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Culture vs cultured



DESIGN REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
naman@gulfweekly.com

AWARD-WINNING artist and designer Rashed Al Araifi has been depicting some of Bahrain's untold and lesser-known stories through visual narratives such as his recent piece showcasing the battle between traditional pearl divers and lab-developed pearls.

Rashed's installation, called *Cultured Culture*, re-imagines the constant struggle between traditional pearl diving and modern-day cultured pearls as a match between two football teams on a foosball table. His creative work of art won second place at the 46th Bahrain Annual Fine Arts Exhibition.

Rashed told the *Gulf Weekly*: "I consider my art to be a visual response as opposed to a final outcome. Coming from an artistic family, I was always encouraged to express this side of me, and over the years, my visual responses have matured with me, into well-researched pieces, bridging process with narrative."

"With this piece, I wanted to tell the story of the local pearl diving industry and the struggles they have faced in the last century. I also want to spark conversation around the social, cultural and anthropological impact of this struggle."



Rashed showing his table to the dignitaries at the Bahrain Annual Fine Arts Exhibition

Built with solid teakwood similar to that used in dhows and diving ships, Rashed's *Cultured Culture*, pays particular attention to each detail of the piece. Wooden paddle-shaped handles and curved figures intended to represent the pearl divers, propel the traditional team, while the lab-team is driven by culturing scientific equipment encased in the handles and box-cutter figures, to represent the manufactured nature of the process.

The 'ball' being played with is made up of wood, with a cutaway showing a single natural pearl. Even though Bahrain is the only country in the world to ban the trade



Rashed

of cultured pearls, the global industry has affected local pearl-diving and few pearl divers remain today. Rashed's piece as well as events like the Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Maritime Heritage season, aim to increase interest and boost

national pride in the traditional practice.

Rashed added: "This piece took me two years. I wanted to bring some of the stories from that era into this one. I researched and talked to some of the well-known pearl merchant families in the kingdom and after a deep analytical study and developing a narrative around the story, the foosball table seemed like the perfect medium or playground to share it with the world."

An architect by profession and co-founder of a multi-disciplinary design practice in the kingdom, Rashed studied interior and spatial design at The University of the Arts

London and completed a Masters of Architecture from The University of the Creative Arts.

His art is intended to represent the duality of a methodical architectural approach to design and a more free-spirited look at architecture. He has exhibited his work in exhibitions around the world, including the London Design Festival and his most recent piece is on display at the National Bank of Bahrain's Seef branch, showcasing the structures of the Bahraini archipelago utilising fluid lines.

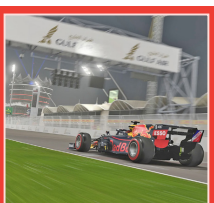
Check out Rashed's latest pieces @rashedalaraifi on Instagram.



SPREADING POSITIVITY
Upcycling art
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RACE MUST GO ON
Exciting Esport
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Like mother like daughter

ADORABLE Aaradhya Salin Nair is using her time in isolation to continue making the planet a better place through her artistic upcycling skills. She is also encouraging others to follow suit.

The seven-year-old Bahrain Indian School student enjoys transforming leftover toilet rolls, cardboard boxes, plastic containers and old paper into colourful works of art using water colours, poster colours and colour pencils as well.

"I love to paint on everything, especially on items that nobody needs to help reduce waste," said Aaradhya, who lives in Adliya. "I can do whatever I want using these items and my mum will not get mad at me for wasting or spoiling them. You can paint these things that no one wants and make them look beautiful."

Upcycling, which is defined as 'reusing discarded objects or material in such a way as to create a product of a higher quality or value than the original', has flourished in popularity especially during these troubled times

ART REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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when people are stuck in doors with little to do. The concept of living more sustainably has increased with upcycling taking over fashion runways and also helping residents inject new life into old and tattered items found at home.

