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Al Neyadi to do experiments for UAE varsities

MICROGRAVITY SPACE STUDIES TO BENEFIT MBRU, NYUAD AND OTHERS

DUBAI

BY SAJILA SASEENDRAN
Senior Reporter

The UAE's second astronaut Sultan Al Neyadi, who reached the International Space Station (ISS) on Friday, will conduct dental and postural experiments in space for the universities in the country.

This was revealed by the Mohammad Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC), the agency behind the UAE Astronaut Programme.

MBRSC said it is currently supporting two research projects from the Mohammad Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences (MBRU), that will also be part of Nasa's SpaceX Crew-6 mission involving Al Neyadi. The educational research projects are assigned by MBRU.

What are the projects?

The first project focuses on assessing how space flight environment of microgravity affects cardio-postural interactions. The data from this study could lay the foundation for the development of improved in-flight countermeasures and post-flight recovery programmes. It could also help with new protocols for pre- and post-flight health

Over 200 science experiments and technology demonstrations will be carried out during the 6-month mission to ISS.

monitoring. The second project investigates dental or oral cells in a microgravity-simulated environment on the ground. The data from this study will lay the foundation for designing space-based research for testing the same.

Both projects will engage students and researchers to assure capability development and qualification of new generations of scientists, said MBRSC. Al Neyadi is expected to conduct experiments required for these projects in the actual microgravity environment of the ISS.

Apart from MBRU, data sharing from the Crew-6 mission by Al Neyadi will include prominent local universities such as New York University (NYU) Abu Dhabi and others.

According to Nasa, over 200 science experiments and technology demonstrations will be carried out during the six-month mission to the ISS.

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Al Ain boy to military man to Emirati hero

AL NEYADI TO TURN 42 IN SPACE AMID HISTORIC MISSION

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We first learned of him when his name was announced along with that of Hazzaa Al Mansoori in September 2018 as the first two Emirati astronauts.

Today, Sultan Al Neyadi is known as the "Sultan of Space" who has made Arab everywhere proud with his historic trip to the International Space Station (ISS), which marks the first Arab long-duration space mission.

From an Al Ain boy to becoming 'Sultan of Space', the journey of Al Neyadi has been literally astronomical. Here is your full fact file on him.

Al Neyadi's full name is Sultan Saif Hamad Al Neyadi. He was born on May 23, 1981, in Umm Ghafa, 30 kilometres southeast of Al Ain. His primary and secondary education was in Al Ain itself.

He was an excellent student and he decided to follow in the footsteps of his father who served in the military. He joined the UAE Armed Forces and was assigned to study Communications Engineering. He went to the UK for his higher education. He received a Bachelor's degree of Science in Electronics and Communications Engineering from the University of Brighton.

On his return, he began serving with the Armed Forces. However, Al Neyadi was passionate about studying further.

He later headed to Australia and received his Master's degree in Information Technology from Griffith University in 2008. When he came back again, Al Neyadi worked as a Network Security Engineer for the Armed Forces. During his career, he visited more than 20 countries.

Six research papers

Again in 2012, he returned to Australia for five years, where he earned a PhD in Information Technology (Data Leakage Prevention). He also published six research papers on international websites.

Al Neyadi's sojourn to space began after he applied for the UAE Astronaut Programme that was launched in 2017. Among more than 4,000 candidates, he and Hazza Al Mansoori were chosen for the



Al Neyadi visited more than 20 countries during his armed forces career. Twitter

Though he rightfully has a doctor prefix to his name, Al Neyadi prefers to be known as Astro Al Neyadi on social media.

90

courses done as part of their training by Al Neyadi, Al Mansoori

UAE' first space mission. He was named the back-up for Al Mansoori who became the first Emirati astronaut to go to space in September 2019. During the one-year run up to the mission under the slogan 'Zayed's Ambition,' both the astronauts underwent rigorous training programmes.

Rigorous training

They trained at various astronaut and cosmonaut training centres in the US, Russia, Germany etc. The duo completed more than 90 courses and clocked in more than 1,400 hours of training.

After the successful first space mission, the astronauts' training continued for the UAE's second mission.

Al Neyadi had successfully completed his first year of training at Nasa's Johnson Space Centre in 2021, becoming officially certified to work as an operator on board the ISS.

With Al Mansoori as his back-up this time, Al Neyadi was last year named as the prime astronaut of the UAE Mission 2.

He was granted the Nasa astronaut's pin after completing around 20 months of general training at Nasa's Johnson Space Center in May 2022. His training included spacewalks,

robotics and science experiments. Since his Nasa graduation, Al Neyadi prepared for the mission in Houston, Texas, as well as at centres in Florida and California. He completed his training in Nasa's Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory (NBL) recently.

Al Neyadi is a mission specialist of the SpaceX Crew-6, the sixth crewed operational Nasa Commercial Crew flight of a Crew Dragon spacecraft, and the ninth overall crewed orbital flight. He is the flight engineer on board ISS.

He will spend six months in the orbiting laboratory during which he will carry out almost 20 experiments.

He could also be possibly the first 'Najmonaut' to perform the first spacewalk. Najmonaut is a word coined to refer to an Arab astronaut. Najm means star in Arabic.

Al Neyadi has five children and he will celebrate Ramadan, Eid-Al Fitr, Eid Al Adha and his 42nd birthday in space during his six-month stay in space.

In September 2022, President His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan had visited Al Neyadi's house in Al Ain.

Once Al Neyadi completes his mission, the UAE will become only the 11th country to carry out a long-duration astronaut mission.