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Inspiring Educator: Soya Sato on Teaching Across Cultures in Qatar



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By Haroon Rashid Qureshi

During the Japanese Cultural Evening hosted by the Embassy of Japan in cooperation with Georgetown University in Qatar, we had the opportunity to meet Mr. Soya Sato, a dedicated teacher from Japan currently serving at the Japan School of Doha. He shared his journey, his passion for education, and his experiences teaching in a multicultural environment.

Q. Good evening, Sir. Could you please introduce yourself?

A. Good evening. My name is Soya Sato, and I am from Japan. I currently teach at the Japan School of Doha. During my university years, I majored in international economics and obtained my teaching license. After graduating, I worked at a school in Japan near Mount Fuji. Almost two years ago, I moved to Qatar, where I now teach elementary and junior high school students. Our school caters to children aged 7 to 15.

Q. What inspired you to choose teaching as your profession?

A. When I was in high school, I had a class teacher whom I deeply respected. His personality and guidance inspired me to pursue teaching. Although Japan is an advanced country, teaching has become a challenging profession, and fewer people want to enter the field. The work environment

can be demanding, but the government and schools are working to improve it. Despite the challenges, many teachers continue with strong passion—and I am one of them.

Q. Which level do you mainly teach?

A. I mainly teach junior high school students.

Q. Qatar is a multicultural society. Do you notice differences between Japanese students and students from other countries?

A. Yes, definitely. Students from Qatar, Pakistan, and other countries express themselves more freely. They have their own ways of thinking and doing things. Japanese students are very polite—sometimes too polite—which makes them hesitate to challenge themselves. Students from other cultures tend to take more risks. These differences make teaching in a multicultural environment very interesting.

Q. How many years have you been teaching?

A. I have been teaching for about five to six years.

Q. Where do you see yourself in the next ten years?

A. That is a difficult question. I believe I will still be involved in education, but maybe not strictly as a classroom teacher. I might create a new type of school, develop special classes, or organize

educational events. I am not completely sure yet, but I want to explore new possibilities while staying connected to education.

Q. What message would you like to give to the younger generation?

A. The world they will face may be more complicated than today. My message is simple: enjoy your life and follow the compass of your heart. Stay true to your dreams and believe in what you want to achieve.

Q. Thank you very much for your time, Sir.

A. Thank you. And I apologize if my English wasn't perfect.