“VOLUNTEERING FOR HUMANITY”

THE PHASE III CLINICAL TRIALS IN THE KINGDOM
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The phase III clinical trials are being conducted in the Kingdom in collaboration with Abu-Dhabi based G42 Healthcare using a vaccine developed by Sinopharm CNBG, the sixth-largest producer of vaccines in the world.

Up to 6,000 volunteers will participate in the trials, selected from those who meet the required medical criteria. The clinical trial involves administering a vaccine to the selected volunteers, in order to study the effectiveness of antibody production and its protection against the virus.

Highlighting the importance of positive participation of citizens and residents in the third phase of the experiments on coronavirus vaccine which is being overseen by the national medical team in cooperation with the competent parties to combat the pandemic according to the highest standards, the phase III clinical trials has seen volunteering from the dignitaries from diverse levels in the Bahrain Society.

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, participated in the phase III COVID-19 vaccine trials underway in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, said: “I was privileged to stand together with our vaccine volunteers, each one of them determined to play their part in working to protect others, not just at home in our Kingdom, but right across the globe.

This global crisis requires a global response. In Bahrain we are proud to say we have stepped forward and shouldered responsibility, first in sharing in treatment and testing best practice, and now in support of safe vaccine testing and development.”

Supreme Council for Health (SCH) President, Head of the National Taskforce for Combating COVID-19, Lieutenant-General Dr. Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al-Khalifa initiated phase III clinical trial for a COVID-19 inactivated vaccine which will be tested on an estimated 6000 citizens and resident volunteers across the Kingdom of Bahrain.

During participation in the clinical trials, he pointed out the big stride made in this regard with more than 4000 volunteers undergoing the vaccine test so far. He commended the sense of patriotism and responsibility shown by all in these exceptional and distinctive circumstances. He stressed that participation in the clinical trials is an active contribution to the efforts to get rid of the pandemic.

Lt. General Dr. Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa praised participation of all social components in the experiments, stressing that the vaccine is safe and the accompanying symptoms, should they exist, are among the recognised ones.

Participation of the SCH President and Head of the national medical taskforce in the clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccine, under the theme “Volunteering for Humanity”, is part of the national efforts to combat the virus.
INSIDE BAHRAIN

BAHRAIN’S HUMANITARIAN INITIATIVES LAUDED BY SUDAN

Royal Humanitarian Foundation (RHF)’s Secretary-General Dr. Mustafa Al-Sayed, visited some areas affected by the floods and torrents that swept Sudan.

This came under the directives of the Representative of HM the King for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sport (SCYS) His Highness Sheikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

Dr. Al-Sayed met many of the families affected by these torrents and floods, where he conveyed to them the greetings and condolences of HM the King.

He affirmed Bahrain’s support to Sudanese government and citizens as the two countries share deep-rooted historical ties.

Sudan’s Acting Foreign Minister Omar Qamar Al Din Ismail has praised the support of His Majesty the King to Sudan in various circumstances and assistance offered by Bahrain during the floods crisis that hit the African country and caused heavy loss of lives and damages.

He also lauded the steadily increasing relations between the two countries in various fields.

Sudan will always be grateful to Bahrain for the noble act of providing assistance that will contribute to addressing health and economic issues caused by the floods, he added.

Dr. Al-Sayed stressed Bahrain’s support for the Sudanese people during their ordeal caused by the torrents and floods that swept many states.

The RHF is working on several initiatives to support the Sudanese people in a way that contributes to mitigating the effects of the disaster through relief and humanitarian aid, he said.

The secretary-general said that the foundation is working on carrying out many initiatives and efforts to support Sudanese in their ordeal.

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Can you give a brief on the Startup Bahrain initiative?
Startup Bahrain, a headband initiative was brought to play in 2016, and it serves as a national platform for connecting different stakeholders that are supporting startups in the Kingdom. It serves as a one-stop-shop for entrepreneurs and startups wanting to find out more about what's going on in Bahrain.

