

CPHI Middle East Opens With Unveiling of Strategic Partnerships Worth SAR3Bn to Advance Saudi Arabia's Pharma Future

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Saudi Arabia solidified its status as a key player in the rapidly advancing global pharmaceutical industry as the inaugural CPHI Middle East opened in Riyadh on Tuesday with the unveiling of a series of partnerships worth more than SAR3 billion to enhance the Kingdom's pharmaceutical sector - the world's fastest-growing market of its kind.

Welcoming thousands of pharmaceutical policymakers, industry leaders, professionals, and stakeholders from around the world for the first time in the region, CPHI Middle East opened at Riyadh Front Exhibition & Conference Centre for a three-day run with the goal of demonstrating Saudi Arabia's commitment to innovation and excellence in healthcare and biopharmaceutical development, and underlining its position as a gateway to meeting healthcare demands for more than 400 million people across the Middle East and North Africa.

Opening CPHI Middle East, His Excellency Abdulaziz Hamad AlRamaih, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Health, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, highlighted the country's significant efforts in establishing a robust pharmaceutical ecosystem. He emphasised the foundations laid to



advance both public and private sectors, particularly in driving innovation and transformation within the healthcare and pharmaceutical industries.

“The Kingdom is undertaking the largest healthcare transformation in the world. A thriving pharma sector is a core pillar of that transformation and plays a central role in health and health security, and advances our economic strength and global standing,” said His Excellency AlRamaih.

His Excellency outlined how Saudi Arabia’s pharma sector represents a “compelling opportunity” and positions Saudi Arabia as a dynamic hub for investments and partnerships in the pharma and biotech industries. He also outlined the scale of opportunity in the Kingdom, with the regional pharma market set to reach a value of US\$32 billion by 2027, where “Saudi Arabia represents almost 50 per cent of that,” he said.

“With a projected compound annual growth rate of 9.3 per cent, Saudi Arabia is the fastest growing pharma market in the G20,” added His Excellency, commenting on government efforts to create a thriving biotech and pharma ecosystem by attracting regional and global pharmaceutical and medical device factories and world-leading research and development centres. The Kingdom, he noted, is now home to more than 200 factories, totalling an investment of more than US\$2.6 billion. “Saudi Arabia is the gateway to more than 400 million people in the Middle East and North Africa, giving companies the perfect opportunity to scale operations for maximum impact.”

He announced the Kingdom is developing 10 new national centres for clinical trials, including virtual clinical trials, positioning Saudi Arabia as a leader in drug development, completing the circle on crucial developments.

Opening of CPHI Middle East Brings Big Investment in KSA Pharma Industry



The Vice Minister's opening address was followed by a stream of announcements on the Future Stage, demonstrating public and private sector commitment to driving the Kingdom's pharma future.

The first announcement was a SAR1 billion partnership between Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health (MoH), the Ministry of Investment (MISA), the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources (MIMR), and Vertex to prioritise research and development and localise manufacturing for use in treatments for sickle cell disease and thalasemia.

That was followed by a partnership between Tamer, a leading healthcare logistics operator, and Saja Pharmaceuticals, worth SAR1 billion to develop the largest logistics park in Riyadh with cutting-edge automation and solar energy system, and a manufacturing facility in Jeddah.

Pharmaceutical company Julphar announced a SAR300 million commitment to building a state-of-the-art biopharma facility in Saudi Arabia for advanced biologics with the aim of creating 300 jobs, while pharma and tech industries combined further with Tabuk and Thera announcing a SAR100 million partnership to expand reach into auto-immune diseases and other key areas of pharma R&D.

Next up, biologics and vaccines innovator SVAX and China's Henlius announced a strategic partnership worth SAR 426 million to establish Fosun Henlius Middle East with a commitment to enhance the biologics sector. Zeta Gulf then revealed a SAR200 million commitment to establish a pharmaceutical facility in the Kingdom.

Middle East Taking Life Sciences to the Next Level

Elsewhere, Eng Nizar Al Hariri, senior advisor to His Excellency the Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources, opened the Bio-Next Gen stage, where he talked about the Kingdom's strategy to invest SAR11 billion in next-generation health with the goal of creating 13,000 "quality and high-paid" jobs.

Meanwhile, attendees on the opening day of the Discovery Theatre heard how the life science industry in the Middle East is primed for longevity and prosperity. Rauf Mohammed, Vice President for the MENA region at global healthtech company IQVIA, delivered a keynote in which he highlighted how advancements in healthtech have boosted investment opportunities in the MEA region, particularly in South Africa and Saudi Arabia, where the value of local expertise is proving to be advantageous.

Mohammed outlined the challenges faced when products produced in global markets are not easily adaptable in other markets due to localisation and regulatory complexities. However, with the pharma market among the top 15 economic contributors in Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom has been able to navigate those challenges, driven by efficient regulation and a focus on localisation.

Looking to the future, the IQVIA executive pointed out opportunities in oncology and obesity to address alarming global trends, with 20 per cent of the world's population projected to be obese by 2035 - a figure set to be disproportionately higher in lower-income countries.

Healthcare remains a priority in the Middle East, according to Mohammed, with funding and policy reform central to that. Saudi Arabia and the UAE, he said, currently dedicate 5 per cent of their national funds to the sector.

Commenting on the inaugural opening day, Mundhir Al-Hakim, Exhibition Director of Tahaluf, said, "CPHI has a 35-year global legacy so we were confident it would make an impact in the region, yet the opening day of CPHI Middle East has really exceeded our expectations. The exceptional support of industry pioneers and decision-makers is a testament to both industry opportunity in the region and the confidence in Saudi Arabia's commitment to create a thriving pharma and healthcare ecosystem. The event is already paving the way for groundbreaking collaborations and innovations, and we are privileged to be at the forefront of shaping the future of pharma in this dynamic region."

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