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Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute Hosts Science Majlis

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Wider community meet with researchers to debunk myths on air quality



The Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (QEERI), at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), recently hosted the first in a series of three Science Majlis initiatives, as part of its 2019 community outreach initiative to promote greater awareness about its research projects.

The Science Majlis, which included the attendance of young students, featured a talk by Mohammed Ayoub, acting senior research director at QEERI's Environment and Sustainability Center, who discussed air quality in Qatar, including the composition of the air in Doha on an average day, and how recent sandstorms and rain have impacted air quality.

The event provides a platform for experts from QEERI and members of the community in Qatar to engage in for informal discussions on energy, water and environment topics relevant to the country. The Science Majlis is designed to actively engage attendees of all ages, by offering them an insight into the research carried out at QEERI, making it more accessible and better understood.

Dr. Marc Vermeersch, executive director at QEERI, said: "Community outreach and student engagement are crucial to the work we do at QEERI. Through activities such as the Science Majlis, we aim to contribute towards scientific literacy and capacity building, engage the community in dialogue about science, and raise awareness about the energy, water and environment challenges in Qatar. The event also enables our scientists to gain the public's perspective and nurture a research culture in the country."

Commenting on his presentation at the event, Ayoub, said: "I find it to be a personally rewarding experience, and especially so when I receive thought-provoking questions from our youngsters. Improving air quality is a community effort that requires transparency and constant communication between research, policymakers and impacted communities."

Rami Ayeche, one of the students who attended the event, found the Science Majlis to be educational: "My friend and I are working on a project on air quality at school and the Science Majlis has been extremely helpful. It is great to learn about the scientific research that is undertaken at QEERI. Listening to the scientist's firsthand experience working in the field and having the opportunity to engage in key topics helped us to gain a better understanding of air quality research in Doha."

QEERI is to host the next Science Majlis in September 2019, featuring a discussion on its energy-related research. The final event in the series will focus on QEERI's water research.

The institute is home to four centers, each tackling the areas of water, energy, environment and sustainability, and computational processes and materials. Since its establishment, QEERI has played an instrumental role in supporting Qatar's policymaking efforts, and conducting groundbreaking research that benefits society and the region.

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