

MEDIA RELEASE**PHARMANIAGA SIGNS MOU WITH TECHNICAL PARTNERS IN THAILAND TO STRENGTHEN GROWTH STRATEGIES**

BANGKOK, 25 FEBRUARY 2022 – Pharmaniaga Berhad (Pharmaniaga) steps up its efforts to become a major regional pharmaceutical player by partnering with Thailand's BioNet Group (BioNet) for vaccine research and development (R&D) and Bio-Innova Co. Ltd. (Bio-Innova) for bioequivalence solutions as well as pharmaceutical product development innovation.

The strategic collaborations were sealed through Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) between Pharmaniaga's wholly-owned subsidiaries, Pharmaniaga LifeScience Sdn Bhd (PLS), with BioNet, and Pharmaniaga Research Centre Sdn Bhd (PRC) with Bio-Innova, today.

Witnessed by YAB Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Prime Minister of Malaysia, the MoU were signed by Mohamed Iqbal Abdul Rahman, Pharmaniaga Deputy Managing Director; Vitoon Vonghangool, President of BioNet and Apichai Kittivoravikul, President of Bio-Innova.

Through the signing of the MoU, PLS and BioNet will serve as the foundation in establishing the framework to exchange information and know-how to facilitate registration, manufacture, supply and marketing of various finished products and bulk antigens in respect of biopharmaceutical products, especially vaccines.

Pharmaniaga Group Managing Director Datuk Zulkarnain Md Eusope said, "As part of our efforts to support the Government in reducing import dependency for critical and high-value vaccine products, our high-tech EU certified plant, PLS, has embarked on developing biopharmaceuticals such as vaccines to ensure affordable, high-quality vaccine supply and build self-sufficiency for Malaysia.

"Hence, this collaboration with BioNet will support the development of combination vaccine formulation by providing required antigens and know-how method using recombinant acellular pertussis vaccine, leading to the most innovative paediatric combination, and market insights for long-term use in Malaysia and other relevant territories," he said.

Meanwhile, at the same event, another wholly-owned subsidiary, Pharmaniaga Research Centre Sdn Bhd (PRC), signed a strategic collaboration with Bio-Innova to explore opportunities riding on Bio-Innova's scientific expertise in bioavailability and bioequivalence studies as well as to build capabilities in product development.

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Datuk Zulkarnain said that with the growth strategies the Company has laid, Pharmaniaga needs to accelerate the introduction of new products to the market. Since bioequivalence study is a mandatory requirement prior to product approval submission to the authorities, Pharmaniaga needs to establish collaborations with international centres with advanced technical know-how to ensure product development timelines are met.

“It is timely for Pharmaniaga to establish a strategic partnership with the right partners, such as BioNet and Bio-Innova. We will be able to capitalise on each other’s strengths and know-how to synergise and accelerate our shared pursuit towards technology and innovation advancement. It will also help us to further improve our products and processes, as well as enhance our competitiveness to achieve greater resilience for our businesses,” he added.

Commenting on the signing, Pharmaniaga Chairman Datuk Seri Zainal Abidin Mohd Rafique said the partnership between the parties are in line with the changing market landscape, which require the need to remain competitive and relevant.

“We need to innovate and improve continuously, thus the collaborations play a vital role to further enhance and spur Malaysia’s pharmaceutical industry, as well as open more opportunities.”

Mr. Vitoon Vonghangool, President of BioNet said, “We are very pleased with the establishment of this collaboration with Malaysia’s market leader, Pharmaniaga. We are keen to work together on the development of the next generation of vaccines and contribute to the country’s self-resilience plans for the future.”

Meanwhile, Dr Sasitorn Kittivoravirkul, Managing Director of Bio-Innova, said this strategic collaboration will bring a tremendous opportunity to strengthen R&D capabilities in the ASEAN region for generic medicines today and also biosimilars and innovative medicines in the near future.

“The collaboration will serve as a prime initiative platform that potentially leads the pharmaceutical industry to the new frontier for drug self-reliance and sustainable security within the region and beyond. It is highly expected to be a driving force for change for medicine development in the ASEAN region,” she said.

Pharmaniaga Berhad is the leading pharmaceutical Company of Boustead Holdings Berhad group of companies, and 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.

About BioNet

BioNet is a French-Thai biotech group focusing on bio-innovation and access to genetically-designed vaccines against re-emerging and pandemic diseases. BioNet is the world's only manufacturer of licensed recombinant pertussis vaccines (Pertagen[®], Boostagen[®] and Boostagen^{RED}) containing a genetically-inactivated pertussis toxin (PT_{gen}).

BioNet has also been producing DNA and mRNA vaccines against COVID-19, with ongoing clinical trials in Australia and Thailand respectively. BioNet and CEPI, a global vaccine coalition, are partnering to develop all-variants SARS-CoV-2 mRNA vaccine in collaboration with leading American universities and Asian organizations.

BioNet's vision is to establish strong partnering networks to share vaccine expertise and enable access to life-saving vaccines anywhere in the world. Our team of more than 200 people across the globe are fully dedicated to the development, manufacturing and supply of vaccines. BioNet's main locations are Thailand (BioNet Asia) and France (BioNet Europe).

For more information, please contact us at info@bionet.one

About Bio-Innova Co., Ltd.

Bio-Innova is established in Thailand and offers professional services in the areas of clinical research, pharmacokinetics, bioavailability, bioequivalence, statistics and data management with a vast scientific expertise and quality team for pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical device industries.

Forward-looking statement

This release may contain certain forward-looking statements with respect to the financial conditions, results of operations and business of the Group and certain plans and objectives of Pharmaniaga Berhad with respect to these items. By their nature, forward-looking statements involve risk and uncertainty because they relate to events and depend on circumstances that will occur in the future and there are many factors that could cause actual results and developments to differ materially from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements.

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