



مكتبة قطر الوطنية

QATAR NATIONAL LIBRARY

عضو في مؤسسة قطر

Member of Qatar Foundation

HIS HIGHNESS THE EMIR INAUGURATES QATAR NATIONAL LIBRARY

*Grand Opening Ceremony in Education City attended by His Highness the Father Emir
and Her Highness Sheikha Moza*

Doha, Qatar, April 16, 2018: His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Emir of Qatar, officially inaugurated Qatar National Library (QNL) at the grand opening ceremony of its new building in Education City today. The event was attended by His Highness the Father Emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation (QF).

The grand opening ceremony was also attended by His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of Qatar, and a number of dignitaries.

His Highness the Emir commemorated the event by signing the official inauguration certificate, which will be mounted to a plaque, and by placing the library's one-millionth book, a rare 843-year-old manuscript copy of Sahih Al Bukhari, on the shelves of QNL.

In her opening address, Her Highness Sheikha Moza said: "The inauguration of Qatar National Library invokes a great sense of historical pride and belonging to the Arab world, which pioneered writing, transcription, and libraries in Mesopotamia 5,000 years ago. The idea of the National Library was inspired by this glorious history, in hopes of restoring an Arab renaissance that we do not want to lose. The library was established to be a treasury of written history and a medium for the transfer of knowledge between different cultures.

"Essentially, it will be an institution of reference for Arabic and Islamic heritage and a platform for spreading contemporary intellectual and literary thought. Designed in form and content to be three-dimensional: a national library, a public library, and a research library in one. As an advanced digital library, it will allow users immediate access to accurate information. It will provide new generations with the necessary, intellectual tools to read and interpret history correctly."

Her Highness Sheikha Moza also discussed the role of the library in the promotion of Arabic: "Given that books are a vessel through which civilizations preserve language, we aspire to make this library a modern mechanism to revive the Arabic language and to re-establish its presence as a marker of civilization. Through a new interpretation of our heritage, we can restore the days when Arabic was the universal language of the Middle Ages. When it was synonymous with science and culture, and a source of pride. It was a well-known fact: You speak Arabic, then you are educated."

Her Highness Sheikha Moza concluded: "The National Library would not reach these distinguished heights as a monument of knowledge without the unwavering vision of the country's leadership. From the reign of the father to the son, supporting sustainable and strategic development projects, particularly in human development."



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The first book on the shelves of QNL was placed by Her Highness Sheikha Moza in December 2016.

Guests were welcomed into the library on a bespoke LED carpet, which took invitees through a virtual journey of Qatar's landmarks. After a special presentation marking the inaugural moment, poet Tamim Al-Barghouti gave a speech titled 'It is still possible', followed by a film showing QNL's journey from concept to grand opening, and a speech by the library's lead architect, Rem Koolhaas, who spoke about the architecture of cultural institutions. The event continued with a video message featuring numerous library directors from around the world congratulating QNL on its opening. Roly Keating, CEO of the British Library, gave a speech on the importance of libraries; Nicholas Negroponte, co-founder of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Media Lab, delivered a speech titled 'Where Bits and Atoms Meet'; and an interactive map showed the 52 countries from which guests were visiting.

The event concluded with a performance of the musical piece 'Sounds of the Library', by Qatari composer Dana Al Fardan.

Mrs. Machaille Al-Naimi, President, Community Development, QF, said: "It is with great pride that we unveil Qatar National Library to the world - this project is a reflection of Qatar's vision for the future, and the result of a collective effort to preserve our rich culture and heritage. We are deeply honored to be able to offer a greater insight into the Arab world through our vast collection of resources."

Dr. Wastawy, Executive Director, QNL, said: "We are honored to have His Highness the Emir inaugurate Qatar National Library as the state's national library, and we thank His Highness and the many other esteemed guests for joining us in celebrating this milestone. Qatar National Library seeks to be a center of learning not only in Qatar but also internationally. This grand opening, which welcomed more than 700 visitors from Qatar and around the world, demonstrates the continued global importance of libraries in everyday life."

QNL opened its doors to the public in November 2017 for an experimental period, and since then has welcomed more than 200,000 visitors, and held hundreds of events for visitors of all ages, ranging from early literacy programs for children to research workshops. The library's collection includes one million books in English, Arabic, and other languages, complemented by a dedicated Children's Library and Young Adults collection. The QNL Heritage Library collection includes rare and valuable items related to Arab and Islamic civilization. Its collection has more than 50,000 items, including manuscripts, early printed books, historical maps, globes, photographs, and scientific instruments.

Over the next two weeks, QNL will host a series of public lectures, exhibitions and other events including the inaugural Heritage Library exhibition.

For more information about QNL, please visit www.gnl.qa.

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Qatar National Library

Qatar National Library (QNL), a member of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, acts as a steward of Qatar's national heritage by collecting, preserving and making available the country's recorded history. In its role as a research library with a preeminent heritage collection, QNL fosters and promotes greater global insight into the history and culture of the Gulf region and the Middle East. As a public library, QNL provides equal access for all Qatari residents to an environment that supports creativity, independent decision-making and cultural development.

QNL also supports Qatar's transition from a reliance on natural resources to become a diversified and sustainable economy by providing support to students, researchers, and the public to promote life-long learning and empower individuals and communities for a better future.

Website: www.qnl.qa

QNL's e-newsletter: <http://qnl.qa/programs-and-services/subscribe-qnl-newsletter>

QNL's Twitter: @QNLlib

QNL's Instagram: QatarNationalLibrary

QNL's Snapchat: Qnlib

QNL's Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheQatarNationalLibrary

QNL's YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/QNLlibrary>

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