

QNL Snapshots - Issue (6) - July, August & September 2014

Kindly note that the Arabic and English versions may not be identical and this is due to the media coverage differences during this period.

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Qatar National Library Participates in the Eightieth IFLA World Library and Information Congress in France



Qatar National Library (QNL) continued to raise its global profile during the IFLA World Library and Information Congress held in the French city of Lyon, from 16 to 22 August, 2014.

The week-long 'Citizens, libraries and communities: Knowledge Forum' gathered librarians, publishers and database firms from all over the world, with the aim to enhance mutual cooperation, and promote international best practices in the libraries sector.

The event presented QNL with another opportunity to keep abreast of the latest advancements and practices in the library world and shares its

own experience. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) is the leading international body representing

the interests of library and information services and their users. With more than 1,600 members in approximately 150 countries, it is the global voice



of the library and information profession.

The Congress included a number of sessions that focused on key areas relevant to QNL's increasingly popular services. These included Acquisition and Collection Development, Cataloguing, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Document Delivery and Resource Sharing, Government Information and Official Publications, and Libraries for Children and Young Adults, in addition to many other specialised themes.

QNL's participation benefited by a group of Qatari staff members attending the event to gain knowledge and a better insight into the profession.

Furthermore, the library's Project Director, Dr Claudia Lux, whose considerable library experience includes a term as elected president of IFLA, presented a talk on how to make a difference using statistics in a session entitled: "Telling the Library Story: creating metrics for management, advocacy and community building".

Commenting on the value to the library's participation, Dr Lux said: "Contributing to local, regional and international events such as this Congress helps to promote QNL's profile, and share lessons of how the library is delivering innovative new services."

"The IFLA World Library and Information Congress presents a great opportunity for QNL staff's networking and professional development, which we at QNL are committed to," she added.



Qatar National Library Participates in “GARANGAO” Festival Organised by Qatar Foundation



Qatar National Library (QNL) participated in the Garangao festival organised by Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development to celebrate the traditional mid-Ramadan children's festival “Garangao”. The festival held on Thursday 10 July, in Al Shaqab, aimed to help preserve Qatar's heritage for the future generations.

During the wonderful event, more than 3000 children and their families participated in a variety of traditional activities that have been passed down throughout the generations. Apart from receiving the traditional Garangao gifts and sweets, the children were also given complimentary books. The joyous event also featured a number of entertaining activities, including arts and crafts, storytelling, games, pony rides, time-honoured folk songs, and amusing puppet shows for children.

“Garangao” is a middle of Ramadan tradition that is widely celebrated by children across the Gulf region. On this

night, children walk around their neighbourhoods singing traditional songs that mark the occasion and receive gifts and bags of sweets from their elders. This year, the QNL event was a great success and the National Library enjoyed bringing families together in a traditional festive atmosphere to celebrate Ramadan and Garangao day. Saadi A. Al Said, QNL's Associate Director for Administration and Planning said: “We aimed through participating in the organisation of the “Garangao” night to highlight Qatar's heritage and encourage the young generation to preserve such traditions which comes as one of the most important

priorities of Qatar National Library, and goes in line with its vision in bridging with knowledge Qatar's Heritage and Future.”

Commenting on this event, Dr Claudia Lux, Project Director of Qatar National Library, said: “Participating in this festival comes as part of the National Library's efforts to keep alive local traditions and encourage the younger generation to preserve this form of folk heritage.”

“Children and elders enjoyed the fun-filled memorable festival, and QNL is planning to organise several events in a traditional atmosphere in the near future,” she added.

Qatar National Library Introduces New Online Databases



Qatar National Library (QNL) introduced new online databases that enrich its vast online resources and offer the nation access to high-quality reference material on an unprecedented level.

One of the new databases comes from the 'Royal Society of Chemistry', which provides access to journals in multidisciplinary fields including biology, biophysics, energy and environment, engineering, materials, medicine and physics, in addition to its core subject of chemical science.

Elsewhere the 'Emerald Insight eJournal Collection' includes journals and books on a range of subject areas including accounting and finance, economics, management, marketing, education, information studies, engineering, sociology, and tourism and hospitality.

Another resource that many users will find invaluable is 'OECD iLibrary', the online library of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In this offering, the OECD presents eBooks, chapters, articles and papers, as well as data and statistics going back to the 1960s covering over 80 countries. Its information is useful for a wide range of users including staff and students at universities, researchers and business people.

QNL not only provides access to English language material but also leading Arabic resources. 'Al Manhal' is a database that offers QNL users the

chance to access electronic content, and full-text searchable electronic databases of peer-reviewed and copyright protected Arabic publications. This provides readers with the opportunity to navigate and access thousands of electronic publications from the Arab world's leading universities, research centres and scientific societies.