Upcycling can vary from giving an existing item a new

paint job to creating a completely new look. It could also be reinventing an item so that it is used for a completely different purpose.

Since people are self-isolating, perhaps it's time to take a page out of Aaradhya's book and get creative.

"We have only one planet so let's do our bit by reducing the waste, turning it into something very beautiful and spreading awareness about the environment," explained Aaradhya, who participated in author Sarah Clarke's Trash to Treasure event themed around up-cycling old t-shirts. "Let's make our planet a beautiful place to live and spread positivity and goodness. I love to create from my imagination and



Rekha at work

make everything beautiful and happy."

She does this by painting pretty pictures of happy homes, vibrant flowers and of people. She also spreads joy by creating cards for her loved ones and teachers.

The creative child, who dreams of one day being a military physician and a famous artist with her own dance YouTube channel, picked up her passion for painting from her mum Rekha, 42, who is an artist

and illustrator.

Rekha comes from an accounting background and worked in a senior level at a Fortune 500 company for almost 10 years before putting her career on hold to care for her son.

She said: "I was travelling around the globe. It was a dream job. However, nine years ago when my son was born, we had to make a tough call of quitting my job as my little baby needed me the most. But that sudden void created from working full time and crazy hours to suddenly staying home all day was something I couldn't handle. I reverted to what I always loved as a child - painting. What started off as just a pastime soon turned into my passion."

Rekha finds art to being an excellent form of expression and her most preferred mediums include acrylic, water colour and digital art.

"Painting and sketching is very unwinding and like therapy to me," she said.

"I work in pretty much all mediums except oil paints. I also work with pencils, charcoals and soft pastels to paint on fabrics and glass."

She is inspired by nature and everyday life. Rekha added: "I love to capture the



Aaradhya turned a plastic container into art

beauty around me. Birds, florals and cups are my most favourite subjects to paint. I also love to feature beautiful and quirky moments in life. I want to share stories through my little illustrations wherever possible. Being able to bring to life what is on somebody's mind is what truly excites me."

For more than a year now, Rekha has been working on a book about a flawed coffee cup. The idea came about after she had casually showed Sarah, who is the founder of Baloos Buddies, her doodling sketchbook that boasted drawings of all kinds of cups.

"Sarah instantly suggested why not write a book about

the coffee cup," Rekha explained. "The book is about a coffee cup that is beautiful but is flawed. His journey to explore the world and how he finally accepts his flaws is what makes him so special."

"The message I am trying to convey is that imperfections are what make YOU so special. Be yourself and don't try to be like someone else."

Her book, entitled *Kapi- the Coffee Cup*, will be a picture book for children aged three to eight.

Find out more about Aaradhya's art and Rekha's upcoming book by following @illustrate_daily on Instagram.



Rekha's coffee cups



Aaradhya and her mum at an art event

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The corona chronicles

HEALTH REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
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THE global coronavirus case count has crossed 260,000 and this has sparked local and global calls for practicing social distancing.

Schools and workplaces alike are calling for people to stay home and isolate themselves, no matter their age.

During a recent press conference, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the World Health Organisation's director-general, said: "Even if you don't get sick, the choices you make about where you go could be the difference between life and death for someone else. I'm grateful that so many people are spreading the word and not the virus. Solidarity is the key to defeating COVID-19 - solidarity between countries, but also between age groups."

As more and more people spend time indoors, isolated from one another in solidarity, the isolation as well as anxiety around the crisis is likely to increase stress, detrimentally affecting people's mental and physical health.

Dr Tedros added: "During this difficult time, it's

important to continue looking after your physical and mental health. This will not only help you in the long-term, it will also help you fight Covid-19 if you get it.

"First, eat a healthy and nutritious diet which helps your immune system to function properly.

"Second, avoid alcohol consumption and avoid sugary drinks.

down the stairs. If you're working at home, make sure you don't sit in the same position for long periods. Get up and take a three-minute break every 30 minutes.

