



THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES DESCEND UPON EDUCATION CITY FOR SUPERB NIGHT OF QATAR FOUNDATION GARANGAO CELEBRATIONS

Qatar Foundation Showcases Best Of Qatari Culture At Its 2015 Garangao Night Festival

Doha, Qatar, 30 June 2015: Around 4,000 members of the local community were transported back in time by Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), during its annual Garangao night festivities held on Monday evening at the Al Shaqab Equestrian Centre in Doha.

During a fun-filled evening that celebrated youth and the richness of Qatari culture, hundreds of families delighted in a wide range of free community activities – including traditional Arabic games for children, arts and crafts, pony rides and unique storytelling sessions.

Deeply rooted in Gulf culture, Garangao is an annual festival that takes place during the Holy Month of Ramadan. It first began as a daytime festival within tribal communities as both a reward and a distraction for children during fasting hours. In more recent years, however, it has evolved into a night-time event, where children are provided with sweets, gifts and the chance to participate in team games and other much-loved pastimes.

As part of its commitment to preserving the nation's heritage, QF looks to uphold such traditions by providing a year-round calendar of cultural activities for the whole community to enjoy. Through hosting such events, the organisation hopes to showcase the best of the nation's culture and traditions to both local and expatriate families.

The latest event provided an invaluable opportunity for all of QF's various entities to work in tandem, share ideas and together, deliver a truly memorable night of celebrations that the organisation can be proud of.

On Monday, QF achieved these ambitions and much more, with a packed Al Shaqab Centre playing host to a superbly entertaining and culturally-engaging Garangao night of celebrations. Converted into a souq, the atmospheric venue treated its visitors to storytelling sessions, as well as free henna and face painting activities.

In a further display of embracing local culture, QF welcomed all those in attendance with traditional Karak and Arabic coffee, as well as popular Qatari dishes including, haris, luqaimat, and jarish. Garangao cakes, sweets and nuts were also handed out for families to enjoy.

Meanwhile, there were also a number of traditional Qatari games for children, including Gaiss (hopscotch), Tagyah, tug-of-war, Dahouri (wheel pushing), plus Gallinah and Natou.

Amongst those to take part in the festival celebrations included Qatari father, Mr Yassin Zein Al-Abedeen, who was attending the function with his children. Commenting on the event, Mr Al-Abedeen said: "Garangao is an excellent occasion that many Qataris have celebrated since their early childhood. Of course, the nature of the Garangao celebrations have changed in recent years but I welcome the fact that our community is still celebrating this occasion together, in order to revive the heritage and culture that distinguishes Qatar."

Another parent delighted to be introducing his children to the Garangao traditions was Mr Mohamed Aqueel Al-Kuwari. Impressed by the event's community spirit, Mr Al-Kuwari enthused: "I highly admire the wonderful organisation of this event and the distinguished activities provided by Qatar Foundation this year. What drew my attention most was the Qatar National Library tent and its representatives, who were keen to narrate interesting stories for the children with the objective of developing their cultural skills. My children also enjoyed the activities of riding horses and the popular traditional games."

Adding to the excitement on Monday evening was a number of horse-related activities, provided by Al Shaqab, in recognition of Qatar's equestrian heritage. Free for all, they included a mechanical bucking horse, pony rides and a high performance equestrian display.

Impressed by these equine activities was Qatari father Mr Ali Atta Shammari, who was attending the celebrations along with his three sons. Praising Qatar Foundation for its organisation of the event, Mr Shammari said: "What makes the Garangao experience unique at Qatar Foundation is the educational and modern aspects of providing information about Qatari heritage and traditions. The Garangao festival has many beautiful meanings that reflect the generosity of the people of Qatar and the way they are compassionate for each other. These celebrations are truly wonderful because they are full of excellent heritage reviving ideas."

During the four hours of the Garangao event, QR 15,000 was collected and will be donated to QF member Reach Out To Asia (ROTA). The charity supports QF's mission to provide world-class education and nurture the development of progressive societies by addressing urgent social needs.

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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.

Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, 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 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>