Another leading resource is 'E-Marefa' which is an Arabic language database presenting over 1,000 scholarly journals from the MENA region. Subjects covered include human sciences (literature, history, education, arts, and languages) and social sciences (politics, sociology, and law) as well as medical and health, business and economics, engineering, IT, and the natural and life sciences.

In addition to its electronic resources, Qatar National Library is planning to provide 350,000 copies of printed periodicals, newspapers and many special collections when its state-of-the-art new building opens, which can accommodate up to 1.2 million printed books.

Furthermore, space for individual and collective learning, a children's section, 300 computers for the use of the public, facilities for the production of digital multimedia, and a cafe will all be offered within the library's building. There will also be a centre for assistive technology, and a centre for writing and education.

Series of Events and Trainings Organised by Qatar National Library



Qatar National Library (QNL) organised a series of events and training sessions in September, which were available for all residents of Qatar.

The programs included an Arabic book discussion and practical training sessions about how to take advantage of the online databases currently offered free to all residents of Qatar through the QNL website.

The Arabic book discussion of 'Qatari Voices' book highlighted the aspirations of the young Qatari generation illustrated in essays and stories. They are intimate glimpses of old reminiscence and longing to the simple past. Qatari Voices is the first anthology that represents 25 young creative Qatari authors. Interactive and practical training sessions helped residents

familiarise themselves with general science and health sciences online databases including 'ScienceDirect', 'Springer', 'OVID - Wolter Kluwer', 'Nature' and 'Scopus'. The 'ScienceDirect' is a leading full-text scientific database that offers journal articles and book chapters, and 'SpringerLink' online database represents a primary resource destination for

all academic researchers and students who are interested in scientific, technical and medical eBooks and journals. The training sessions also included the 'OVID - Wolter Kluwer' database, which provides access to a large collection of full-text peer-reviewed journals and multimedia on behavioural and social sciences and medical sciences.

And 'Nature' electronic resource which is a scientific journal that publishes peer-reviewed research in all fields of science and technology, as well as 'Scopus' online database; the world largest abstract and citation database.

QNL organises regularly cultural and educational activities, in addition to community events and training sessions on the

use of the online resources that the library offers free of charge for researchers, students and residents of Qatar.

Commenting on these events and trainings, Saadi A. Al Said, QNL's Associate Director for Administration and Planning said: "Organising these educational and training programs will contribute significantly in advancing the cultural life in

Qatar, and opens wide areas of innovation and excellence."

"Through these programs, QNL aims to spread knowledge among different society segments, which goes in line with its mission to spread knowledge, nurture imagination, cultivate creativity, and preserve the nation's Heritage for the Future," he added.

Qatar National Library Offers Free Registration through a Series of Visits

Qatar National Library (QNL) continues to raise its local profile and enhance the lives of students, researchers and residents in Qatar by encouraging them to register to freely access its vast online resources.

In support of Qatar Foundation's efforts to support the country's journey towards a knowledge-based economy, the initiative of visiting prominent organisations has given Qatar's community the perfect opportunity in which to learn about QNL's online resources, register free of charge, and begin discovering a wealth of digital content.

The QNL Access Team has conducted more than 100 visits; which included the Ministry of Interior, British Council, Aspetar Hospital, Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consulting, Qatar Cool, Awsaj Academy, the Birla Public School and the German Center. The visits have also introduced a clear picture of the modern library that QNL presents through its 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. The Metropolitan Public Library delivers library services and information for everyone so that they can continue to enjoy reading, meet others, and become rich in knowledge and information.

Commenting on the visits, Dr Claudia Lux, Project Director at Qatar National Library, said: "Through these visits, QNL aims to reach the whole community and introduce them to a variety of services. These include a vast online collection and the on-going activities that the Library



is organising, such as book discussions, community events, and training sessions."

"Our continued efforts all form part of QNL's mission to spread knowledge, nurture imagination, cultivate creativity, and preserve the nation's heritage for the future," she added.

Aysha Hassan AL-Ansari

1. Tell us a bit about yourself.

My name is Aysha Hassan AL-Ansari, I am Qatari and I have been working at QNL for the past 6 years. I hold a bachelor degree in English Literature from Qatar University, and I just completed my Master's degree from London in 'Information Management in the Cultural Sector' at City University London, which is accredited by CILIP. "Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals". It's under Three departments. School of Informatics and Library Science, Arts and Cultural studies. I'm honoured to be the only person from the Arab world to have completed this degree, and so pleased and privileged as a QNL employee to be the first to write about the partnership between QF, QNL and the British Library through my dissertation. I am now working with the Special Collections and Archives team as a 'Senior Middle Eastern Studies Librarian'.

