



THOUSANDS ENJOY QATAR FOUNDATION'S GARANGAO CELEBRATIONS

Proceeds from Event Went to Reach Out To Asia's 'Reach Into Qatar' Initiative

Doha, Qatar, 18 June 2016: More than 5,000 members of the local community took part in Qatar Foundation's (QF's) annual Garangao festivities at Al Shaqab on Friday.

As part of its commitment to preserving Qatar's heritage, QF upholds national traditions by providing a year-round calendar of cultural activities. And, during the fun-filled evening that celebrated youth and the richness of Qatari culture, families enjoyed a wide range of community activities including traditional Arabic games for children, arts and crafts, pony rides and storytelling sessions, as well as the chance to try popular Qatari dishes.

The indoor arena of Al Shaqab provided an ideal location to entertain and culturally-engage visitors after being transformed into an atmospheric venue representative of Garangao's rich cultural roots and traditions.

The exciting event also provided an invaluable opportunity for QF's various entities to celebrate and interact with the local community. Qatar Solar Technology (QSTec) facilitated creative lantern making sessions using solar panels, while the Qur'anic Botanic Garden (QBG) offered visitors a range of planting activities, as well as 3D puzzles and virtual reality games.

Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) offered activities such as 'The Operation', which taught children about medicine and the human body, as well as a 'Grow It Yourself' activity that enabled children to plant seeds and understand nature better. In addition, Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC) collaborated with Qatar National Library (QNL) to produce a popular puppet show and storytelling session.

Amongst those who took part in the festival celebrations was Zahya Al Mashaary, who attended the event with her younger brother and sister. Commenting on the event, Zahya said: "I remember celebrating Garangao when I was a little girl. Of course, things have changed since then, but I think the festival is a great opportunity to bring the whole community together to celebrate a special occasion in our cultural calendar. I know my little brother and sister have really enjoyed all the activities, but the event also reinforces the importance of our history and traditions and why we must keep them alive for the next generation."

Adding to the excitement of Friday's annual event, a number of free horse-related activities were provided by Al Shaqab such as a mechanical bucking horse and pony rides which brought Qatar's equestrian heritage to a young audience, inspiring children to take an interest in equestrian sport.

Impressed by her first visit to QF's Garangao celebrations, Hada Al Sobai praised the event saying: "The Garangao festival is a special occasion for all children in Qatar. There are both fun and educational activities to take part in here at Al Shaqab, which helps everyone learn more about



Qatari heritage and traditions. There is something for everyone to enjoy, even the adults, who get to relive their childhood and celebrate the halfway point of Ramadan with their children.”

A number of exciting National Reading Campaign activities were also held as part of this year’s festivities at the popular spot located in front of the ‘Reading Truck’. Children were able to read at the ‘Book Hangout’, make bookmarks, play games and solve puzzles together.

Thomas Patomaki from Finland has lived in Qatar for two years. Introducing his children to the Garangao traditions for the first time, he was impressed by the event’s community spirit. “I really admire the wonderful set up here in Al Shaqab, which was cleverly designed to combine fun and Qatari culture. My three young children were all very excited to attend tonight’s event as they had heard about it at school and we dressed them in traditional Garangao clothing to celebrate. The kids really enjoyed playing the traditional Qatari games and we’re looking forward to visiting the National Reading Campaign Truck and learning more about the unique festival with each activity,” he said.

The Garangao event not only made a meaningful cultural impact on attendees but also raised money for Reach Out To Asia’s (ROTA) ‘Reach Into Qatar’ Initiative. ROTA is a member of Qatar Foundation.

Garangao is an annual festival that traditionally takes place midway through Ramadan. As part of the celebrations, children are also given sweets, gifts and the chance to participate in team games and other much-loved pastimes.

Image Captions:

Image 1: Father and son enjoy Qatar Foundation’s Garangao celebrations at Al Shaqab on Friday night.

Image 2: Children make book marks during Garangao, a National Reading Campaign activity.

Image 3: Pony rides entertain young visitors and highlight Qatar’s rich equestrian heritage.

Image 4: Qatar Foundation’s Garangao celebrations Al Shaqab’s Indoor Arena on Friday.

Image 5: Children waiting to enjoy a puppet show staged by Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC) and Qatar National Library (QNL).

Image 6: A little boy plays a traditional game which celebrates Qatar’s history and culture at Qatar Foundation’s Garangao festivities.

Image 7: Children take part in a race at Qatar Foundation’s Garangao celebrations on Friday night.

Image 8: A series of fun activities were on offer for children throughout the night.



Image 9: Families from around the country converged on Al Shaqab to take part in Qatar Foundation's Garangao celebrations.

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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, Qatar Foundation'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>