

Doha Forum discusses safety of journalists in dangerous areas



Panelists at a workshop on journalists at the Doha Forum, in Doha, on Tuesday.

MOHAMED KHOULAI
DOHA

A WORKSHOP on enforcing the recommendations of the International Conference to protect journalists in dangerous situations was held on the third day of the Doha Forum for Enriching the Middle East's Economic Future, on Tuesday.

The workshop was chaired by President of the National Committee for Human Rights (QNCHR) Dr Ali bin Smaikh al Marri.

Talking about the workshop, Marri stated that the main objective of the workshop was to implement the recommendations of the International Conference on the protection of journalists in dangerous situations which was held by QNCHR in Doha on January 22 and January 23, 2012.

Marri noted that the confer-

ence was organised in light of the increased attacks on media persons across the world, particularly in conflict zones. He added that members at the conference recommended that the protection of journalists should be on the agenda of all global and regional forums. The recommendations stressed on holding a new global conference, which should be attended by all stakeholders, including government representatives to discuss and develop the current suggestions.

Marri pointed out that the QNCHR, in association with its other partners, will present the International Conference's recommendations to the president of the General Assembly of the United Nations to submit them to the General body during its next session.

"This workshop aims to think about a method to enhance cooperation in order

to activate these recommendations and come up with effective proposals that would help the follow-up team to develop a plan and implement it some time this year," QNCHR president said.

"The group consists of representatives from all international organisations and local institutions who want to walk in this path," Marri concluded.

Speaking at the workshop, Abdul Karim Boumelha, president of the International Federation for the Protection of Journalists, highlighted the significance of holding such workshops and conferences to promote the issue of journalists' protection.

He said, "1,100 media persons were assassinated in the past 10 years, spanning 35 countries. Around 50 journalists have been killed since the end of the last International Conference for the Protection

of Journalists in dangerous situations in Doha last January."

Boumelha emphasised that "the freedom of the press and expression will not be possible where journalists face the constant threat of violence and work in a non-democratic environment."

For his part, Director of Al Jazeera News Mustafa Sawwaq said that modern media tries to give a better satellite coverage of events. "Today's media has provided opportunities to citizens' journalism, which is contrary to the traditional form of journalism. Citizens' journalists have been able to convey a lot of news information to different media houses where free media actually either does not exist or is on the borderline," Sawwaq said.

Sawwaq also said that some of the countries' governments have tried to control this new form of media. He, however,

added that these efforts would be difficult as these media tools were new technologies and were being updated all the time.

Stressing that the validity and credibility of all the news information emanating from citizens' journalists are not always true, he advised the conventional media houses to verify each news item before publishing or airing them.

Another panelist, Hassan Rachidi, advisor at the Doha Centre for Media Freedom, said that the citizens' journalism was a new media phenomenon. He said that "in the near future, it will be necessary to find methods which will enable this kind of media to develop and redefine its techniques by forming new talents in the citizens' journalism and make them work within the framework of the traditional form of news media".

Forum will help mankind, says Sheikh Ahmed

QNA
DOHA

ASSISTANT Foreign Minister for International Cooperation HE Sheikh Ahmed bin Mohammed bin Jabor al Thani has said that as of next year, the Doha Forum, organised annually by the State of Qatar, will take a new direction to become a platform for proposals and solutions for the benefit of mankind.

Speaking at the joint closing session of the Doha 12th Forum on the Enriching Economic Future at the Sheraton Doha Hotel on Tuesday, Sheikh Ahmed said the aspirations and future goals of the Forum focus on proposals and solutions that can be converted into plans, policies and programmes which are useful to humanity.

The assistant foreign minister noted that the world was at a crossroads. "These are difficult times — political, economically and in relation to human rights and women empowerment. There is something wrong, and we must recognise it. This requires intensification of solutions by politicians, economists, thinkers, civil society and international bodies and organisations."

Sheikh Ahmed said that the Doha Forum was looking forward to be an important platform that contributes to shaping future

political and economic aspirations in the Middle East and paves the way for democracy and political reform, sustainable development, human rights and culture of women empowerment. He praised the distinguished efforts and intellectual contribution of the participants, noting that they addressed many important issues on the political and economic situation in the Arab area and the world. Sheikh Ahmed also noted that the forum was attended by high level leaders, politi-

The closing session of the 12th Doha Forum was addressed by a number of scholars and experts.

cians, scholars and experts, as well as representatives of regional and international organisations, which contribute to enriching the discussions during the three-day conference.

The closing session of the 12th Doha Forum was addressed by a number of scholars and experts who talked about the challenges faced by the Middle East, the Arab countries and the rest of the world. Over 600 participants from 84 countries and organisations took part in the Doha Forum and Enriching Economic Future of the Middle East.

Katara, DFI to screen *A Separation*

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
DOHA

KATARAH and Doha Film Institute (DFI) will continue a new strand of world cinema screenings with the highly acclaimed Oscar-winning Iranian film 'A Separation'.

Cultural partners Katara and DFI, following their successful collaboration on the Doha Tribeca Film Festival and TEDx Doha Summit, aim to provide Doha audiences with the best in world and independent filmmaking through the monthly Katara DFI Cinema screenings.

Ludmila Cvikova, head of international programming at DFI, said, "Every year there are gems that are produced outside the conventional studio system, and we are honoured to be able to screen a selection of them in Doha. 'A Separation' deservedly won massive recognition from international critics and audiences alike, and Doha audiences



A still from the movie *A Separation*.

will appreciate its powerful take on family and society."

