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Crew emerges after 45-day mission in HERA habitat

UAE's Obaid Al Suwaidi part of study designed to simulate conditions of long space missions

DUBAI
BY SHARMILA DHAL
UAE Editor

The final phase of the second analog study under the UAE Analog Programme, as part of Nasa's Human Exploration Research Analog (HERA) Campaign 7 Mission 4, was completed on Monday, the Mohammad Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) announced.

The UAE's Obaid Al Suwaidi, alongside crew members Kristen Magas, Tiffany Snyder and Anderson Wilder, concluded the 45-day mission within the HERA habitat at Nasa's Johnson Space Centre in Houston. They emerged from the facility on Monday.

Three-storey facility

The HERA habitat, a three-storey facility, served as the setting for the Earth-based simulation, which replicated challenges similar to those faced during missions to Mars and other deep-space destinations.

The study, which began on November 1, was designed to



Courtesy: MBRSC

Emirati Obaid Al Suwaidi, alongside fellow crew members Kristen Magas, Tiffany Snyder and Anderson Wilder emerges from the HERA habitat at Nasa's Johnson Space Centre.

simulate the conditions of long-duration space missions, providing insights into human adaptability to isolation, confinement and remote conditions.

The crew will remain at Johnson Space Centre for a week to complete post-study surveys, debrief with HERA

managers and scientists, and provide data on crew health and performance under simulated spaceflight conditions.

Salem Humaid Al Marri, Director-General of MBRSC, said: "The successful completion of the second analog study under the UAE Analog Programme

18 HUMAN HEALTH EXPERIMENTS CONDUCTED

- The four-member crew undertook a simulated "walk" on Mars using virtual reality in the HERA habitat, along with activities like cultivating vegetables and shrimp farming.
- The crew also experienced communication delays of up to five minutes with Mission Control, simulating the increasing time lag expected during interplanetary travel.
- The analog study comprised 18 human health experiments, focusing on physiological, behavioural and psychological responses in isolated and confined environments.
- Six of these experiments were led by MBRSC in collaboration with UAE universities including the United Arab Emirates University, Mohammad Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences and American University of Sharjah.

The successful completion of the second analog study under the UAE Analog Programme exemplifies the UAE's commitment to driving strategic advancements in human space exploration and research."

Salem Humaid Al Marri | Director-General of MBRSC

exemplifies the UAE's commitment to driving strategic advancements in human space exploration and research.

Al Suwaidi said, "This study has been a transformative experience addressing the complexities of long-duration spaceflight. It has been an honour to

represent the UAE and contribute to research that will pave the way for future explorers."

The second analog study was part of a four-phase initiative. The final phase concludes a year-long effort that has seen the UAE take a leading role in advancing global space research.