That being said and through my capacity as head of startups, we've been working closely with entrepreneurs, as they go through their journey, and trying to pin the dots as they say.

What are the key achievements of this initiative so far?
Since its inception, the startup ecosystem has been growing very rapidly. We look at innovative solutions that can disrupt industries or that bring in a new efficient and collaborative way to tackle a specific challenge. These are the kinds of startups we aspire to have in Bahrain and to help expand into global markets.

According to the Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2020, not only has Bahrain been recognised as the world's top five fastest-growing ecosystems but also the top 15 for the availability of talent. Similarly, last year, Enterprise Agility Awards 2019 named Bahrain the winner of the Digital Startup Hub of the Year award, which recognises Bahrain's fast-growing, highly-connected and pro-business hub with technology at its heart - enabling startups to test, innovate and scale quickly. This achievement represents the considerable efforts that have been made by all players in the ecosystem to set Bahrain an ideal location for startups regionally and globally.

Are you satisfied with what you have achieved so far with Startup Bahrain?
On a personal note, I'm absolutely delighted and thrilled. I feel honoured every day to be working closely with startups, and with the brilliant minds of their founders to build this exceptional platform together.

It is tough to measure success, but for me, there are three measures which I find important. Firstly, is when startups are able to expand internationally. Secondly, is when Bahraini members of the ecosystem are recognised and get called to participate as speakers in international events as subject matter experts. Finally, and most importantly, when we see strong collaborations between corporates and startups working together hand in hand to solve pressing challenges, as well as having international accelerators, come and base themselves here to serve the MENA region from Bahrain.

We work closely with different government agencies and we attend many of the events and workshops and listen to the entrepreneurs’ feedback. We try to build this ecosystem hand in hand with everyone to ensure that it's sustainable and in line with global benchmarks.

A lot of discussions are happening around future jobs and future technologies. Many say that the future jobs will be totally different from what we see today. What is your input on this topic?
The outbreak of the coronavirus has really transformed the job market, as we know it. With physical distancing and working from home and having to rely on technology in so many aspects of our life, we are seeing a fast emerging trend in Bahrain, which is the gig economy.

Just for those who aren't familiar with the terminology, the gig economy
is basically a way to provide a new way for people to earn income. It’s where you share your specific skills. There’s a subtle difference between a freelancer economy and the gig economy. The freelancer usually is a person who works with a client for a few weeks or months, whereas the Gigsters, as they’re known, are normally providing small jobs. Like converting a PDF to word, for example, to fix a quick website issue, to code specific elements of your app.

That task usually is completed in a very short space of time. So with time being of an essence and the need for specific skills, we are noticing a huge reliance on the gigs economy. That brings in a lot of opportunities for people in Bahrain than the traditional jobs. There is a platform called gigs. majra.me that focuses on gigs opportunities in Bahrain and from different countries as well.

I’ve also noticed a lot of opportunities for sharing skills. So with fitness coaches, yoga instructors, and people with different talents now share their skills on digital platforms and earn a basic steady income, like subscription fees.

Some of the applications that are picking up very fast here in Bahrain are at maximiz.eh and everno.

These are just a few of the platforms that are allowing people to grow their skillset from talented others who are sharing their knowledge through either exclusive sessions or workshops. It makes it very easy for an individual to learn new skills through these sessions with experts.

From what I see, the sharing economy is opening up these opportunities to people and they don’t have to worry about the technology behind this.

Are there any plans and trends being affected by COVID-19? COVID-19 has accelerated discussions around tech adoption in different industries. It increased the reliance on the importance of having startups and digital platforms connect our day-to-day business with each other.

Bahrain’s great ICT infrastructure, along with the presence of 5G and the highest mobile penetration rates in the region has allowed for the quick adoption of technology in different sectors.

