht design firm Sinot denies Bill Gates purchase of \$644m hydrogen-powered super vessel