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GAKU Concludes Inaugural Riyadh Bootcamp: Where Esports Meets Culture

International participants earn Saudi Esports Federation certification while experiencing unique cultural exchange and competitive training

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia – 20-24th August 2025 – GAKU, the global esports development organization, has successfully concluded its first Cultural Esports Bootcamp in Riyadh, bringing together passionate athletes and esports enthusiasts from across the globe for an intensive and unforgettable four-day program focused on skill development, cultural exchange, and global community.



Event Highlights

The cultural esports bootcamp, held over 4 days in August alongside one of the largest esports events in history, featured comprehensive training in popular competitive titles including

Valorant, Street Fighter 6, and PUBG Mobile. 20 esports athletes experienced a unique blend of professional esports development and cultural immersion, with programming designed to educate, empower, and elevate the next generation of esports talent.

Key Program Elements:

- Intensive training sessions with expert coaches from partner organization NES
- Exclusive guided tour and certification ceremony at Saudi Esports Federation (SEF) HQ
- Special guest speaker session featuring Tekken Athlete 'Raef' from SEF
- Media training & competitive tournament culminating the program
- Traditional cultural meal fostering international connections



Strategic Partnerships

The bootcamp's success was made possible through strategic partnerships with leading organizations in Saudi Arabia's rapidly growing esports ecosystem. NES provided world-class training facilities and expert coaching staff, while the Saudi Esports Federation (SEF) offered unprecedented access to their headquarters and official program recognition.

The collaborative spirit that defined this partnership was evident throughout the program, with each organization bringing unique strengths to create an unparalleled experience for

participants. This synergy between international expertise and regional leadership has established a new benchmark for esports development initiatives.

"The collaboration between the Saudi Esports Federation and GAKU is a direct investment in the future of esports talent in the Kingdom and globally," said Rawan AlButairi, CEO of the Saudi Esports Federation. "By providing these young athletes with a unique blend of high-level training and cultural immersion, we are not only helping them develop their skills but also building a new generation of talents who can represent our vibrant culture on the global stage."

Building on this vision of nurturing global talent through regional expertise, Sayo Okamoto, CEO at GAKU adds, "This bootcamp represents exactly what we envisioned when we set out to create meaningful opportunities for esports development. The combination of professional training, cultural exchange, and industry access possible through the generous support and sponsorships of SEF and NES, has provided immeasurable and invaluable encouragement and inspiration to our participants."

"NES is proud to have partnered with GAKU and SEF to deliver this unique bootcamp in Riyadh. By blending professional esports training with cultural exchange, we are not only developing skilled athletes but also building bridges between communities. Esports is truly global, and it was amazing to bring this experience to Saudi Arabia to celebrate and foster this shared culture. This initiative reflects our commitment to inspiring and elevating the next generation of esports talent in Saudi Arabia and worldwide." Elie Honain, CEO of NES concludes.



Bringing the Community Together

True to GAKU's mission of making esports development accessible globally, the program welcomed participants across all skill levels, from beginners to advanced competitors. The bootcamp's unique structure, combining competitive training with cultural immersion and industry access, has set a new standard for international esports development programs. Participants not only improved their skills in their respective titles, but also gained valuable insights into the professional esports landscape in one of the world's fastest-growing gaming markets.

During the discussion with Saudi Esports Federation professional athlete 'Raef', they were surprised to discover his journey for competing globally in Tekken, training as a professional karate athlete, and how he recently completed his education as a licensed medical doctor.

The exclusive Saudi Esports Federation experience provided participants with a unique opportunity to interact with global leaders in esports, offering perspectives on career development and opportunities within the regional esports ecosystem.

Looking Forward

Building on the success of the Riyadh program, GAKU continues to expand its global bootcamp initiatives, with additional programs planned across multiple regions. The organization remains committed to its mission of educating, empowering, and elevating esports talent worldwide through accessible, high-quality development opportunities.

About GAKU

GAKU is a global esports development organization dedicated to nurturing esports talent through comprehensive bootcamp programs, cultural exchange, and professional development opportunities. With a mission to educate, empower, and elevate the esports community, GAKU creates unique learning pathways and experiences for esports athletes worldwide to develop their skills and connect with the broader esports ecosystem.

For more information about GAKU's programs and upcoming opportunities, visit www.gaku.world or follow @gaku_world on Instagram, gaku_world on Facebook, and Gaku Pte Ltd on LinkedIn.

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Note to editors: High-resolution photos from the bootcamp and additional materials are available upon request. Representatives from GAKU are available for interviews and additional commentary about the program and its impact on esports development.