2. What do you do as a Senior Middle Eastern Studies Librarian?

I can highlight 3 major responsibilities in my position. This position is accountable for developing a premier collection of materials through acquisitions and exhibitions that documents, exhibits and connects scholars, students and the general public with information. Alongside the implementation of the collection, I provide information services such as in-depth research assistance to researchers and visiting scholars to the Heritage Collection. I participate in digitisation and preservation organisations to ensure perpetual access to information. For example: I was an intern in the British Library during my studies in London. Finally, I would like to contribute to the profession by publishing my dissertation, which is about 'Digitizing Arabic and Islamic Collections in an Effort to Enhance Global Understanding of Arabic Culture: a Critical Case Study of the British Library and Qatar Foundation Partnership'.

3. Describe your experience working at QNL?

It's been a great experience full of interesting memories as well as motivating challenges. It's been a unique career journey for many reasons; I had my first job through Qatar career fair in 2008, and my first interview as a fresh graduate was with Qatar Foundation. I joined the Heritage Library in 2009, while we were only 10 employees with many dreams, ambitions and long-term goals for having a national library in Qatar. Now, the dream has become a reality. I'm so happy to witness the great development and the opportunities given in this place, and to share my dreams with more than 80 skilled employees, with different backgrounds and with the same goal. All that definitely has made QNL an amazing place to work in, to be creative and to learn more. We are really excited for the opening of the new QNL building, where we can share our goals and show our special collection to the public.

4. What has been your greatest achievement so far at this job?

My Master's degree. I always wanted to do my Master's in London, to study this unique course in City University, London. To graduate with a high merit and to get a distinction (an honour) in my dissertation is definitely my greatest achievement. It will always be the most challenging and unforgettable experience. It's a dream come true. I can't ignore my favourite achievement. I was the



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first and only woman working in the library. To be able to represent Arab and Qatari women, and to talk about the history of my country to different people from different countries in many sectors is an achievement as well.

At last, but not least. I'm honored to do my internship in the Embassy of Qatar in London. I worked in both, in the Cultural Attaché Office and in the Political Sector Office. Through this internship, I fulfilled my passion for Politics, as I always wanted to study this major to be able to practice this in the embassy with qualified people. It added a lot to me. It's indeed an interesting experience, which I'll always remember and value.

5. What's the most important thing you've learned through working in the Library's field?

I believe it's how to be a team player and to stand out from the crowd. You need to have a creative mind, great experience, and passion for learning in order to achieve that. In the library field I learned that this combination can turn to strength, and can be an inspiration if it's combined with transferring knowledge to others. For example: providing information services to readers, building a collection, exhibitions, publications, digitisation and partnerships. There are many ways to give access to information.

The library is the only place where you can find both classic and new methods applied in order to approach many people and to help them to pursue learning throughout their lives, no matter where or how old they are. It's fascinating how it's never too late to learn in such a place.

6. What inspires you and why?

I'm inspired by:

My parents: Being the youngest member in my family allowed me to witness how you can turn your dreams to reality. I grew up listening to their dreams and goals, which later became a reality. That shaped my character a lot. They dream big, yet they keep their feet on the ground. That's what makes my parents, my sisters and my brother brilliant on what they do, and unique in their fields. It's a family thing that I'm fortunate to have.

Studying abroad: I had an amazing experience which taught me a lot both personally and professionally. It was challenging to me, but I'm a risk taker. After all the hard work, it was worth it. Looking back at this chapter in my life, it makes

me stronger, builds my confidence more and reminds me that I can achieve my goals no matter what.

My country: It's a small country, with a small population, which thinks big and has big goals. Both leaders and people in my country want to make a positive difference in other people's lives. That also inspires me daily.

7. What is your favourite book?

My favourite book at the moment is: 'I Am Malala'. The girl who stood up for education and was shot by the Taliban" by Malala Yousafzai (Youngest-ever Nobel Prize recipient -2014). Author: Christina Lamb.

It is a book that will make you believe in the power of one person's voice to inspire change in the world. Within our special collection, my favourite book is *Description De L'Egypte* (Description of Egypt) 1809-1822. It's a comprehensive scientific description of ancient and modern Egypt as well as its natural history. It includes the work of about 160 scholars and scientists and 2000 artists including 400 engravers, who accompanied Napoleon's expedition to Egypt in 1798 to 1801 as part of the French Revolutionary Wars.

Moreover, I have predilection for the Ptolemy Latin map, which is a rare and antique map printed in Rome in 1478, which is one of the oldest maps showing the name of Qatar, referred to in Latin as 'Catara'.

8. How do you think your master's degree will add value to your professional career?

I always wanted to know more about my field and having the experience only wasn't enough for me, that's why I pursued my dream to get my Master's. I believe that great education can unlock doors and through higher education, which I'm lucky to have, you learn in theory and in practice, you read about many topics, you come across new things and different experiences. It gives you a different perspective in life as it teaches you a lot. So, doing Master's definitely added value to my professional career.

I had the desire to write about something related to me and to my culture. To present that in a unique way and to shed the light on our golden legacy as Arabs and Muslims, I always wanted my dissertation to enhance global understanding of my world. That is my dissertation topic, and there's nothing better than a digitisation project to present and do that.