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AL NEYADI'S SPACE DIARY TO HEADLINE EMIRATES LITFEST

*Astronaut-turned-minister will interact with fans
and sign his new book at a session on February 3*

DUBAI

BY SAJILA SASEENDRAN
Senior Reporter

Space enthusiasts who closely followed the social media posts of UAE astronaut-turned-minister Sultan Al Neyadi during his record-setting space mission last year can soon grab a compilation of his literally out-of-the-world photos and anecdotes.

Al Neyadi's fans will also get to hear about his space adventures and get copies of the book signed by him at the 16th Emirates Airline Festival of Literature to be held at the Inter-continental Dubai Festival City from January 31 to February 6.

Responding to a *Gulf News* question at a press conference yesterday, Ahlam Bolooki, CEO of Emirates Literature Foundation, director of Emirates Airline Festival of Literature and managing director of ELF Publishing, said the book is a continuation of the ELF's partnership with the Mohammad Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) which had organised the ELF in Space educational series during Dr Al Neyadi's six-month expedition onboard the International Space Station (ISS).

"We created 20 episodes as an educational series to cover all sorts of topics around space and questions that children had. Some of those episodes



■ Ahlam Bolooki (centre) with Badr Abbas, Emirates' senior vice-president of commercial operations, Africa (left) and Dr Saeed Mubarak Bin Kharbush, CEO of the arts and literature sector at Dubai Culture, at the press conference yesterday.

were live content that we were getting straight from International Space Station. So it was very exciting," she said.

Titled 'Out of This World,' the upcoming publication by ELF will be launched at a session titled 'Out of This World: Sultan Al Neyadi' on February 3. The festival will also feature the UAE's first astronaut Hazza Al Mansoori, it was announced.

Unesco recognition

Meanwhile, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) has established official relations with the Emirates Literature Foundation for a renewable

period of six years, Al Bolooki announced. "This prestigious status underscores the success of the Foundation multifaceted initiatives, ranging from literary events to educational programmes," she said.

New office

The Foundation will move to new office in Al Shindagha Historic Neighbourhood, marking the anticipated relaunch of the Dubai International Writer's Centre. Commencing April 2024, the centre will host an array of year-round events, from engaging book clubs to dynamic book launches and captivating film screenings.