

## GULF TIMES

### QU teams perform well at Japan debating tournament

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QU debate team members with coach Murphy

Two teams from Qatar University’s Debate Club won several rounds in the 21st ICU Debating Tournament held in Tokyo, Japan, recently.

Hayder al-Mazraqchi, Almas Lokhandwala and Saad Elasad (Team one) and Ahmed Ishaq, Sarosh Sohail and Omaima Dammak (Team two) participated in the tournament that included 60 teams from Japan, China, Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, the US and the UK.

The tournament addressed a wide range of topics related to Japanese politics, world economy, humanitarian issues, international relations, nuclear energy and foreign intervention.

It consisted of seven open rounds (followed by octofinals, semifinals and finals), with Team one winning during the first, second, third and sixth rounds, but missing the octofinal round by a few points.

Team two won the fourth, fifth and seventh rounds.

Accompanying the teams was Debate Club adviser and QU faculty member

Patrick Murphy who was selected to join the adjudication panel and chair some of the debates.

Debate Club vice president Almas Lokhandwala recalled the QU debaters were highly commended for their presentations and arguments.

“This was a great achievement, considering that it was the first international tournament for most of the members, and competing against teams from top universities such as the London School of Economics, Tokyo University, and Chulalongkorn University.”

Team members agreed that increased participation in international tournaments and continued coaching can assure that QU teams will do even better in future tournaments.

The Japan trip included a tour of various key historical and cultural sites such as the Asakusa Shrine, the Imperial Palace and the Memorial Garden.

“The team members benefited from this trip not only in debating experience and international exposure, but also in gaining cultural knowledge of Japan, and enhancing mutual understanding in their interaction with local Japanese,” Murphy said.

Debate Club president Hayder al-Mazraqchi commented: “Exploring Japan as a culture opened our eyes to a different and unique lifestyle. It is fitting that we visited Japan during the 40th anniversary of Qatar-Japan relations.”

The students said in addition to helping them improve their debating skills, the tournament greatly increased their knowledge and confidence.

Al-Mazraqchi and Lokhandwala also participated in the Qatar Universities Debate League Nationals later last month at Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, reaching the semi-finals debate on ‘This house would not trade with oppressive regimes.’

Debate Club members Abdul Qudoos, Mohamed Shaheem, Sara al-Kuwari and Fahmida Naheen also participated in the competition.

Murphy and colleague Farzana Lone, along with QU alum Vahid Suljic were among the adjudicators.

“The team members’ success at these tournaments will serve to boost our efforts to build a vibrant and successful student-led Debate Club at QU,” Murphy said.

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