In terms of trends, I’ve seen the rise of interest in Alraiwi, which was an audible Arabic audiobook platform that helps you listen to eBooks on the go. The Ministry of Education has transformed most, if not all of the curriculum online, and made it accessible to public and private schools in Bahrain. We have also seen a company called ‘The Platform’ which created and manufactured small sensors that plugged into Palm trees to help farmers detect the red willoid to save the form.

How do you describe the performance of accelerators and incubators during the current economic slowdown and what would be the impact of the pandemic over the startups if they were not part of these incubators? Accelerators and incubators, basically, are the cradles of ideas. You go to incubators with an idea, and then you use their help to set up your company. They provide you services such as company formation. They provide you a dedicated desk space, introduce you to industry stakeholders and mentors. There are around 28 homegrown incubators in Bahrain, licensed by the Ministry of Industry & Commerce. The accelerators are organisations that provide funding programs. They provide fast access to funding, fast access to industry, and regulators and help you grow into global markets. There are many programs out there that really help the entrepreneur stay on the right track, help them grow into different international markets, provide them with opportunities for funding, opportunities of learning skills, and a new way of building their companies faster.

How could one benefit from the startup Bahrain and the startup ecosystem in Bahrain? This is fairly easy and straightforward. First of all, I would definitely tell them to sign up, to start-up Bahrain’s monthly newsletter by email which summarises and showcases everything that’s happening in the Kingdom such as events, community collaborations, an accelerator program, access to incubators, etc. They can also follow us on social media where we run multiple sessions and share content that connects like-minded people and promotes different events, as well as, run workshops for different international opportunities.

The startups can also get perks from different corporates that have signed up with startup Bahrain. For example, AWS credits, Zoho perks, and NBB are just some of our strategic partners.

This is a collective effort of different stakeholders from the public and private sectors, incubators, accelerators, and different funding agencies in Bahrain. We look forward to connecting with startups that would like to take advantage of what Bahrain has to offer and tap into the Middle East market.

**GLOMAT- THE FIRST THAI-BAHRAIN HYBRID VIRTUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

The Royal Thai Embassy, in cooperation with the Office of SMEs Promotion (OSMEP) Thailand, Institution of Small and Medium Enterprises Development of Thailand and G-Motif Group Co., Ltd., as well as the Thai Club in Bahrain, will organize the First Virtual Business Matching (B2B) between Thailand and Bahrain on 24th September 2020 from 10.00 – 14.00 hours.

The traders and entrepreneurs from Thailand are from 4 sectors: Organic food, Beauty, hotel supply, and spa & wellness.

This hybrid virtual business matching is different from the usual virtual business matching that has been done through the usual B2B platform, avoiding the VIXMA platform (a website for online business matching solution) which combine the actual event (in Thailand) and online channel (in Bahrain) together. VIXMA is a world-wide Hybrid business connectivity Seamless & Synergy on Ground and On Cloud cross territories Business matching workshops, and specific content to leading entrepreneurs, association and government agencies.

Traders and entrepreneurs in Bahrain will be provided the online pre-registration link before participating on the business matching day. They can pre-match businesses to book the time slot on 24 September; also the registration will be open for those who want walk-in registration as well.
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2020

SCE LAUNCHES TRAINING COURSE FOR RADIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR EMERGENCIES

The Supreme Council for Environment (SCE)’s CEO Dr. Mohammed Mubarak bin Dainah, launched the national training course on responding to radiological and nuclear emergencies. The virtual course was organized by the SCE in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to develop national capabilities in the field of responding to radiological and nuclear emergencies.

The first batch has 65 participants from Interior Ministry, Health Ministry and the SCE. Dr. Bin Dainah stressed the importance of holding such training courses to prepare national cadres with the highest level of training in responding to emergencies, especially at this stage of multiple global changes, including environmental issues.

The training course comes within Bahrain’s aim to develop national cadres’ teams in security and civil defense, investigations, Criminal Evidence, and technical support in cases of radiological and nuclear emergencies in order to prepare the best performance in responding to emergencies in accordance with the Manual guide, standards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, he added.

