

HIS HIGHNESS SHEIKH HAMAD BIN KHALIFA AL THANI, THE FATHER AMIR, AND HER HIGHNESS SHEIKHA MOZA BINT NASSER PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL SPORT DAY AT QATAR FOUNDATION

Doha, Qatar, 10 February 2015: His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) joined thousands of spectators from around the country to celebrate National Sport Day at Qatar Foundation.

Their Highnesses watched participants enjoy a range of physical activities designed to inspire healthy living and enjoyment of sport, and thereby support delivery of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

They also witnessed a table tennis tournament for people with special needs, a basketball for children and adults as well as a range of traditional Qatari games such as sack races, rope pulling and Dahrouri.

The highlight of this year's activities was the walkathon through Education City. Under the theme of 'Unlock Your Inner Athlete', each stage of the route included educational activities to inspire people to lead healthier, more active lifestyles.

The walkathon was inaugurated by the President of Qatar Foundation, Engineer Saad Al Muhannadi. Discussing the inspiration behind QF's activities, he said: "Modern-day lifestyles and everyday pressures can have a negative impact on physical and mental health, and I believe that sport is vital to counterbalancing these effects."

"Therefore, through its various centres, programmes, and initiatives, Qatar Foundation is focusing on integrating sports and exercise into everyday lives in order to encourage the population to become more active," he continued.

"National Sport Day is a pioneering initiative and Qatar is leading by example by promoting a sporting culture. Over the next few years, we will continue to witness further positive results that can inspire other countries to do the same."

The walkathon featured 47 activities along its 3.8 kilometre route which enabled visitors to learn more about Education City and the role that QF plays in promoting education, science and research, and community development.

The walkathon started at 10am at AL SHAQAB, which is a member of Qatar Foundation. The equestrian centre is steeped in Qatari tradition and hosted a series of activities that gave residents the chance to learn more about its world-class horses and activities.

Engineer Jassim Telefat, Group Executive Director of Capital Projects and Facilities Management at Qatar Foundation, congratulated the organizers and participants of National Sport Day 2015. Explaining how QF NSD was showcasing Qatari heritage, he said: "It is great that traditional games have been introduced at the celebration. My generation enjoyed them when we were children and we are pleased to be introducing them to younger people today. Our event also allows Qatar Foundation to showcase Qatari culture and heritage to the wider community, including those from outside Qatar."

Jassim Al Marri visited AL SHAQAB with his younger brother Rehama Al Marri, and said: "This is my second National Sport Day at Qatar Foundation and every year the activities get better. It is clear that everyone here is having a great time and the horse riding is a clear favourite with children. It is important to promote activities such as horse riding, archery and swimming to young children in Qatar as these sports are deeply rooted in our heritage and culture."

The next stop on the walkathon was Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q) where the participants attended an informative workshop on nutrition called 'Healthy Life'. Led by Dr Shahrar Taheri, Professor of Medicine at WCMC-Q, the seminar educated visitors about the importance of a nutritious diet.

As the walkathon progressed through Education City, Ameena Ahmadi, Technical Director at QF's Capital Projects, discussed the key architectural properties that define the buildings of Qatar Foundation and their locations. Among the structures featured were Qatar National Library, the new Qatar Foundation Headquarters, the Ceremonial Court and student accommodation.

Additional stages along the route included the Hamad Bin Khalifa University Student Centre where people participated in a rowing exercise and the Green Spine where a number of sports tournaments took place including football and basketball games. Participants were also given the chance to watch a series of taekwondo and gymnastics demonstrations.

The walkathon came to a close at Awsaj Academy, which played host to a series of ladies only activities including aerobics, pilates and circuit training. Awsaj Academy Recreation Center also hosted running competitions for young and old.

Reflecting on the programme, Mohammed Khamis, who is a newcomer to Doha, praised QF's National Sport Day activities, saying: "I have only been here for ten days and am so pleased I brought my three children to Education City as they are having a wonderful time. I have just finished the walkathon and it is fantastic. I am very impressed with Qatar as a country, and proud we have such a forward-thinking country as Qatar in the Arab world."

In addition, the Qatar Foundation cricket ground hosted a collection of activities throughout the day, including the annual Friendship Cup cricket tournament between Qatar Foundation and

RasGas which seeks to strength social ties between the workers taking part. The stadium also witnessed tug of war competitions and cricket games for children too.

Speaking about this year's events, Syed Abbasi from Pakistan said: "I have played in the three previous editions of the Friendship Cup but this year I am part of the organising committee. As well as the cricket we are hosting a range of other activities too. There really is something for everyone."

This year marks the fourth annual National Sport Day since its official launch in 2012 by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. National Sport Day is part of a year-round programme that is designed to encourage the Qatar community to live active, healthy lifestyles, and reflects Qatar Foundation's dedication to serving the community.

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Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organisation that is supporting Qatar on its journey from carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. QF was co-founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, QF's Chairperson. QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercialising solutions through key sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>.