

## QT INTERVIEW WITH TURKISH AMBASSADOR TO QATAR - PART I

## 'A grand Turkish programme likely in March'

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A GRAND Turkish cultural programme featuring about 100 performers from Turkey is expected in March, the Ambassador of Turkey to Qatar HE Ahmet Demirok has told *Qatar Tribune*.

As part of the framework of the 'Qatar-Turkey 2015 Year of Culture', the event will coincide with an official visit to Qatar by the Minister of Culture and Tourism of Turkey Ömer Çelik.

In a recent interview, the ambassador said, "Our Minister of Culture will hopefully arrive in the beginning

of March. Almost 100 artists and performers are also expected for a grand event where we will present our culture to the Qatari society."

There are several other events in the planning stage, the ambassador said, underlining the significance of diverse cultural offerings, and inviting Qataris and expatriates to experience Turkish culture. The details on specific events will be made available on social media, he added.

"Qatar has successfully carried out three 'cultural years' with Japan, the UK and Brazil. And Turkey has been doing a similar project for many years. So, both the



Ambassador of Turkey to Qatar HE Ahmet Demirok.

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countries are experienced in organising an event of such a magnitude. We do have a professional approach," he said, adding, "Many of the events will be organised by professional groups, taking into consideration the expectations of the people of Qatar and Turkey. The Year of Culture is not one-way. Turkey will organise cultural events in Qatar, while Qatar will hold similar activities in Turkey."

The ambassador further said that cultural exchanges between the two countries are not a recent development, but has been an ongoing process. "In the past, Qa-

tar and Turkey have hosted cultural events in each other's countries. But, the Qatar-Turkey 2015 Year of Culture is very comprehensive. Throughout the year, we will organise events and display the characteristics of our culture. Our main objective is to bring Qatari and Turkish people closer through such cultural activities," the ambassador explained.

The ambassador elaborated, "Turkey wants to be more active in Qatari society. So, we are organising various events to raise awareness of Turkey, and I think, we have been successful in this regard. The number of

Qatari people visiting Turkey is doubling every year. They are investing in Turkey. In fact, Turkey has now become one of the top destinations for Qatari people."

He noted that Turkey has been offering many things to Qatar, and one of the most important factors making Turkey attractive is the common culture. "Whenever Qataris visit Turkey they feel at home, and vice-versa. We enjoy a close cultural affinity. So, we are confident that the Year of Culture will be fruitful and successful in bringing the two peoples together," the ambassador said.