"Fifth, look after your mental health. It's normal to feel stressed, confused and scared during a crisis. Talking to people you know and trust can help."

Mental health, even during normal times, can be a difficult subject to address. Staying in isolation, even if it is with family, can often be stressful for most.

◆ Check in on neighbours, family and friends, virtually. Compassion is a medicine. Numerous patients in Wuhan recognised the value of staying connected with loved ones, even if it was through an instant messaging (IM) application. Especially make sure to check in with friends and family who have a history of depression or anxiety.

◆ Pick up that hobby you have been meaning to try. Connor Reed, 25, the first Briton to catch the coronavirus in Wuhan and be isolated for more than 40 days after he recovered, took the time to learn Russian and pick up an instrument, so he could stay occupied.

◆ Listen to music, read or play a board game. While it is tempting to catch up on thousands of Netflix hours, doing something creative instead of consumptive is more likely to keep your brain stimulated and active.

◆ Make time and space for your own needs and feelings. Engage in healthy activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly, keep regular sleep routines and eat healthy food.

◆ Try not to read or watch too much news if it makes you anxious. Get your information from reliable sources once or twice a day. Undeniably, this is quite a stressful time for everyone,



A family playing a board game

and while we as human beings are conditioned to come together in such times, the paradox here is that by staying apart, we can stand together. Fortunately, our technology-enabled lives help us stay connected and keep busy while doing so.

So stay busy, and who knows? *GulfWeekly* might be doing a story on the book you end up writing or your hidden maestro-level Oud skills, when this is all done!



Learning an instrument



Healthy snack

"Third, don't smoke. Smoking can increase your risk of developing severe disease if you become infected with Covid-19.

"Fourth, exercise. WHO recommends 30 minutes of physical activity a day for adults and one hour a day for children. As far as national guidelines allow it, go outside for a walk, a run or a ride and keep a safe distance from others. If you can't leave the house, find an exercise video online, dance to music, do some yoga, or walk up and

HEALTH OF A HOME

An important part of staying healthy is a clean and hygienic environment. Here are some of our top tips:

● Clean and disinfect: Cleaning and disinfecting are two very different things. Cleaning is about removing contaminants while disinfecting is about killing pathogens.

● Target your home's high-contact surfaces such as doorknobs, table surfaces, chairs (seat, back, and arms), kitchen and bathroom counters, faucets and faucet knobs, toilets (seat and handle), light switches as well as TV and game controllers.

● Wash your hands and feet often and whenever you leave and enter the home.



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Leisure Guide



Listings, lifestyle, travel, entertainment and sporting events by Naman Arora

Due to on-going public health concerns, restaurants and hotels are limited to deliveries and takeaways only until approximately mid-April. Many of our partner hotels are offering limited versions of their regular menus within the comfort and safety of your own home.

GULF HOTEL BAHRAIN

At Waha, La Pergola, Margarita Mexicana, Sato, China Garden, Royal Thai and Takht Jamsheed are offering curated menus for delivery and takeaway from 11am to 11pm daily. Call to enjoy Al Waha's hot mezzeh and mixed grills, La Pergola's pizza and pasta, Margarita Mexicana's empanadas and tacos, Sato's teriyaki and teppanyaki, Royal Thai's tom yum and curries, Takht Jamsheed's kebabs and khoresht and China Garden's dumplings and noodles, delivered to your doorstep. Prestige club members enjoy 20% off all takeaway or delivery orders.

✦ Gulf Hotel Bahrain
☎ 36445585/ 36551222/ 17746425/ 17746426



THE RITZ-CARLTON, BAHRAIN

At the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain, The Gourmet Lounge and The Lobby Lounge are offering their existing menus for takeaway only. The Thai Lounge is offering a special menu featuring Thai, and Balinese cuisine and a selection of items from La Plage. Primavera, Nirvana and Cantina Kahlo will be offered by La Plage to be enjoyed at home with your family and loved ones. All other outlets at the hotel are currently closed.

