



The wooden pier surrounded by sea waters.



A tourist cruise ship.



Visitors entertain themselves in various sections of the harbor.

Doha ancient harbor is distinguished with a strategic location in the heart of the Qatari capital. The harbor is close to Waqif market, museums and other tourist attractions. There are various services at the port location for travelers and tourists, with a chain of restaurants and cafes. —KUNA



Tourists walk on tiled lanes snaking among the harbor buildings.



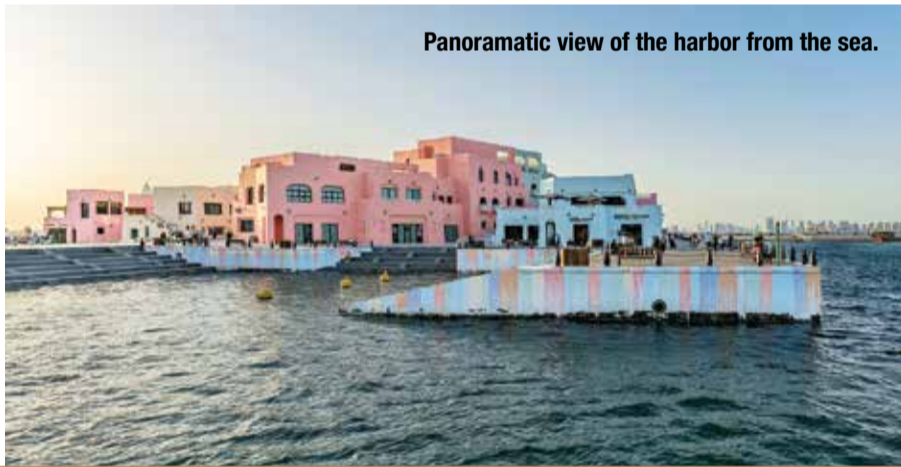
The colored buildings in harmonious colors.



The fish market



A boy playing with the sea gulls.



Panoramic view of the harbor from the sea.



An alley at Doha port.

Zip line row erupts at Rio's iconic Sugarloaf Mountain



View of a Sugarloaf Cable Cars during a demonstration against proposals to create a zip line attraction at Sugarloaf Mountain in Rio de Janeiro.



Protestors demonstrate against proposals to create a zip line attraction at Sugarloaf Mountain in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



The chance to speed down a zip line from the top of Rio de Janeiro's breathtaking Sugarloaf Mountain should easily draw huge crowds of thrill-seekers to the iconic tourist destination.

But not if Grisel Osorio Hor-Meyll has anything to say about it. Hor-Meyll, a psychologist, was one of dozens of people who protested Sunday against the construction of a 755-meter (2,477-foot) zip line that promises to let tourists whizz down from the top of Sugarloaf, the dramatic mountain at the mouth of the Brazilian beach city's Guanabara Bay. "It's not right. It's going to disfigure a UNESCO World Heritage Site," said Hor-Meyll, a member of the environmental group Ecological Action and an activist in the "Movement for a Sugarloaf with no Zip Line."

"It's bad for the city, and bad for conservation," she told AFP. The company that manages the Sugarloaf visitors' area, Parque Bondinho, launched work on the zip line project last year, and plans to finish it by mid-2023.

It says the attraction will be a "unique and environmentally sustainable experience": four zip lines connecting Sugarloaf—elevation 396 meters (1,299 feet) above sea level—to the neighboring peak, Urca—elevation 220 meters (722 feet) -- and transporting visitors at speeds of up to 100 kilometers (62 miles) an hour.

Critics warn the project could harm the local environment and wildlife, already suffering from the impact of helicopter flights for tourists and night-time parties on the mountain. They also detest the idea of drilling holes to plant the zip line cables in the mountains, which are protected national monuments in Brazil and an iconic part of Rio's cityscape, which UNESCO declared a World Heritage site in 2012. "They're not just rocks. They're living things," said Hor-Meyll.

'Tip of the iceberg'

Sugarloaf's tropical-green peaks offer stunning panoramas of Rio's famed beaches, Christ the Redeemer statue and other postcard-perfect landmarks. The park comprising Sugarloaf and Urca receives around 1.6 million visi-

tors a year, most of whom make the trip up on a cable car known as the "bondinho," completed in 1913.

Parque Bondinho, which manages the cable car, argues the zip line will have limited impact on the landscape, saying the cables are thinner and vibrate less than the ones already linking Sugarloaf and Urca for the cable car system. The company said in a statement it has fulfilled all regulatory requirements, conducted consultations with civil society groups and obtained all necessary permits for the project.



View of a Sugarloaf Cable Car during a demonstration against proposals to create a zip line attraction at Sugarloaf Mountain in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. — AFP photos

That did not assuage protesters at the base of the mountain, who brandished signs reading "SOS UNESCO" and "Down with zip lines." An online petition against the project has collected more than 11,000 signatures. Activists say there should have been a broader public discussion on the zip line, which the group warned in a statement is "just the tip of a gigantic iceberg." That is a reference to an even bigger development project the authorities are currently evaluating, which would include building stores, a concert venue and a nightclub on the mountains.

"It's a horrific, awful thing," said artist turned protester Regina Costa de Paula, 67. "It would kill the mountaintop." Businessman Hans Rauschmayer, a 57-year-old German now living in Rio, said the company is "using Sugarloaf as if it were private property." "But actually, it's a treasure that belongs to Rio, to Brazil, to the entire world," he said. —AFP