



مكتبة قطر الوطنية
QATAR NATIONAL LIBRARY
عضو في مؤسسة قطر
Member of Qatar Foundation

SECOND PHASE OF QATAR FOUNDATION, QATAR NATIONAL LIBRARY AND BRITISH LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHED

Agreement Will See Over One Million Pages Of Historical Documents About The Islamic World, Arab Culture And The Gulf, Digitised And Made Public Through QNL's Qatar Digital Library

London, UK, 19 January 2015: Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), Qatar National Library (QNL) and the British Library today announced the second phase of their ongoing partnership. The next stage of this productive collaboration, which will last until December 2018, follows on from the initial partnership announced in 2012 which has raised awareness of Gulf and Middle Eastern history.

Phase two will see the digitisation of 1,125,000 pages of rare, historical documents that will be shared with the public through QNL's online Qatar Digital Library (QDL) in a bid to significantly enhance current understanding of the Islamic world, Arab culture and the Gulf's regional history.

Qatar Foundation's mission is to foster a progressive, engaged society that is appreciative of its heritage and traditions, and interested in furthering learning and knowledge in support of the nation's priorities as set out in Qatar National Vision 2030.

As a member of QF, QNL's vision is bridging Qatar's past and future through knowledge, and it does this by sharing valuable information and cultivating creativity through an exceptional selection of printed and digital resources, regular training programmes, and social engagement initiatives.

This next phase will focus on digitizing historical documents from Britain's Indian Office Archive including papers of the Political and Secret Department, political and military records, letters, photographs, maps and medieval manuscripts relating to Gulf and Arab regional history.

Building on the success of the first phase of this collaboration, the Qatar Digital Library will add an additional 970,000 pages from the India Office Records dating from the mid-18th century to 1951 as well as historical maps and photographs. Further highlights will include 56,000 pages of Arab Islamic Sciences manuscripts, and approximately 100,000 pages from private papers including those of Lady Anne Blunt, thought to be the first woman to cross the Arabian Desert in the 19th century.

Following digitisation, the material will be added to the Qatar Digital Library which originated out of the first phase of the partnership and was launched in October 2014. The QDL already provides students, researchers and the general public in any part of the world with free online access to over half a million pages of precious historic archive and manuscript material. The QDL's unveiling received an exceptional reaction from the online community with nearly 780,000 page views in the first month alone.

Commenting on phase two of the agreement, Engineer Saad Al Muhannadi, President of Qatar Foundation, said: "This planned new material will preserve and add rich new insights into the history of Qatar, the Gulf region and Arab and Islamic history and culture. This project is a testament to the commitment of QF to fostering greater understanding of Qatar's heritage, and to sharing this precious collection of resources with the whole world. I am delighted that this extension to QF's partnership with the British Library both



supports the nation's journey towards a knowledge-based economy as set out in the Qatar National Vision 2030, and opens up this precious material for local people's academic benefit and enjoyment."

The many digital images of historical documents related to this region, once completed, will provide an informative source for anyone seeking to learn more about the region.

"The aim of this partnership is to explore, and raise awareness about the history of the Gulf and the wider region while creating one of the world's most ambitious and accessible resources for studies into Gulf History and Arab Islamic Sciences," said Dr Claudia Lux, Project Director of QNL. "The second phase of this partnership will add further value to QNL's existing databases and collections as we remain steadfast in our commitment and support of Qatar Foundation's mission to preserve and bridge Qatar's and the region's past and future through knowledge."

Commenting on the launch of the second phase, Mr Roly Keating, Chief Executive, of the British Library, said: One of the purposes of the British Library is to work with partners across the world to advance knowledge and mutual understanding. The goal of this collaborative project with the Qatar National Library is to create a 21st-Century online library to transform the study of both the modern history of the Gulf and Arabic science. Extending our relationship with the Qatar Foundation and Qatar National Library now enables us to now to further really develop these themes, converting the huge wealth of stored knowledge at the British Library into shared knowledge that is accessible anywhere in the world.

Richard Gibby, Head of British Library - Qatar Foundation Partnership said: "Our goal in launching the Qatar Digital Library was to create a resource which will advance world knowledge and understanding of the Gulf region's cultural heritage. The second phase of our partnership, adding over a million extra pages in the next four years, will add depth and breadth, stimulating new research and enabling new discoveries."

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Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development 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. Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, Qatar Foundation is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

In pursuance of the objectives of the Qatar National Vision 2030, Qatar Foundation has become a key engine that is transforming the state of Qatar from a hydrocarbon economy to one based on knowledge. Qatar Foundation carries out its mission through three strategic pillars: education, science and research, and community development. Qatar Foundation's education pillar brings world-class universities to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. Meanwhile, its science and research pillar builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercialising solutions through key sciences. Finally, its community development pillar helps foster a progressive society while also enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.



Qatar National Library – Bridging with knowledge Qatar's Heritage and Future

Qatar National Library (QNL) is a non-profit organisation under the umbrella of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF). QNL is supporting Qatar on its journey from a carbon-based economy to knowledge-based economy by providing resources to students, researchers, and the community in Qatar. It was announced in November 2012 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development.

QNL carries out its mission through three functions: National Library, University and Research Library, and a Metropolitan Public Library of the digital age. The National Library function collects and provides access to global knowledge relevant to Qatar and the region. It also collects, preserves, and provides access to heritage content and materials about Qatar and the region. The University and Research Library function supports education and research at all levels by providing printed and digital library materials for students and researchers. Metropolitan Public Library delivers library services and information for everyone to enjoy reading, meet people, and become information literate.

The British Library

The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom and one of the world's greatest research libraries. It provides world class information services to the academic, business, research and scientific communities and offers unparalleled access to the World's largest and most comprehensive research collection.

The Library's collection has developed over 250 years and exceeds 150 million separate items representing every age of written civilisation and includes books, journals, manuscripts, maps, stamps, music, patents, photographs, newspapers and sound recordings in all written and spoken languages.

Up to 10 million people visit the British Library website - www.bl.uk - every year where they can view up to 4 million digitised collection items and over 40 million pages.