✦ The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain
☎ 17580000



THE INTERCONTINENTAL-REGENCY

From 6:30am until 10:30pm daily, enjoy a multi-outlet menu with Arabic, Indian, American and International cuisines, available for delivery or takeaway. Party platters and ouzi are also available for order, with two days' notice. Takeaway orders enjoy a 15% discount.

✦ Intercontinental-Regency
☎ 17227777 / 36967701



FOUR SEASONS HOTEL BAHRAIN BAY

CUT by Wolfgang Puck and re/ Asian Cuisine are now offering take-away and home delivery service from noon to 10pm daily. The menus combine specialties from both CUT by Wolfgang Puck and re/ Asian Cuisine and feature your favourite salads, steaks and sides. And for the first time, the Wagyu Cheesesteak will also be available to order. The Family Pack is also available at BD16.5 per person (with a minimum order for two) and includes your choice of starters, mains, sides and desserts, with Wagyu Rib Eye Steak and Filet Mignon available for an additional BD4 per person.

✦ Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay
☎ 17115000

CRUST & CREMA

From 8am to 11pm, Crust & Crema is offering a selected takeaway and delivery menu, including pizzas (starting at 11am), sandwiches, acai bowls, smoothies, coffees, frappes and beverages. Check out their Purple Immunity booster smoothie with acai berries, now available for takeaway and delivery through Talabat.

✦ Crust & Crema Karbabad/ Galleria
☎ 17214155/ 38821512 – takeaway and information only. Delivery through Talabat only.



JUMEIRAH ROYAL SARAY BAHRAIN

Every day from 7am to midnight, pick up your favourite salad, pasta, pizza, signature sandwich and grills from Jumeirah Royal Saray Bahrain and relish in the cuisine from the comfort of your home.

✦ Jumeirah Royal Saray Bahrain
☎ 77707070

THE WESTIN CITY CENTRE BAHRAIN



Every day from 8am to 10pm, Furn Bakery is open for takeaway only offering cake slices and other bakery items on display as well as items from the a la carte menu.

✦ The Westin City Centre Bahrain
☎ 17171441

Designed for your absolute relaxation, the Lagoon Beach boasts serene views from sunrise till sunset and is one of Reef Clubhouse's most scenic spots in the kingdom.

The Reef Clubhouse's new indoor pool is open! The large-scale indoor pool is a sight to behold. Whether enjoying the warm water, a beverage poolside, soaking in the Jacuzzi, or relaxing on deckchairs, the pool offers a world-class environment in which to spend moments of leisure.

Enjoy their Pre-Launch Special and relax

REEF RELAXATION

and unwind every day until Sunday. For BD10 net/person at the food savoury area, guests can enjoy free access to Lagoon Beach facilities including the new indoor pool while children under five are free of charge. Located at Reef Island, the scenic Clubhouse & Lagoon Beach are perfectly positioned overlooking the panoramic view of Bahrain skyline where guests can create memories with loved ones aboard the

Lagoon Moon floating restaurant as they witness the striking view.

The Clubhouse is a vibrant hub of lifestyle amenities placing you at the heart of a world where dining, well-being, leisure, socializing and relaxation are all yours in luxury surroundings. It also has a playroom area where a sphere of entertainment and educational-fun will keep younger guests amused in a safe and engaging environment.

✦ Reef Clubhouse, Reef Island
☎ 77900700



Smart shopping



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Healthcare checkout



SHOPPING REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
naman@gulfweekly.com

LULU Hypermarket has opened two checkout counters at each of its Bahrain locations dedicated to providing priority service for busy healthcare professionals working hard to contain the coronavirus spread.

An official at the company said: "We at Lulu Hypermarket take this opportunity to thank all the healthcare professionals for their selfless care of the community in Bahrain and around the world."

"Our doctors, nurses, technicians, pharmacists and all the workers in hospitals and throughout the public and private healthcare system are our frontline soldiers. They are protecting us, our health and lives in the fight against COVID-19."



