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Prince Ahmed Bin Salman



Student exhibition pays homage to the Golden Age

Laura Bashraheel & Hassna'a Mokhtar | Arab News

IN the modern world, Muslims are seen as many things — but rarely as a source of revelation and enlightenment. In January 2008, however, Dr. Salim Al-Hassani of the UK-based Foundation for Science, Technology and Civilization gave a lecture at Dar Al-Hekma College which inspired Suhair Al-Qurashi, president of the college, to design a course emphasizing Muslim achievements and contributions for her students.

The course — A Millennium of Muslim Contributions to Civilization — which has now been taught for two semesters has proved to be inspiring. In addition, it helped students to show Muslim achievements in a two-day exhibition entitled “Muslim Contributions to Civilization.”

When Al-Qurashi hosted the lecture by Al-Hassani two years ago she was so inspired that she asked a professor at the college, Chaman Rahim, to use Al-Hassani's book and prepare a course for students in the college. “I studied his book, prepared a plan, presented it to the college and they approved it. And this is now the second time we have offered the course,” said Rahim.

In an attempt to inform students and put theory into practice, those taking the course had the chance to participate in the exhibition. “The students were fascinated by the course. They find the subject very interesting. I teach them the material from the book and during the semester, I ask them to do some research and give presentations,” Rahim explained.

Students also took part in a competition in which a group will eventually win as the best booth and the example of the best teamwork. “First, I divided them into groups, five in each group and each chose a topic to work on,” she said.

The exhibition featured the achievements of great scholars during the Muslim Golden Age. Students made models — such as the elephant clock and the first map of the world — similar to those made by Muslim scientists.

The exhibition also illustrated achievements and breakthroughs in various fields such as education, commerce, medicine and astronomy. The impressive exhibition was all done by a total of 45 students who prepared the decorations and equipment for their respective booths.

The exhibition was attended by Saad Al-Ghamdi, Deputy CEO, Abdul Latif Jameel Company; he praised the exhibition, describing it as “very impressive” and felt that more people should know about it.

“Arabs and Muslims were the first to do many things in algebra, math and chemistry. Even the Indian numbers we all use nowadays came from Muslims,” said Radeya Bamashmoos, one of the students who participated in the exhibition.

Students stood in their booths, giving brief presentations on Muslim achievements and commented that the period known to Europeans as “the Dark Ages” was actually the golden age for Muslims.

“It was a wonderful learning experience about the achievements of Muslims since we thought that Europeans had done it all, but now we know that they took many things from us Muslims,” said Ahad Baeshen.

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