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SHARJAH HOSTS 4th OIC HALAL MIDDLE EAST EXHIBITION



With the Muslim population projected to increasingly claim a bigger share of the world's consumer spending, the global halal industry is homing in on Sharjah as the 4th OIC Halal Middle East exhibition which took place at Expo Centre Sharjah on December 8.

Giving credence to the market projection and underscoring the significance of the three-day event, latest reports say that the Muslim consumer spending across the different sectors of the Islamic economy is expected to reach US\$2.6 trillion by 2020, compared with US\$1.8

trillion in 2014. Being held under the patronage of His Highness Dr. Sheikh Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, Halal Middle East has launched a new vertical targeting the halal tourism segment – Halal Tourism Middle East 2015 – and is also featuring the expanded Kitchen Equipment - HoReCa Middle East 2015 – as a concurrent show.

The event was opened by H.E. Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdullah Bin Sultan Al Qassimi, Chairman of Sharjah Sea Ports and Customs, in the presence of Mr. Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Owais, Chairman, Sharjah Chamber

of Commerce & Industry; Mr. Saif Mohammed Al Midfa, CEO, Expo Centre Sharjah; other officials, dignitaries and industry representatives. "The 4th OIC Halal Middle East comes at a time when the UAE is emerging as a global leader in the rapidly growing Islamic economy, which is expanding at nearly twice the rate of the global economy and Muslim consumer spending is on the rise. Awareness about halal products is increasing and more products are being certified to comply with Shariah," said Mr. Saif Mohammed Al Midfa, CEO, Expo Centre Sharjah.

Lifestyle Change is Top Option for Addressing Obesity



The impact of obesity on health is causing increasing concern in the UAE. Findings released earlier this year by Zurich International Life revealed that almost two-thirds of the country's residents

are either overweight or obese. Recognizing the serious health complications associated with obesity, in particular, that it could lead to increased risk for mortality, the World

Health Organization officially classified obesity as a disease. Dr. Patrick Noel, Laparoscopic and Bariatric Surgeon for The American Surgecenter in Abu Dhabi, said, "The concern over obesity is not limited to the UAE as it is an escalating global epidemic. While the epidemic is an unwelcome development, this has led to greater focus on developing treatment and prevention options for obesity. It also encouraged greater health-consciousness in our society."

Lifestyle modification remains the first and top option for addressing obesity and achieving sustainable weight loss. "Medical science shows that genetics play a key role in developing obesity, but behavior and environmental factors are key contributors

too. Therefore, improving your eating habits and increasing your physical activity are effective strategies to manage obesity. Realities, however, show that not all individuals who resolve to change their eating and exercising habits become successful, as there are a good number of patients whose bodies do not respond to lifestyle modifications. "Obesity is an important risk factor for a range of serious chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and some cancers. Because of these associated risks, it is extremely important that obesity is treated aggressively. If a weight loss program through diet and exercise is proven difficult, that's the only time we discuss with our patients bariatric surgery as an option," Dr. Noel explained.