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**Royal Thai Embassy and Qatar Research, Development, and Innovation (QRDI) Council
Host Seminar on "Labs, Farms, and Bottles: Turning Waste to Treasures" Showcasing
Thai Innovation for Sustainable Development**

On 28 August 2024, the Royal Thai Embassy in Qatar, in partnership with the Qatar Research, Development, and Innovation (QRDI) Council, hosted a seminar and mini exhibition titled "Labs, Farms, and Bottles: Turning Waste to Treasures" at the QRDI Council Auditorium. The event provided a platform to showcase Thailand's innovative approaches to upcycling waste materials into valuable products, underscoring the shared commitment of Thailand and Qatar to sustainable development.

The seminar opened with welcoming remarks from Dr. Hisham Saber, Executive Director of the QNRF Programs office at QRDI Council, who emphasized the importance of research, development, and innovation (RDI) collaborations between Qatar and Thailand to address both nations' priority areas and goals. H.E. Mr. Sira Swangsilpa, Ambassador of Thailand to Qatar, delivered a keynote address that highlighted the event's pivotal role in enhancing collaboration between Thailand and Qatar. He emphasized the importance of working together on research, technology, and sustainability, with particular focus on sustainable development, innovative upcycling, food security, biotechnology, sustainable textiles, and local entrepreneurship. He also noted that this collaboration with QRDI Council aligns seamlessly with the RDI 2030 and Qatar National Vision 2030, both of which prioritize environmental sustainability as a core pillar of development.

Key Sessions and Presentations:

The seminar featured three key sessions led by distinguished experts from Thailand's top universities.

1. Upcycling: Thailand's Creative Solution to Waste

- **Presenter:** Associate Professor Dr. Singh Intrachooto, Professor of Sustainability and Building Innovation and Director of the Scrap Lab, at Kasetsart University.
- **Focus:** Dr. Singh Intrachooto presented innovative material developments from construction by-products, emphasizing the importance of waste reclamation in sustainable design. He showcased examples of how waste materials can be repurposed into high-value products, positioning Thailand as a leader in ecological design and exploring prospects for collaboration between Thailand and Qatar.

2. Sustainable Textiles: Turning Agricultural Surpluses into Clothing

- **Presenter:** Assistant Professor Dr. Chanakarn Ruangnarong, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Home Economics and Department of Textiles and Garments at Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi (RMUTT).
- **Focus:** Dr. Chanakarn Ruangnarong shared her research on converting agricultural overproduction and invasive weeds into sustainable textiles. She also discussed her collaborative work with local communities, including the Sangtawan Community Enterprise, to address environmental challenges, highlighting the socio-economic benefits of her projects. The Chairperson of the Sangtawan Community Enterprise, Ms. Bunnapa Bualuang, was also present to showcase various sustainable textile products.

3. Utilization of Cellulose-Based Products: Thailand's Model in Food and Medical Applications

- **Presenter:** Associate Professor Dr. Prakrit Sukyai, Head of the Cellulose for Future Materials and Technologies Special Research Unit and Faculty of Agro-Industry at Kasetsart University.
- **Focus:** Dr. Prakrit Sukyai's session centered on the sustainable utilization of cellulose-based products derived from agro-industrial waste. He discussed the application of these materials in the development of food and medical components, showcasing the potential for innovation in both fields.

Complementing the seminar, a mini exhibition displayed a range of innovative products developed by Thai researchers, including:

- **Carpets Made from PET Bottles:** Illustrating the potential of upcycling plastic waste into durable household items.
- **Household Goods from Industrial Scraps:** Highlighting the creative reuse of industrial by-products.
- **Handbags from Medical Waste:** Showcasing how waste from the healthcare sector can be transformed into fashionable and functional accessories.
- **Sustainable Clothing from Banana Trunks and Water Hyacinths:** Presenting environmentally friendly textiles made from natural fibers.

Attendance: The seminar was attended by over 50 participants, including representatives from various sectors of Qatar such as the Ministry of Municipality, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Qatar Foundation, Qatar Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Qatar University, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, members of the diplomatic corps, and local news outlets.

Delegation Visits: From 26 to 29 August 2024, H.E. Ambassador Swangsilpa led a distinguished delegation from Thai academic institutions in discussions with several Qatari institutes, including Qatar University (QU), Qatar's Center for Advanced Materials and Center for Sustainable Development under QU, Qatar Research, Development and Innovation (QRDI) Council, and the Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (QEERI) under Hamad Bin Khalifa University. These discussions aimed to enhance academic collaboration in Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) for sustainable development, with a specific focus on agricultural research, upcycling and value addition of waste materials, and the integration of Islamic principles into biotechnology research.

This initiative underscores the Royal Thai Embassy's steadfast commitment to promoting Thailand's research and innovation efforts and strengthening academic cooperation between educational institutions in Thailand and Qatar. Such collaboration serves as a fundamental foundation for the bilateral relationship across various dimensions, including political, socioeconomic development, and people-to-people connections.

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