The new checkout counters for healthcare providers



To avoid having to wait in long queues, no ID is required and health care professionals simply have to line up at the two new

counters.

Supermarkets and hypermarkets across the country have been experiencing significant foot

traffic and delays at their checkout counters in the last few weeks.

With the closure of commercial shops tomorrow, Lulu Hypermarket,

along with other supermarkets and hypermarkets, as well as cold stores, bakeries, pharmacies and banks will remain open.



FinTechFocus



BeAware App



On Monday, the Information and e-Government Authority (iGA), in coordination with Supreme Council of Health and the Ministry of Health launched a national mobile application to monitor home-quarantined people, as part of the efforts to combat the novel coronavirus (Covid-19), writes Naman Arora.

The BeAware application, available on Android and iOS provides users with reliable Covid-19 updates within the kingdom to inform users about the location of active cases and to maintain accurate figures from the contact tracing programme.

The application also aims to identify contact tracing cases and alert individuals in case they approach or have been in contact with an active case or location.

The initiative is in line with the directives of His Royal Highness

Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, to contain the virus and provide citizens and residents with a reliable means of contact tracing.

The iGA chief executive Mohammed Al Qaid said: "The application aims to protect society which showed its awareness and responded positively to all precautionary measures and preventive protocols. The application has the ability to follow up

on suspected cases subjected to the 14-day mandatory quarantine."

The free application has been tested by hundreds of volunteers and quarantined cases to ensure its efficacy and information provided by the application will be confidential and protected to ensure the privacy of citizens and residents.



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GULF Industry

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Motoring Weekly

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The safest choice



THE Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) in the US announced that the 2020 Mazda CX-30 has earned its 2020 TOP SAFETY PICK award when equipped with specific headlights.

To qualify for the 2020 TOP SAFETY PICK award, the CX-30 earned good ratings in all six IIHS crashworthiness evaluations including the driver-side small overlap front, passenger-side small overlap front, moderate overlap front, side, roof strength and head restraint tests.

It also needed advanced or superior ratings for both vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-pedestrian front



crash prevention, as well as an acceptable or good headlight rating.

Mazda North American operations president, Jeff Guyton, said: "Safety is a

top priority with Mazda, and we are proud to have the CX-30 earn the 2020

IIHS TOP SAFETY PICK award. We are committed to providing the most advanced safety technologies in our vehicles and we continue to challenge ourselves to create unique products and technologies, which provide our customers a confident, relaxing, joyful driving experience."

Mazda's i-Activsense is an umbrella term covering a series of advanced safety technologies which make use of detection devices such as milliwave radars and cameras. They include active safety technologies that support safer driving by helping the driver to recognize potential hazards, and pre-crash safety technologies which help to avert collisions

or reduce their severity in situations where they cannot be avoided. Mazda's i-Activsense advanced safety technologies include Advanced Smart City Brake Support with Pedestrian Detection, Smart Brake Support with Collision Warning, Smart Brake Support, Mazda Radar Cruise Control with Stop & Go Function, Blind Spot Monitoring with Rear Cross-Traffic Alert, Lane Departure Warning System with Lane-Keep Assist, Driver Attention Alert, High Beam Control, Adaptive Front-Lighting System and Traffic Sign Recognition.

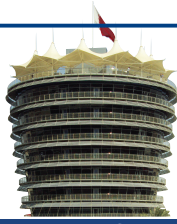
The CX-30 joins the Mazda CX-9, when equipped with specific headlights, as a TOP SAFETY PICK for 2020.

The Mazda3 Sedan and Hatchback, Mazda6, CX-3, and CX-5 vehicles have earned the IIHS 2020 TOP SAFETY PICK+ award. IIHS noted Mazda as a standout, earning more TOP SAFETY PICK+ awards than any other automaker.

