

MBRF shines with success

The Foundation reports huge success in 2014 with launch of major programs and initiatives

DUBAI / GULF TIME

Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation (MBRF) has reported remarkable success in the year 2014 with the launch of a number of key programs and initiatives. The achievements during the year were in line with the directives of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to enhance the value of knowledge in the UAE and the region to achieve prosperity and happiness of the people.

The First Knowledge Conference 2014 organized from December 7 to 9 was the most notable achievement of the year for the Foundation. The event, which was the first of its kind in the region, attracted wide participation from international and regional influencers and thought-leaders.

The event saw the launch of Arab Knowledge Report 2014: Youth and Localization of Knowledge, which shed light on the status of knowledge in the Arab world. It also announced the start of work on the Arab Knowledge Index, an indicator that monitors the status of knowledge in the Arab world on an annual basis.

The conference caught attention with the launch of the first Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Award. The US\$1 million award, which is the highest award of its kind in the world, aims to raise awareness about the importance of the dissemination and transfer of knowledge as a means for sustainable development and prosperity of the peoples.

The first award was shared between Sir Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the World Wide Web, and Jimmy Wales, co-founder and promoter of Wikipedia.

In another notable achievement during the year, MBRF announced the completion of the preparatory phase of the 'Encyclopedia of Arab Narrative', authored by Dr. Abdullah Ibrahim, an Iraqi critic and professor who has specialized in narrative studies and culture, and is the recipient of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award in 2013. Comprising eight volumes, the encyclopedia contains critical data on the development of the narrative genre of Arab literature and its salient features.

During the year, MBRF revealed a new logo for its House of Poetry, an important hub for cultural and literary activities in Dubai. The House of Poetry features a comprehensive library containing collections of poetry, analytical works and translations as well as a modern studio equipped with an audio library and recording equipment.

During the year, MBRF established Qindeel Printing and Publish-



ing Services as one of its investment project to create a world leader in the provision of printing and publishing services. Qindeel publishes books, magazines and journals in Arabic and other languages which encourage learning, knowledge and development. Qindeel also offers a

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wide range of services to the print and publishing sectors including acquiring and providing large orders for machinery, materials and logistical support.

In a unique effort to empower young writers and authors from the UAE and the Arab world, MBRF announced during the year the official launch of the first phase of its Dubai International Program for Writing (DIPW).

The program, organized in September, featured with a training

workshop on novel writing by Lebanese novelist Najawa Barakat, and was attended by eight Emirati talents. MBRF launched "The Knowledge Page" initiative, in partnership with Al Bayan newspaper, showcasing articles and opinion pieces on culture as well as best practices in science by some of the most famous Arab and international writers. "The Knowledge Page" is included in the newspaper for five days a week - from Sunday to Thursday.

In the framework of its efforts to strengthen bonds of cooperation and partnership with global leaders in the areas of development and dissemination of knowledge, MBRF participated in the Frankfurt Book Fair, the largest event of its kind in the world, from 8 to 12 October 2014. The participation in the book fair enabled MBRF to identify international best practices and exchange knowledge with key players in the knowledge sector.

In another major initiative, MBRF signed a joint venture agreement with Nshama, a newly launched developer of smart integrated communities, to undertake a value-added lifestyle development in Dubai that focuses on sustainability, culture and education.

With the signing of the agreement, MBRF will extend a part of its land bank in Dubai on a joint venture partnership basis for developing an integrated community development

that will create unmatched value for future generations.

The year also saw MBRF launching Flashes, the first knowledge magazine in English in the UAE. Flashes has been inspired by the book Flashes of Thought by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and contains exclusive interviews with public figures and decision makers on a variety of topics of current relevance.

Additionally, it features scientific, economic, and social research from a development angle, as well as outstanding case studies on youth leadership.

As part of its efforts to enhance the image of the Arabic language and promote it as an international language, MBRF launched during the year the second edition of 'Bil-Arabi' initiative. Coinciding with the International Day for the Arabic Language observed annually by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December, the 'Bil-Arabi' initiative encourages people to post and share updates on social media websites for the entire day to spread awareness about the aesthetics of the Arabic language and the Arabic heritage.

The year was also notable for a number of agreements and memoranda of understanding signed by MBRF. An MoU was signed with Bahrain Folk Poetry Society to reinforce the status of poetry, literature and culture in the Arab societies.

Another MoU was signed with

Japan Arts and Culture Foundation to activate the first partnership under the Writer Exchange category of MBRF's Dubai International Program for Writing.

In an effort to strengthen cooperation and enhance the status of the printing and publishing sector, and translation services in the region, MBRF's Qindeel Printing and Publishing Services signed a MoU with Obeikan Publishers, a subsidiary of Obeikan Investment Group, during the Frankfurt Book Fair 2014.

The alliance between two of the biggest influencers in the transfer of knowledge in the region is set to pave the way for the implementation of joint projects in the fields of translation and publishing.

Marking major success in bringing on board government entities in its knowledge development initiatives, MBRF joined hands with Dubai Smart Government and Mohammed Bin Rashid Housing Establishment in its 'My Family Reads' initiative, a programme under which a variety of books are distributed to targeted Emirati families in the UAE. The period was also significant for the Foundation's 'Book in Minutes' initiative, which completed its first year in 2014.

The 'Book in Minutes' initiative aims to strengthen the culture of reading among all segments of the society, including youth and families as well as intellectuals and business professionals.