



PRESS RELEASE

QATAR'S FIRST NATIONAL IDENTITY SEMINAR KICKS OFF

- Organised by the Qatar Heritage and Identity Centre
- Vodafone Qatar is Exclusive Sponsor
- First day saw a line-up of prestigious speakers from Qatar and beyond discussing factors impacting national identity
- Case studies from Japan and Oman presented

Doha, 20 October 2014: Under the patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of The State of Qatar, Qatar's first National Identity Seminar kicked off today at Al Sharq Village with scores of attendees from Qatar and beyond.

The seminar, organized by the Qatar Heritage and Identity Centre and sponsored by Vodafone, will be held on the 20th and the 21st of October 2014 from 9.00 AM to 11.00 AM and will see a prestigious line up of speakers discussing factors impacting Qatar's national identity in an ever-globalised world in addition to major topics pertaining to the significance of conserving a country's national identity.

The seminar will tackle subjects such as the Qatari identity as a priority within the Qatar National Vision 2030; family and identity; demographical effect on identity and the role of population dynamics; and the media's take on identity. In addition, the seminar will showcase successful case studies of the preservation of national identity from Japan and Oman.

Discussing national identity in light of Qatar National Vision 2030, during the first session of the seminar, H.E. Dr. Saleh Mohammed Al Nabit, Qatar's Minister of Development Planning and Statistics said: "In Qatar, we aim at turning our culture into a platform to reinforce identity, citizenship and national pride, and we seek to preserve our cultural heritage, which starts at the core of the Qatari family. The family lies at the heart of the Qatari community, and one of the main goals of our National Development Plan 2011-2016 is to enable Qatari families financially, as a way to hold family ties, and hence reinforce our commitment to our identity and values."



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At his keynote speech, Dr. Khalid Youssuf Al Mulla, Executive Director of Qatar Heritage and Identity Centre said:” Addressing national identity is our call to preserve a valuable asset, and an invitation to build a communication bridge between the Qatari culture and other cultures. We aim at applying a modern lifestyle without losing the shape and form of our identity and values. This two-day seminar will feature a number of Ministers, thought-leaders, and academics who will shed the light on the importance of national identity and recommendations of the seminar to preserve national identity will be publicly shared in due course. We would also like to thank Vodafone Qatar for their continued and invaluable support of this initiative and for being a very strategic partner.”

Giving the second keynote speech, Mr. Mohammed Al Yami, Director of External Affairs at Vodafone Qatar, said: “Our exclusive sponsorship of Qatar’s first National Identity Seminar originates in our deep realisation of the importance of the Qatari identity and the necessity that we preserve it lest it should dissolve into the multitude of other identities in the age of globalisation with the world turning into a small village. Believing in the vision of HH the Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, picturing Qatar among the world’s most developed countries by 2030, Vodafone Qatar did not hesitate for a moment to partner with Qatar Heritage and Identity Center, aspiring to introduce Qatari identity and heritage not only to Qatari younger generations who have not lived the past, but also to all residents and newcomers, and show them how proud we are of our identity which we consider the natural outset for our bright present and future alike.”

“Vodafone Qatar has supported many social events based on its unwavering belief in the mission the company envisages for the Qatari society. For example, we have launched two literary competitions earlier this year under the title “With your pen express your love for Qatar” with the aim of promoting the creative writing which preserves Arabic language. This highlights its unique entity and celebrates its beauty. I would like to thank the Qatar Heritage and Identity Centre for offering Vodafone Qatar this prestigious opportunity which reaffirms our commitment to continue our partnership and support of Qatar Heritage and Identity Center and all other national events.” Al Yami continued.

Dr. Maysara Taher, Manager of Beit Al Mashoor Psychological Consultancy, spoke about family and identity and said:” The main components of identity are religion, language, and history. We strongly appreciate the efforts of the Qatar Heritage and Identity Centre to tackle and examine the histories of other nations, as they aim to shed the light on the importance of history and its influence on identity. Understanding our history enables us to realize the philosophy behind it, where we can learn lessons that family was and still is the core of preserving identity among nations.”



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Dr. Kaltham Al Ghanem, Manager of the Human and Social Sciences Centre, spoke about the impact of demographics on national identity and said: "Population dynamics and demographics have a strong impact on identity. One of our goals is to reinforce identity and citizenship through strengthening cultural identity, and encouraging community engagement, especially when it comes to our younger generations."

The Seminar ended with two case studies presented by TV personality, Mariko Mikami, and Cultural Expert in Oman, Ahmed Khamis Bou Safi who shared successful examples on the various methods adopted in their respective countries towards the preservation of national identity from Japan and Oman.

Ms. Mariko Mikami, a recognised media figure in Japan and former Associate Professor at Shinshu University said: "Japan's focus was primarily on its human capital as they represented the only available natural resource. Identity was imperative for the evolution of the Japanese, and Japan's emphasis on education, language, and the private sector, in addition to the design of an original socio-economic system, to preserve its identity."

Mr. Ahmed Khamis Bou Safi, a Representative of the Ministry of Heritage and Culture, Sultanate of Oman, showcased his country's experience in this space and said: "Our country focused on five key areas to reinforce the understanding of identity across generations: The first one being Heritage through the provisioning of studies on heritage and historic scripts, and reinforcing the role of museums; Second pillar being Education by embedding national identity content within academic curriculum starting at a very young age at school; Third pillar being Culture, through social and educational centres for the youth, applied arts, libraries, theatres in addition to encouraging the adoption of our traditional garments in our daily lifestyle; The fourth pillar being Social Development, through seminars, lecture, and workshops; And the last pillar is our focus on Media, by launching special programmes on TV and Radio to promote national identity."

The Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030) aims to build an advanced, knowledge-based economy that is capable of sustaining its own development, in addition to providing a high standard of living for Qatar residents. QNV 2030 defines the long-term outcomes for the country, and provides a framework through which national strategies and plans can be developed.

The Seminar will continue on Tuesday, 21 October 2014, and will see former Kuwaiti Minister of Information, H.E. Dr. Saad Bin Tefla, opening the second day with a speech on the effect of traditional



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and modern media on identity, followed by speeches from Dr. Fatima Al Suweidy, Deputy Chief of Arabic Language Department at Qatar University, on the identity and the Arabic language and Mr. Mohammed Ali Abdullah, Expert on Cultural Architecture, on identity through architecture in Qatar.

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About Vodafone Qatar Q.S.C.

Vodafone Qatar Q.S.C. ("Vodafone Qatar") is the holder of the Second Public Mobile and Fixed Telecommunications Networks and Services License in the State of Qatar. Vodafone Qatar switched on its mobile network on 1 March 2009 and shortly after started delivering great value to its customers with a range of exciting products and services.

Having built a world class converged IP network, Vodafone launched fibre-based consumer and enterprise fixed-line services commercially in October 2012.

Vodafone's objective is to be one of the most admired brands in Qatar and the Company is committed to providing world class telecommunications infrastructure to support Qatar National Vision 2030. Please visit www.vodafone.qa for more details.

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