Find out more about the Mazda CX-30 on <https://mazda.kekanoo.com/> or call 17875777.



Motor Sport

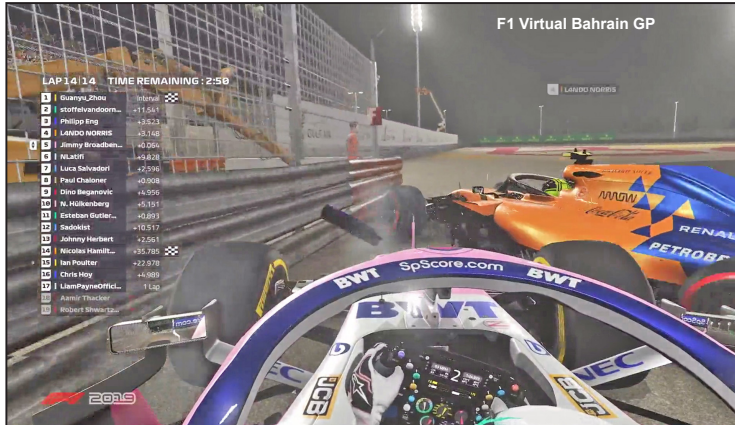


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Virtual Bahrain GP

MOTORSPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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FORMULA 1 racing went ahead as planned for Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), just not as everyone had imagined it would.

Instead of motorsport fans cheering on their favourite drivers from the Circuit's grandstand seating, they were treated to an exhilarating race through the world's first F1 Esports Virtual GP on Sunday (March 22).

F1's teams were represented by a mix of current and former drivers, rising stars and other celebrities as they competed against each other remotely on the F1 2019 PC game.

Twenty drivers from various career backgrounds took to the virtual version of the Sakhir track to excite and entertain while racing pundits were being isolated at home during the corona crisis.

The action was undeniably fun and unpredictable as racers including former F1 drivers Lando Norris, Nicholas Latifi, Nico Hulkenberg, Johnny Herbert and Anthony Davidson took on Olympic cycling legend Sir Chris Hoy, golfer Ian Poulter and singer-songwriter Liam Payne.

The race was won by Renault test driver Guanyu Zhou. The 20-year-old Chinese youngster overtook pole sitter Red Bull athlete and WeatherTech SportsCar driver Philipp Eng midway through the shortened 14-lap race. Eng had topped the timesheet from the first lap of Qualifying setting the early pace with a 1:28.638. None of the other racers could get close to the Austrian and with under two minutes remaining of the session he took another 0.371s off his best time ensuring pole position.

However, in the end, Mercedes' reserve driver Stoffel Vandoorne took second place and Eng

raced into third. On the final lap, Eng was caught by Vandoorne before the two collided and nudged Eng Philipp off the track and into third. He was lucky to avoid the wall, but was unable to re-claim second place.

Following his podium finish Eng said: "It was good fun and I really enjoyed representing Aston Martin Red Bull Racing in the virtual world. Pole was a great achievement as I don't really play this game very often. I struggled a bit to make the strategy work in the race. Somehow my pit stop took a little too long and I think I didn't de-select to repair the damage. A podium finish was a good start though and now I have a good base, so I'm happy to be back driving for the team anytime."

The next F1 Esports Virtual GP will take place on the Albert Park Circuit, a racetrack used annually for the Formula One Australian Grand Prix, from April 3 to 5.



F1 ESPORTS BAHRAIN VIRTUAL GP RACE RESULTS

1. Guanyu Zhou	Renault
2. Stoffel Vandoorne	Mercedes
3. Philipp Eng	Aston Martin Red Bull Racing
4. Jimmy Broadbent	Racing Point
5. Lando Norris	McLaren
6. Nicolas Latifi	Williams
7. Luca Sluatore	Alpha Tauri
8. Paul 'Redeye' Chaloner	Haas
9. Dino Beganovic	FDA Hubolt Esports Team
10. Nico Hulkenberg	Racing Point



Olympic dreams



SPORT REPORT

By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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THE fate of the sporting world has been turned topsy-turvy with events being suspended left and right, leaving athletes to wait and wonder whether their Tokyo Olympic dreams will continue as planned or be postponed as well.

