



# QAWS: Home for the homeless



(Photographs by Udayan Nag)



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**DOHA** The story of Qatar Animal Welfare Society (QAWS) is that of compassion and care for animals which have been left on the streets to fend for themselves. Formed by a few enterprising men and women five years ago, this organisation follows the belief once aired by great Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi who had said 'The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.'

It may be noted that QAWS, located on the outskirts of the city, celebrated its fifth birth anniversary on Friday. Looking back at the small yet significant past of the organisation, Kelly, one of the four volunteer committee members, said: "Five years ago we started the shelter from a boarding kennel where we had very few animals as the space was very limited. Now we have an all-purpose shelter and nearly 40 kennels and 35 places to keep cats places. We are also building a new kennel block as part of our expansion plan this year. Five years ago no one had heard about us. Today, the support we are getting is absolutely fantastic."

The birthday bash on Friday, which was a major fun-event for the institution before residents start leaving the country for summer, was not only attended by hundreds of QAWS supporters but also helped in garnering about QR37,000 through donations.

From accommodating just a few dogs and cats in 2003, QAWS now houses about 50 dogs and 50 cats. It serves as a permanent home to many animals considered not suitable for re-homing, including a donkey, bull, kestrel, possum, farm birds and feral cats.

QAWS is planning to embark on an expansion plan so as to offer state-of-the-



art facilities to the ever-growing number of animals being rescued or brought to them. But since the institution purely operates on personal donations, moving ahead at a faster pace is a huge challenge. No wonder, its members are so keen to get QAWS recognised as a charity institution. Kelly said, "Until we become a charity organisation we can't accept donations from companies. A lot of companies here want to sponsor us but we just can't accept it for now. With the assistance of companies, we can expand the shelter to accommodate four times the number of animals we have now. We can also get full-time staff and do school tours to educate children about animals. Our monthly operating cost is about QR30,000 but will reach QR35,000 next month due to increase in rent."

While patiently waiting for a charity status, QAWS has been constantly urging Doha residents to offer voluntary help by sparing an hour or two from their daily routine and do TLC (tender, love and care) for the animals through dog walking, kennel cleaning, cat care and socialising, administrative work, advertising, PR, fundraising, newsletter contributions. They have also enumerated on their website the items they will need to fend off the summer season like window A/C units, washing machine, water cooler, cloth-drying racks, fans and canned dog food. Kelly said, "We urge the residents to consider adopting one of our animals. Don't go to the pet shops or order online from other countries. There are so many animals in Qatar that need your help."

# 400% rise in hotel capacity likely by 2012: QTEA

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK

**DOHA** Qatar Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (QTEA) has revealed its new strategy to increase hotel establishment capacity from the current 7,000 luxury rooms to over 29,000 rooms by 2012, a rise of over 400 percent. As part of its plan, the QTEA hosted newly launched hotels in Doha, like the Arabian-inspired Grand Hyatt, the contemporary W hotel, and other internationally recognised lavish brands, at its stand at the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) in Dubai.

"ATM has given us a great exposure to promote our new hotel," said Amine Pierre Hachem, sales manager of Grand Hyatt Doha. "Our business resort is a unique product in the Doha market, combining business with leisure. We are proud to be the first hotel to have a Thai restaurant 'Isaan' and we are looking forward to the opening of our new Arabia-inspired 'Jaula' Spa in



Officials at the QTEA stand in Arabian Travel Market in Dubai, recently.

June, which will offer 14 treatments to our guests," Hachem added.

A lot of visitors came to the Qatar stand to know more about the first W branded

Hotel in the Middle East, the ultimate expression of style and sophistication: "W Hotel

Doha offers a unique mix of innovative design, comfort and cultural influences from fash-

ion to music and art. The two concept restaurants of the world-renowned chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten every night are fully booked" said Berta Beran, account manager at W Hotel Doha.

"We had very busy days here at ATM. We met lots of buyers and visitors keen to see what Qatar has to offer. Qatar is the next destination in the GCC and the big interest showed by visitors coming to Qatar's stand and asking for information and brochures is a proof," said Sandra Schulze, director of public relations and marketing communication, and Gareth Greening, director of sales and marketing at Renaissance Doha. Opening early 2010, the three new hotels Renaissance, Courtyard Marriott and Marriott executive apartments will be ideally located in the new vibrant business district of West Bay and will be ready to offer in one location more than 450 rooms, 123 apartments on the

21 floors, 17 meeting rooms with over 2000 square meters of flexible event space.

QTEA Chairman Ahmed Al Nuaimi announced Qatar's participation in the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) in Dubai as a great success. "QTEA sponsorship of the Hosted Buyers Club was of primary support, considering the numbers of people attending the club. During the four days of ATM the Buyers Club hosted a high number of CEOs, managing directors, owners and partners of different companies. Qatar's hospitality was once more hailed by buyers coming from all over the globe," he added.

The sponsorship of the Hosted Buyers Club is a part of QTEA's marketing strategy for this year. QTEA sponsored in the past months several events, such as Qatar Career Fair 2009, Project Qatar 2009 Exhibition and Qatar Speed Boats Race. QTEA will be sponsoring the 3rd Economic Forum in June.