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MEDIA RELEASE (EMBARGO 10 AM)

PHARMANIAGA RECEIVES SINOVAC COVID-19 VACCINE FOR PROCESS VALIDATION BATCH MANUFACTURING

SEPANG, 27 FEBRUARY 2021: Pharmaniaga LifeScience Sdn Bhd (PLS), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Pharmaniaga Berhad (Pharmaniaga) today received the first batch of Sinovac Covid-19 vaccine bulk for the purpose of process validation (PV) batch manufacturing which is part of the registration application requirement by the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA).

The 200-litre bulk equalling to 300, 000 doses of vaccine, arrived in an envirotainer which preserves the vaccine temperature between 2 to 8 degree Celsius. It was flown in by MASkargo on an Airbus A330-300 from Beijing, China.

Witnessing the arrival of the vaccine at Advanced Cargo Centre here were Senior Minister of Defence YB Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation YB Khairy Jamaluddin, Minister of Transport YB Datuk Seri Ir. Dr. Wee Ka Siong and Foreign Affairs Minister YB Dato' Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein. Also present was the Chinese Ambassador to Malaysia, H.E. Ouyang Yujing.

Pharmaniaga Group Managing Director, Datuk Zulkarnain Md Eusope said the arrival of Sinovac Covid-19 vaccine marked a historic moment for Malaysia and an important milestone for the Company's venture into vaccine manufacturing as this will be the first-ever vaccine to be filled and finished locally.

"To date, Pharmaniaga has submitted two applications to the NPRA, consisting of product registration for ready to be administered vials from Sinovac Life Sciences and for the fill and finish (F&F) that will be manufactured in our EU certified PLS plant. The PV batch manufacturing followed by stability study monitoring is critical to complete the registration application to ensure that vaccines are of equal quality even with the change in manufacturing sites from Sinovac to PLS."

PLS will F&F the vaccines into vials in a highly sterile clean room environment in full compliance of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP).

Datuk Zulkarnain said the PV will start on 1st March 2021 and expected to be completed within 12 days. NPRA will perform a GMP inspection to verify PLS's GMP compliance to ensure vaccines which is produced by PLS are of the quality required for its intended use.

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“We are very thrilled with the arrival of this PV batch manufacturing because it brings us a step closer to our vision of manufacturing vaccines in this country. Malaysia does not have the facility to manufacture or to F&F any vaccines until now, and we have been importing all the vaccines used in the National Immunisation Programme.

“Our vaccine roadmap, including the F&F facility and a full manufacturing plant will not only be the first in Malaysia, it will also be the first halal vaccine plant in the world. Many renowned vaccine manufacturers will be involved in the know-how and technology transfer in which Sinovac will participate for two vaccines, Insyallah.

“In the long term, besides helping the nation to reduce dependency on imported vaccines, Pharmaniaga’s foray into vaccine venture will help the government to reduce its yearly vaccine expenditure,” he said, adding that it will further help spur the industry growth within the value chain including R&D at universities, clinical trials providers and human capital expertise.

Pharmaniaga and Sinovac have signed an agreement for Sinovac to supply in bulk 14 million doses of its Covid-19 vaccine for PLS to conduct F&F manufacturing at its plant.

The bulk vaccine is a vaccine manufactured in the country of origin and transported in large quantities for filling into an administrable form of vials, ampoules or prefilled syringe vaccines. PLS will process the inactivated vaccine (or killed vaccine), a vaccine consisting of virus particles that have been grown in culture and then lose disease-producing capacity.

The storage and distribution condition of this vaccine is between 2 to 8 degrees and proven to be very reliable and dependable as the technology was established more than 40 years ago. The vaccine is also ready to use and requires no dilution, unlike some other Covid-19 vaccines in the market.

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Pharmaniaga is the leading pharmaceutical company of Boustead Holdings Berhad group of companies, which together with Lembaga Tabung Angkatan Tentera, are the major shareholders of the Company.

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ABOUT PHARMANIAGA BERHAD

Pharmaniaga is the leading pharmaceutical company of Boustead Holdings Berhad Group of Companies, which together with the Armed Forces Fund Board, are the major shareholders of the Company. Listed on the Main Board of Bursa Malaysia, Pharmaniaga's core businesses are generic pharmaceuticals manufacturing; research and development; marketing and sales; warehousing and distribution of pharmaceutical and medical products; supply, trading and installation of medical and hospital equipment as well as community pharmacy.

With a vision to be the premier Malaysian pharmaceutical company, Pharmaniaga is guided by its philosophy of 'Do It Right Always' and is empowered by its motto of Passion for Patients. Strengthened by nine manufacturing plants, nationwide logistics and distribution in Malaysia and Indonesia as well as products registered in 15 countries, Pharmaniaga Group is positioned to be a regional player in the international pharmaceutical arena.

Issued for Pharmaniaga Group by Corporate Communications Department, Pharmaniaga Berhad.

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