GULF AIR APPOINTS BAHRAINI COUNTRY MANAGER IN KUWAIT

Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, announce that it has appointed Mr. Mohamed Ibrahim Al Hamer as a Country Manager for its Kuwait station after relocating from the Asia Pacific region upon completing 15 months as Country Manager in Colombo and Male. Prior to joining Gulf Air, Mr. Al Hamer held positions in two airlines for a period of 6 years in the United Arab Emirates and the Eastern Province in Saudi Arabia as an Account Manager as well as a Yield and Inventory Controller in Bahrain.

Gulf Air is committed to invest in its Bahraini workforce and their career development and as such, it continues to provide opportunities for Bahraini nationals to take over senior positions in the company. Gulf Air is proud that it remains a leader in the Bahrainisation programme in the Kingdom as it provides the opportunity for local talents and experienced personnel to work in its various areas of the airline’s business.

THE AVENUES-BAHRAIN 3RD YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The Avenues-Bahrain is celebrating its 3rd year anniversary since opening its doors to the public on the 29th of October 2017. The Avenues – Bahrain is commemorating the occasion through a “Shop and Win” event by partnering up with Al Haddad Motors, the official authorized Mercedes-Benz dealership in Bahrain. Upon spending a minimum of BD25 at any of the retail dining or entertainment outlets at The Avenues-Bahrain from the 17th of September till the 28th of October 2020, visitors will have the chance to enter the grand draw, where one lucky winner will be selected on the 29th of October 2020 to win a brand new Mercedes-Benz E-Class 2021. Additionally, three lucky winners will be selected each week of the campaign to win valuable prizes from Mercedes-Benz and Trafalgar’s luxury brands (Maurice Lacroix, Charral Watches & Leather and Aligner Leather).

The Avenues-Bahrain has witnessed remarkable success over the past three years as it is considered the largest and only seaside shopping and leisure destination in the Kingdom. The Avenues-Bahrain continues to strive to redefine the shopping and entertainment experience in Bahrain through its plans to expand by implementing Phase II of the project. This will reflect positively on the diversity of stores and brands, as well as establishing Hilton Garden Inn – Bahrain, which is directly connected to The Avenues-Bahrain and will include 200 keys, further solidifying The Avenues – Bahrain’s position as a core leisure and entertainment destination for local citizens, tourists and businessmen from the Arab Gulf region and other destinations.

BD 150,000 ‘SHOP & WIN’ ANNIVERSARY BONANZA

Lulu Hypermarket is celebrating its 13th anniversary of being a retail leader in the Kingdom of Bahrain with a grand ‘Shop and Win’ e- raffle promotion offering BD 150,000 in Lulu Shopping Gift Card prizes to winners. From September 17 2020 to December 15 2020, shoppers will get an e- raffle entry in their names for every BD 5 spent at any of the eight Lulu Hypermarkets in the Kingdom. The ‘Shop & Win’ e- raffle promotion will consist of a fortnightly prize draw during which BD 25,000 worth of Lulu Shopping Gift Cards will be rewarded every 15 days.

The anniversary shopping promotion period is also filled with amazing deals to make shopping attractive for Lulu customers. From one, two and three day offers to special promotions, from luxury smartphones and wide-screen televisions to chocolates, cheese and meat, from tags and fitness equipment to personal hygiene items, there is something every household will need which is on special offer. There are also Hourly Surprise Offers which will be revealed at Lulu Hypermarket’s Social Media channels, Big Bang Offers and exciting general promotions. The Anniversary promotion was on from 17 September 2020 to 21st October 2020.

In addition, customers can get two e- raffle entries for every BD 5 spent on specific brands, thus doubling their winning chances.

Lulu Hypermarket is located in all the four Governorates of the Kingdom – Dana Mall, Juffair Mall and Galeria Mall in the Capital Governorate; in the Ramli Mall in Al-Asa Town of the Northern Governorate; in Rif’s in the Southern Governorate; in Atrium Mall in Saar, in the Southern Governorate and in Hidd and in Muharraq Central in the Muharraq Governorate.
DRIVER LICENSE AND VEHICLE CERTIFICATES CAN NOW BE ISSUED VIA BAHRAIN.BH!