Dr Emad Sultan, cultural affairs director at Katara, said, "Doha is fast becoming a cultural hotspot, and we at Katara are proud to be able to provide some of the most innovative screenings and events. Our partnership with DFI has allowed us to boost

Doha's cinema culture by showcasing the best films from our region and beyond. We look forward to continuing the trend with this year's screening series."

'A Separation' revolves around the marital disintegration of Nader and Simin, an upper middle class couple in Tehran. The film is Iran's

first Oscar winner; prior to its 2012 Best Foreign Language Oscar, the film also won Golden Globe Awards in the Best Foreign Language Film category, and the prestigious Berlin International Film Festival Golden Bear for best film as well as the Silver Bear for Best Actress and Best Actor.

SFS-Q students to host 'first of its kind conference' from May 25

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
DOHA

STUDENTS of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in Qatar will hold SFS-Q's first annual undergraduate conference on Middle Eastern studies from May 25 to May 27, 2012.

Miodrag Stamboldziew, MESSA founder and conference chair, praised the new initiative. An initiative of SFS-Q's Middle Eastern Studies Students Association (MESSA), it is set to attract over 20 student conference presenters from the most prestigious universities internationally, including Harvard University, Princeton University, Brown University, University of California Berkeley, Columbia University and Qatar University.

Conference participants will be presenting original ideas on the theme of sustainability as it pertains to economics, politics, culture and society, featuring

titles such as — 'Counter-insurgency Convergence: The militarisation of aid and its role as a weapon in the War on Terror' and 'The International Criminal Court: The Shifting Arab Perspective'.

Founder of MESSA and conference chair Miodrag Stamboldziew has steered the planning committee that has prepared for the conference for over a year, beginning with a call for papers widely disseminated through academic channels. "Having been with the organisation since its inception, I am really pleased to see that our team has independently managed to put together an impressive conference. We hope that the event will remain an integral part of SFS-Q's academic calendar," said Stamboldziew.

Specifically, the conference will involve presentations by the visiting students on the subject of their paper submission, thematically arranged into

three sections— social change, culture and anthropology, and law and politics.

An SFS-Q expert will be chosen as a discussant to guide the conversation, assisting the presenter in excavating their insights more decisively.

Ahmed Warfa, SFS-Q student and academic programming chair of the conference, expressed confidence in the success of the event. The conference will also mark the launch of SFS-Q's first Undergraduate Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, in which the most discerning essays and findings from the conference will be published. "The quality of submission is extremely high, and I am confident that this year's participants are setting the bar for future conferences. The most important aspect of this experience, in my opinion, is getting a glimpse of what our colleagues from different universities are engaged in," added Warfa.

'Janan' makes waves in Gulf marine research

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
DOHA

A NEW state-of-the-art ship given to Qatar University will transform marine research in the Gulf region.

The model research facility 'Janan' — named after the island located in the western part of the Qatari peninsula — was donated to the University by the Heir Apparent His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa al Thani. Underlining a real commitment to improve sustainability, it will be used by the uni-

versity's Environmental Studies Center (ESC) to advance critical marine environmental studies and research in Qatar and the wider Gulf region.

With Qatar almost surrounded by water from three directions, 'Janan' will address the pressing environmental problems that arise especially from human and industrial activity that threaten marine life particularly the hawksbill turtles, coral reefs and oysters, and the seabed. The vessel is equipped with a remote-controlled subma-

rine, and can carry out a variety of surveys — to monitor earthquakes, seabed movements and marine radioactivity. It will also maintain and build on a comprehensive database that will identify and analyse conditions prevailing in the marine environment.

Boasting a length of 42.8m and breadth of 10m, the vessel can sail for 21 days, and can accommodate a total of 30 technical, scientific and research staff. The ESC team, students pursuing environmental studies, and local and

Boasting a length of 42.8m and breadth of 10m, the new state-of-the-art ship can sail for 21 days, and can accommodate a total of 30 technical, scientific and research staff.

regional researchers will have the use of the vessel's impressive facilities. 'Janan' is equipped with two main engines, allowing it to work near oil and gas platforms. It

has the ability to function on generators without relying on the major engines, and contains an advanced system to stabilise the vessel using satellites. It has five sophisticated research laboratories, a sewage treatment unit, water desalination plant, an ER for medical emergencies and a diving room.

The vessel arrived at Doha port on January 15 this year at the end of a month-long journey crossing the Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, Suez Canal, Red Sea, Arabian Sea and through the Arabian Gulf.

QU President Prof Sheikhha Abdulla al Misnad said, "It goes without saying that 'Janan' is a remarkable scientific achievement that adds to our mission and vision. It is not just a vessel but it launches a new area of research that is expected to attract new scholars who will conduct advanced studies in Qatar's waters and those of the Gulf."

'Janan's' distinctive features were developed by a team comprising QU leaders, navy experts, scientists and researchers, and was built to specification in Vigo, Spain

by Freire, the world-renowned manufacturer in the shipping industry, mainly in scientific research vessels.

With the addition of 'Janan' to its committed efforts in research and the environment, Qatar University continues to take the lead in articulating the goals stated in the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the National Development Strategy which prioritise research towards developing a knowledge-based society, and preservation of the environment for future generations.