

Egypt displays trove of newly discovered ancient artifacts

May 30 2022



Painted coffins with well-preserved mummies inside, dating back to the Late Period of ancient Egypt around 500 B.C, are displayed at a makeshift exhibit at the feet of the Step Pyramid of Djoser in Saqqara, 24 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of Cairo, Egypt, Monday, May 30, 2022. Credit: AP Photo/Amr Nabil

Egypt on Monday displayed a trove of ancient artifacts dating back 2,500 years that the country's antiquities authorities said were recently unearthed at the famed necropolis of Saqqara near Cairo.

The artifacts were showcased at a makeshift exhibit at the feet of the Step Pyramid of Djoser in Saqqara, 24 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of the Egyptian capital.

According to Mostafa Waziri, head of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, the find includes 250 painted sarcophagi with well-preserved mummies inside, as well as 150 bronze statues of ancient deities and bronze vessels used in rituals of Isis, the goddess of fertility in ancient Egyptian mythology, all from the Late Period, about 500 B.C.

A headless bronze statue of Imhotep, the chief architect of Pharaoh Djoser who ruled ancient Egypt between 2630 B.C. and 2611 B.C was also displayed.

The artifacts will be transferred for a permanent exhibit at the new Grand Egyptian Museum, a mega project still under construction near the famed Giza Pyramids, just outside Cairo.

The Saqqara site is part of a sprawling necropolis at Egypt's ancient capital of Memphis that includes the Giza Pyramids and the smaller pyramids at Abu Sir, Dahshur and Abu Ruwaysh. The ruins of Memphis were designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1970s.



An antiquities employee tries to prevent reporters from getting close to painted coffins with well-preserved mummies inside, dating back to the Late Period of ancient Egypt around 500 B.C, at a makeshift exhibit at the feet of the Step Pyramid of Djoser in Saqqara, 24 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of Cairo, Egypt, Monday, May 30, 2022. Credit: AP Photo/Amr Nabil



Painted coffins with well-preserved mummies inside, dating back to the Late Period of ancient Egypt around 500 B.C, and a trove of ancient artifacts recently unearthed, are displayed during a press conference by Mostafa Waziri, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, at a makeshift exhibit at the feet of the Step Pyramid of Djoser in Saqqara, 24 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of Cairo, Egypt, Monday, May 30, 2022. Credit: AP Photo/Amr Nabil



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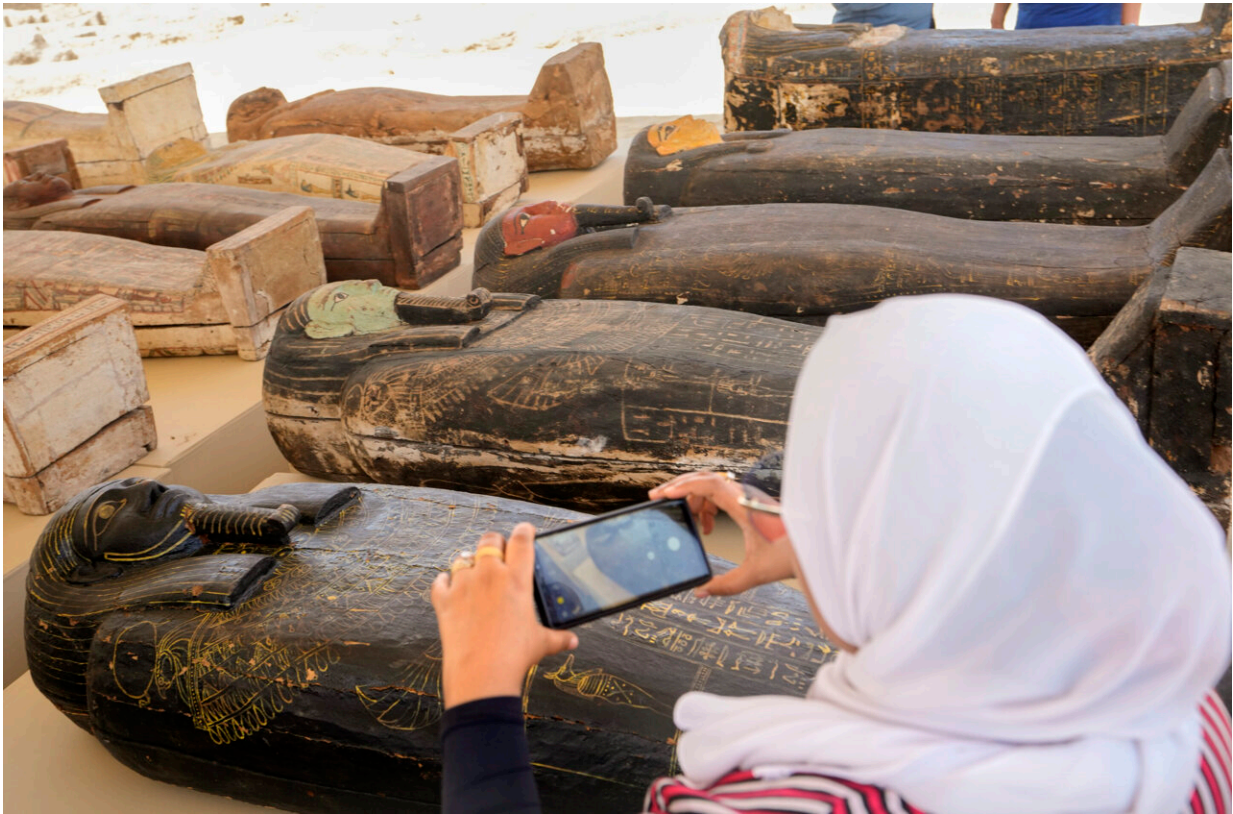
A reporter films painted coffins with well-preserved mummies inside, dating back to the Late Period of ancient Egypt around 500 B.C, displayed during a press conference at a makeshift exhibit at the feet of the Step Pyramid of Djoser in Saqqara, 24 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of Cairo, Egypt, Monday, May 30, 2022. Credit: AP Photo/Amr Nabil



A reporter films a headless bronze statue of Imhotep, the chief architect of Pharaoh Djoser who oversaw the building of the step pyramid, during a press conference by Mostafa Waziri, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities at a makeshift exhibit at the feet of the Step Pyramid of Djoser in Saqqara, 24 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of Cairo, Egypt, Monday, May 30, 2022. Credit: AP Photo/Amr Nabil



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Egypt has been heavily promoting recent archaeological finds, hoping to attract more tourists to the country. Its tourist sector, a major source of foreign currency, suffered from years of political turmoil and violence following the 2011 uprising that toppled autocrat Hosni Mubarak.

The sector has recently started to recover from the coronavirus pandemic, only to be hit again by the effects of Russia's war on Ukraine. Along with Russia, Ukraine is a major source of tourists visiting Egypt.

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