Having earlier introduced a number of traffic services such as Payment of Traffic Conventions and Issuance of International Driving Licenses, the National Portal bahrain.bh and eTraffic app on bahrain.bh/apps have now added even more traffic services. Available through these simple and user-friendly platforms, these include essential services such as driver’s license and vehicle certificates, greatly reducing the need to visit government service centers.

Launched by the General Directorate of Traffic (GDT), in cooperation with the Information & eGovernment Authority (IGA), the new services allow users to complete a number of traffic related transactions quickly and securely while maintaining social distancing. Users can now issue and view certificates for driver’s licenses and vehicles, and also verify their validity online.

Beneficiaries must log in using the eKey to benefit from the service. Individuals with expired licenses must renew them before proceeding to have the certificates issued either via Bahrain.bh or via the eTraffic app available via Bahrain.bh/apps. All issued traffic certificates will be valid for one month from the date of issuance.

For more information, please visit the National Portal bahrain.bh

ABU DHABI WORKING TO PROTECT CORAL REEFS NEAR BARAKAH NUCLEAR PLANT

Abu Dhabi is working to protect coral reefs around the UAE’s nuclear plant following the connection of the first unit to the UAE grid.

In a statement, the Abu Dhabi Media Office said Abu Dhabi’s environment regulator – the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD) – and the Emirates Nuclear Energy Company (ENEC), which owns the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant are working together to achieve this environmental goal.

“Following the successful connection of Unit 1 to the UAE’s grid, EAD and ENEC have collaborated to conserve and rehabilitate coral reefs around the plant as part of the efforts to protect the environment and biological diversity in Abu Dhabi,” the statement said.

As part of preservation initiatives, 7,300 coral reef settlements have been preserved by removing them from the Barakah site and rehabilitating them in other areas. Another 22,300 coral reefs have been regrown, while 6,000 square metres of artificial reef have been created.

A compensation plan is also being implemented to ensure that the Arab World’s first nuclear plant supports and preserves the environment and the UAE’s biological diversity.
KHK MMA DOMINATES AT BRAVE CF 41 WITH FOUR HUGE VICTORIES

BRAVE Combat Federation hosted the first of three groundbreaking events last Thursday in the Kingdom of Bahrain, with seven bouts taking place behind closed doors at the National Stadium, in Riffa. The KHK MMA team founded by His Highness Shaikh Khaled bin Hamad Al Khalifa had an excellent evening, winning four of its five scheduled bouts with several high-profile fighters moving up towards a title shot.

In the co-main event of the evening, KHK Dagestan captain and one of KHK MMA most prominent athletes, Middleweight Ibram Alisherov had another impressive performance, dominating Denis Tiuliulin over the course of two and a half rounds before getting a kimura lock, which made his opponent tap-out.

After the bout, Ibram spoke highly of the influence of KHK MMA and His Highness Shaikh Khalifa on his training camps and hoped he would be able to challenge the new world champion Mohammad Fakhreddine in his next bout.

Also moving up in his own weight-class was Ahmed Amir, who outgrappled and outclassed Irish striker Cian Cowley, winning a unanimous decision in the process. After the fight, Amir also hailed His Highness Shaikh Khaled’s influence in his career and asked for a title fight against arch-rival Cleiton “Predator”.

In the night’s first fight, young Abdulra Ayyub earned an immense victory in his own home country, as he came from behind to earn an unanimous decision over Umed Urfonov, from Tajikistan. Abdulra lost the first round but came back stronger, made adjustments and walked away with victory by winning the next two rounds.

Finally, European IMMAF champion Magomed Idrisov started off his pro career in the best way possible, dominating a 11-fight veteran in John Cris Corton, using his wrestling to stifle any offense of his opponent and earn a victory in his first professional contest.