

Cultural award recognises Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid's message of hope

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DUBAI, 17th April 2015 (WAM) ---

Awards are not new to Vice

President and Prime Minister and

Ruler of Dubai His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, but the Cultural Personality of the Year Award is for his spirit of tolerance and efforts to build bridges among nations and communities, said a local newspaper Friday.

The award is rooted in the Emirati tradition of hospitality, which has welcomed peoples from distant lands for centuries, wrote the Khaleej Times in an editorial comment on the naming of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed as Cultural Personality of the Year for the ninth edition of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award.

"Not very often do we find leaders who stay true to their values that stem from a sense of social justice. Sheikh Mohammed has often broken the mold and does it in his own unique way. He is all about inclusive growth and has shown that while he may be one among equals, he has raised the bar with his single-minded focus on excellence as a leader who will stop at nothing short of the best. It may be an obsessive streak, an oft repeated term in government departments and ministries which has taken Dubai and the country to its current lofty status, attracting the best brains and talent from all over the world. This culture of coexistence has made the UAE a safe haven, an oasis of calm as countries around grapple with varying degrees of civil strife," said the English-Language newspaper.

Hailing the UAE's growth story continues, the paper said that the Vice-President has taken special interest in its heritage, art and culture, which flow from a spirit of tolerance where the human potential is nurtured and allowed to flourish.

"It takes great wisdom to develop creative leadership in an environment where enterprise thrives and merit takes pride of place.

The UAE was once all about business, and of oil but Shaikh Mohammed is keen on expanding its sphere of influence. It's been groomed to become the cultural capital of the Arab world where ideas can sprout and spread. Dubai has already overtaken traditional centres like Beirut and Casablanca while Abu Dhabi is also developing infrastructure for the arts with millions in investments."

Commenting on the humanitarian side, the paper added that the UAE is one of the largest donors for projects in developing countries, noting that the Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Foundation, Humanitarian City and the annual Government Summit have helped put the Vice President's thoughts into action on a global scale.

"Sheikh Mohammed has been effective in bringing Arab soft power to the fore. Syria, Iraq and Yemen may be in turmoil, wracked by violence, its ancient civilisations driven to the dust. Amid the ruins, there is reason to hope with the Vice President winning the battle of minds. May his tribe increase," concluded the Khaleej Times.

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