



MORE THAN 500 PEOPLE VISIT 3rd QATAR HERITAGE COLLECTION OPEN DAY

Qatar National Library Hosts Annual Event To Demonstrate Its Leading Role In Promoting Qatar's Cultural Heritage

Doha, 28th April 2015: More than 500 visitors flocked to the 3rd Heritage Collection Open Day hosted last week by Qatar National Library (QNL), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF).

Held in line with its vision of bridging with knowledge Qatar's heritage and future, and celebrating World Heritage Day, the two-day public event celebrated Qatar's cultural heritage, highlighting precious items housed in the Heritage Collection Building.

His Excellency Dr. Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al-Kuwari, Minister of Culture, Arts and Heritage, was among the many VIPs, dignitaries, diplomats, and members of the public to attend the annual event that engaged the community through regular guided tours of the Heritage Collection, which houses some of the rarest and most valuable texts and manuscripts, including traveller's instruments, globes and maps.

His Excellency Dr. Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al-Kuwari said: "I am happy with the idea of the Heritage Collection Open Day and the way it has been organised. QNL hosting this event demonstrates the leading role that will be played by the library in the future, not only for Qatar, but also in Arab countries and around the world. On this occasion I would like to invite the community to visit the Heritage Collection Building to enjoy what it shows and to feel proud of Qatar's achievements as they see how Qatar has changed over the years."

Held under the theme 'Wagten Geda' – times gone by – the event also provided Qatar's community with the opportunity to glimpse rare historical collections related to Arab-Islamic civilisation, and witness the unveiling of the newly-acquired Arabic Cinema Collection. In keeping with its commitment to support QF's mission to foster a progressive society, while preserving and protecting the nation's heritage for future generations, QNL shares valuable information and cultivates creativity within the community.

Acquired by QF in 2006, the Collection is now an integral part of QNL. The Collection attracts intellectuals and diplomats from across the world and has welcomed many high profile visitors, among them HRH Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, who visited the Collection in February 2014.

"Qatar Heritage Collection is a unique destination for the people of Qatar, and the surrounding region, as it allows them to glimpse rare pieces of Arab-Islamic history as part of our mission to support Qatar's journey towards a knowledge-based economy," said Eng. Saadi A. Al Said, QNL's Associate Director for Administration and Planning,

"Since the Heritage Collection is an integral part of the Qatar National Library, the 'Open Day 2015' is equally as important for us, and we are simply delighted by the public's enthusiasm towards the historical treasures housed within it."

Founded in the early 1980s as part of H.E. Sheikh Hassan bin Mohammed bin Ali Al-Thani's vision to create, and make accessible, a landmark repository of Qatar and regional history in the heart of Doha, the Heritage Collection is a unique contribution to Qatar's cultural landscape. Specifically, the Collection's Early Arabic printing section contains some of the first Arabic books printed on presses in Shweir (Lebanon), Aleppo (Syria), Mosul (Iraq), Bulaq (Egypt) and in the Hijaz (Saudi Arabia).

The Collection is home to more than 2,400 manuscripts, including Qur'ānic manuscripts and other texts dealing with religious topics, manuscripts on the Arabic language, medicine, pharmacology, and astronomy. The Collection also



holds a large number of books written in foreign languages including writings by European travellers and explorers who visited the Arabia Gulf Region and its surrounding.

“It has been a great pleasure to visit the Heritage Collection celebrating World Heritage Day. It is a wonderful collection of manuscripts and various materials from way back in history detailing how Islamic culture, religious thought and philosophy have moved through the centuries, which is very relevant to today. This has been a very inspiring exhibition which shows in a positive way Qatar’s role in the region and the prospects for Qatar’s development in the future,” said H.E. Nicholas Hopton, UK Ambassador to Qatar.

“The Heritage Collection here in Doha is very important and I’m proud that the British Library in London is working in partnership with QNL to help augment and create a world class unique collection of manuscripts and other material for those researching Islamic culture and thought, and those who want to know more about the region and its history,” he added.

Qatar National Library offers free access to vital learning resources through its state-of-the-art website and other accompanying online portals. To learn more about the Library, please visit www.qnl.qa or to visit the Qatar Digital Library, log onto www.qdl.qa.

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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.

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