

Qatar Foundation celebrates National Sport Day

Qatar Foundation President stresses the importance of this initiative towards achieving the organisation's vision

Doha, 11 February 2014 – Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, joined hundreds of people who gathered at Education City today to celebrate National Sport Day. Her Highness attended a number of sporting activities and events across various locations at Qatar Foundation.

Members of the public took part in a variety of friendly sporting competitions and events, alongside Qatar Foundation's staff, students, and faculty. Throughout the day, a number of fun-filled competitions and tournaments were organised, with games and activities also planned for children of all ages and for people with special needs.

Engineer Saad Al Muhannadi, President of Qatar Foundation, participated in the celebrations and emphasised the importance of National Sport Day in raising awareness among members of the community and instilling a culture of sport and physical fitness.

He said, "In the three years since it was established, National Sport Day has gained momentum by championing the health and wellbeing of the nation's residents. The success of this event stems from its widespread appeal, which draws people of all ages and abilities. It supports a positive lifestyle that everyone should commit to, in order to foster a healthier society today and in the future."

Engineer Al Muhannadi added, "Every year, Qatar Foundation organises a wide range of sporting activities, with the aim of achieving the organisation's ongoing mission to unlock human potential. Playing sports is a key factor, since it encourages every individual to attain their best, persevere and commit to achieving success. Sport has become the common language that unites people around the world, as sporting competitions transcend geographical boundaries by creating a common

history that encourages people to accept one another. We are extremely proud that Qatar has chosen sport as a language to express its message to the world.”

Fahad Al Qahtani, Group Executive Director of Qatar Foundation Administration, stressed that Qatar Foundation endeavours to organise a variety of sporting events throughout the year, which helps ensure that the objective of National Sport Day is continuous.

“Every year, the second Tuesday of February serves to remind people about the importance of playing sports to maintain physical and mental health. It is a well known fact that sport reduces stress levels and can clear the mind, which in turn facilitates better decision-making,” said Mr Al Qahtani. “We are pleased that so many people joined us in celebrating National Sport Day, since this clearly reflects Qatar Foundation’s commitment to helping build a healthy population that will support the growth and development of Qatar, as it achieves its national vision.”

Ali Al Muftah, Executive Director of Support Services at Qatar Foundation, said that the large turnout at Qatar Foundation underscores the value of National Sport Day, and demonstrates a growing understanding among the wider community about the value of adopting a healthier lifestyle by participating in a variety of sports.

“Today, we saw people of all ages and nationalities come together to enjoy the day by getting involved in a sport of their choice. Sport is truly an international language that links people together, regardless of their origins. National Sport Day has become a great occasion to emphasise the importance of physical activity, but it has also become a unifying social event that strengthens social and national ties. People have formed teams to compete amicably, overcome challenges and, ultimately, do their best to win.”

National Sport Day Highlights

Qatar Foundation was full of excitement and energy on National Sport Day, with popular sporting activities including running, football, basketball, tennis, swimming and cricket attracting many participants.

Children were thrilled to take part in cycling and tennis competitions, in addition to a number of exciting swimming pool games. Ping pong, basketball, and water sports tournaments were also organised for children with disabilities.

Members of the community were given the wonderful opportunity to watch a number of exceptional showjumping and dressage demonstrations at Al Shaqab, in addition to a presentation of pure breed Arabian horses. There were also special activities for children in the indoor arena and horse carriage rides. Elsewhere, a friendly cricket match was played between employees of Qatar Foundation.

In keeping with National Sport Day celebrations, the Community Services Department at Qatar Foundation invited participants to enjoy an exhibition on ‘Popular Qatari Sports’, which showcased the traditional Qatari pastimes played by children in the past.

Throughout the day, participants were encouraged to test their levels of fitness, as well as opportunities to have health checks. Qatar Biobank, a member of Qatar Foundation, set up a booth to give members of the public the chance to meet with a nurse and have their blood pressure measured and their body fat percentage calculated.

Dr Hadi Abderrahim, Managing Director of Qatar Biobank said, “Qatar Biobank is a resource that will make vital health research possible and will advance Qatar’s journey towards becoming a regional hub for medical research and expertise. Through National Sport Day, we see Qatar’s dedication to promoting a healthy lifestyle as a key part to helping us achieve this vision. Our team of nurses and staff have relished the opportunity to interact with members of the public and to offer some advice on adopting a healthy lifestyle all year around.”

The action-packed day came to an end with a special awards ceremony at Al Shaqab to recognise and congratulate all the winners. Champions of the futsal competition held at Hamad bin Khalifa University Student Center were awarded prizes, along with winners of the children’s cricket competition, interdepartmental football competition, women’s basketball tournament and running tournament.

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Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organization 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. Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

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 commercializing 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>