

'We are global union'

Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid receives Cultural Personality award from Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed

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ABU DHABI — In a ceremony at the ongoing Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, and His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, walked side by side on to the stage for a rather special award.

On Monday night at the ninth Shaikh Zayed Book Award (SZBA), Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid was given the Cultural Personality Award for his endless philanthropic work and support to Emirati culture and heritage.

In the presence of Shaikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Foreign Minister; members of the Royal Family and other dignitaries, Shai-

kh Mohammed bin Rashid received the award from Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed.

"I want to tell you a story about the founders of the UAE," said Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid.

"I knew the late Shaikh Zayed before the establishment of the union. As you know, there were nine emirates and Shaikh Zayed visited them all, but some were scattered. One day, Shaikh Zayed and Shaikh Rashid met in a tent and they sat on the floor, drank coffee and had lunch together. I had the honour to serve them coffee."

"The challenge was very big. Arab countries did not establish unions and foreign countries didn't want them to. Plus, there was no infrastructure, no roads, no schools, no hotels."

"However, Shaikh Zayed's persistence paid off and he and Shaikh Rashid signed the union agreement, then all the others followed."

"Shaikh Zayed wasn't one

among us. He was one nation for all of us, and I say now: Shaikh Zayed, your children have reached out to the world, they are a global union," concluded Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid.

All other winners of this year's SZBA were also awarded by Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed.

The Literature Award went to Osama Alaysa from Palestine for his novel *Majaneen bait lahem (The fools of Bethlehem)*, while Hanawa Haruo from Japan was named winner of the Translation Award for his *Naguib Mahfouz's Cairo Trilogy (Palace Walk, Palace of Desire and Sugar Street)* translated into Japanese.

The Arab Culture in Other Languages Award went to Sugita Hideaki from Japan for his book *Arabian-Naito to Nihon-Jin (The Arabian Nights and the Japanese)*, whereas the Arab Scientific Publishers from Lebanon won the Publishing and Technology Award.

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