

Press Release

Bahrain's Future Gemmologists embark on Intensive Training Programme

Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, 3rd July 2017: The Bahrain Institute for Pearls & Gemstones (Danat) has been conducting an intensive professional training programme for its new recruits at the Institute's headquarters in the World Trade Centre. Designed to introduce the new generation of Bahraini graduates to gemmology, the programme is spearheaded by Danat CEO and renowned industry expert, Kenneth Scarratt.

The training programme includes the use of classic gemmological analytical instruments while educating graduates in the field on gems' geological genesis and biomineralisation, gem treatments and gem synthesis as well as the various features identified for testing including assessments of colour, measurements and treatment of stones.

'The education of the country's future gemmologists is an important part of the Danat mandate and promise,' explained Scarratt. 'We have been conducting practical sessions with our trainees, building on their theoretical knowledge of the instruments and their different applications in gemmology.'

'By the end of this initial two-year training programme, each gemmologist will be able to operate every instrument and provide correct interpretation of the results. At the same time, we expect our new trainees to study, sit for, and pass external examinations in gemmology before specialising further in a gemmological discipline,' he added.

As part of Danat's commitment to the development of the local industry and human capital, the institute's 35-strong staff will grow as new and existing trainees will be encouraged to specialize in a number of gemmological disciplines: the solid-state physics and/or chemistry of particular gemstone or pearl species, microscopy and photomicroscopy, various forms of spectroscopy (FTIR, UV/visible, Raman) and real-time microradiography / CT imaging.

Training is provided by Danat's existing top management who are senior gemmologists and researchers including Dr Stefanos Karampelas, Research Director, a specialist in pearl research, Abeer Alalawi, Laboratory Director, ex-Director of Precious Metals and Gemstone Directorate at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism (MOICT), Dr Supharat Sangsawong, Gemstone Testing Manager, previously a research scientist with the Gemmological Institute of America (GIA) and a highly respected solid state chemist who has published extensively on the optical and chemical properties of rubies, sapphires and emeralds in relation to their country of origin, and Ali Alatawi, Pearl Testing Manager, who previously managed the identification services provided by the Gem and Pearl Testing Laboratory of Bahrain at the MOICT.

Danat was established by the sovereign wealth fund of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Mumtalakat, in line with the fund's interest in enhancing the local job market while increasing local expertise in the area of pearl and gemstone testing as the global jewellery industry continues to grow at a rate of 5-6% annually with global sales expected to reach over USD 270 billion by 2020.

-ENDS-

About Danat

Established by the Bahrain Mumtalakat Holding Company (Mumtalakat), Danat aims to leverage the Kingdom's expertise in the field of pearl and gemstones testing to become the world's preferred institute for natural pearl third party verification services.

About Kenneth Scarratt, CEO

One of the world's leading authorities on natural pearls, Scarratt has worked across the world to serve the industry. He has served as the CEO & Laboratory Director of the Gemmological Association & Gems Testing Laboratory of Great Britain until 1992 before his appointment as the Director of Laboratory Services, Education and Research at the Asian Institute of Gemmological sciences in Bangkok, a position he maintained until 1997. Then between 1998 and 2005, he oversaw the American Trade Association Gemmological Testing Center in New York after which he moved to Asia as the Managing Director Southeast Asia for the Gemmological Institute of America, where he remained until 2015. Recognised in the Middle East for his industry research and knowledge, he also helped establish the gemstone and pearl testing laboratory for the Ministry of Commerce in 1991.

About Mumtalakat

Mumtalakat, the Bahrain Mumtalakat Holding Company, is the sovereign wealth fund of the Kingdom of Bahrain. With a mandate to grow the wealth of Bahrain through long-term investments based on sound financial, strategic and governance principles, Mumtalakat holds stakes in over 50 commercial enterprises with a portfolio spanning a variety of sectors, including industrial manufacturing, financial services, telecommunications, real estate, logistics, consumer products and education.

Further details on Mumtalakat can be found at www.bmhc.bh