
Advanced Evaluation Methods and Competitive Debate Highlight Second Day of the 7th International Universities Debating Championship

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Non-native Arabic speaking participants share that debating in Arabic has helped them deepen their understanding of the language

Doha – Qatar Debate Center

The second day of the 7th International Universities Debating Championship (7th IUDC), hosted by the Qatar Debate Center, witnessed exceptional debates in the qualifying rounds. Participants addressed various important issues of regional and global significance, featuring topics such as the role played by state-funded news institutions in the media landscape, and the role of governments in integrating refugees into formal labor forces, both pressing contemporary issues.

One of the participating teams is from Kuwait University, which is one of the first institutions to send its teams to international debating competitions in Arabic. Dr. Nawal Al-Kandari, the general supervisor of debating at Kuwait University, expressed her delight at participating in the 7th IUDC and stated: “There is a strategic partnership between us and the Qatar Debate Center that has lasted for many years, and we have greatly benefited from this partnership, which has reflected positively on the training of teams, coaches, and judges.”

This year, Kuwait is participating with four teams in the 7th IUDC, with all of them having previously won the national championship in Kuwait. She also emphasized their commitment to diversifying the team by including students from various colleges with different skills and experiences, contributing to enriching the collective expertise of the team.

Qatar Debate Center has introduced in this year’s championship significant developments to its mechanism for evaluating the qualifying teams. Ibrahim Mahfouz, a judge who previously participated as a debater in the sixth championship held in Istanbul and was recognized as one of the top speakers, explained that the selection process for judges in this edition was characterized by precision, and they were selected based on two judging tests before the start of the championship.

He added, “This championship continues to grow, and we have seen an increase of 40 teams compared to the previous edition. Moreover, this increase has also translated into other areas including the efficiency level of teams, as some non-native Arabic-speaking teams even managed to defeat native Arabic-speaking teams. This reflects the tremendous efforts exerted by Qatar Debate Center to empower the Arabic language through debate and dialogue.”

Sharing his experience, Jonah Daniel Phillips, a participant from Brigham Young University in the United States, commended the competitive atmosphere of the championship and the experience of the non-native Arabic speaking teams.

He said, “I am delighted to participate in this exceptional event. For us, participation in the 7th IUDC represents a great opportunity to develop our debating techniques in Arabic. Despite facing some difficulties as learners of Arabic, especially the technicalities of the language in terms of vocabulary and terminology, we will continue to develop our skills and benefit from this rich experience.”

After concluding the second day of intense debate, the participants now gear up for the octo-finals, the quarterfinals, and the semi-finals, scheduled to be held on Monday, May 27. This crucial phase of the championship will test their skills and determination as they vie for a place in the final rounds.

The 7th International Universities Debating Championship is held in collaboration with several key partners including the Doha Forum as a strategic partner, the Al Jazeera Media Institute as a media partner, the Translation and Interpreting Institute at Hamad Bin Khalifa University as a translation partner, and the Doha International Family Institute as a knowledge partner.

The championship also features an exhibition with interactive booths engaging the participants by Education Above All and Qatar Reads, an initiative by Qatar National Library, along with the Center's partners for the championship.