Various sporting organisations including USA Track and Field team, UK Athletics and national Olympic committees such as Brazil's, have urged for the Olympics postponement to help control the spread of the coronavirus. Russia's Boxing Federation added that it should be postponed by a year because the virus has disrupted athletes' preparations and could jeopardise their health.

It seems organisers are starting to heed their advice. As of March 22 (Sunday), Thomas Bach, president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), wrote a letter to Olympic athletes in which he said canceling the Summer Games altogether is not an option and vowed that a final decision on postponement would be made within the next four weeks.

The Summer Olympics were scheduled to run from July 24 to August 9.

On March 23 (Monday), Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told a parliamentary committee that postponing the Tokyo Games may become a consideration if the event cannot be staged in a "complete manner".

While some athletes and national Olympic committees have already expressed their unwillingness to participate in July, such as German former world champion



Tokyo Olympics amid pandemic

fencer Max Hartung who heads the German Olympic Committee's athletes' commission, other competitors are continuing their preparations.

Athletes such as Bahrain Endurance 13's Kristian Blumenfeld and Lauren Parker will continue their training with the aim of achieving their golden dreams.

Blumenfeld is known to train up to eight hours daily and races just as hard. He broke the Ironman 70.3 world record by five minutes in 2018 at the Ironman 70.3 Middle East Championships. He then bested it by another three minutes the following year.

The Norwegian is one of the youngest on the Bahrain Endurance 13 roster and is expected to make headlines at the Olympics.

He said: "My goal is to win the Olympics in Tokyo! I'm already qualified so I'm preparing as well as I can these days to be best prepared for July 27."

"However, I think it's very important these days as an athlete to note that global health and safety is more important than just sport. It's important that we all respect the rules and guidelines we have been given, so we can defeat this virus together and come stronger out of it. I try

to keep and positive mindset, and do all the training I can do as well as I can. I do a lot of riding indoors on my turbo and since all swimming pools are closed, I try to compensate with dryland swimming with elastic bands."

Parker, the first paratriathlete to wear Bahrain Endurance 13's acclaimed team's jersey, is also training for Tokyo Paralympics. She said: "I am so excited about competing at Tokyo 2020 Paralympics and I'm honoured that I can represent my country as well

I think it's very important these days as an athlete to note that global health and safety is more important than just sport.

as the number one team, Bahrain Endurance 13.

"I grew up having the dream of one day competing at the Olympic Games. I worked so hard and since my accident, that goal once again arose. I now have the goal of becoming Paralympic Champion and winning that Gold medal. That is where my focus is and I believe that I will achieve it! I feel excited about being on the start line at the Paralympics with the best paratriathletes in the world.



Parker championing for Bahrain Endurance 13

"I am training for Tokyo Paralympics which is to be held at the end of August this year. My focus hasn't changed with everything going on around the world. I'm training as though the Paralympics are still going ahead."

Parker has gone from elite triathlete to elite paratriathlete, approaching training and competition with the same fire she has always had as a former junior swimmer who turned professional after placing second in the 25-29 age group at the 2015 Ironman World Championship.

Three years ago a freak

at the Paratriathlon Oceania Championships in Newcastle this past January.

She was looking forward to competing in Sarasota-Bradenton ITU Paratriathlon World Cup on March 22 in Florida, however, her race got cancelled and the whole of Florida shut down.

"I had to train in my hotel car park until I got a flight home to Australia. Upon arriving home, I am on strict 14 day isolation so I'm not able to leave my house. I will be training hard indoors though and staying positive. Although I won't be able to swim, the pools are closed anyway; I am not focussing on that. I'm letting this be an opportunity to rest and focus on the bike and run."

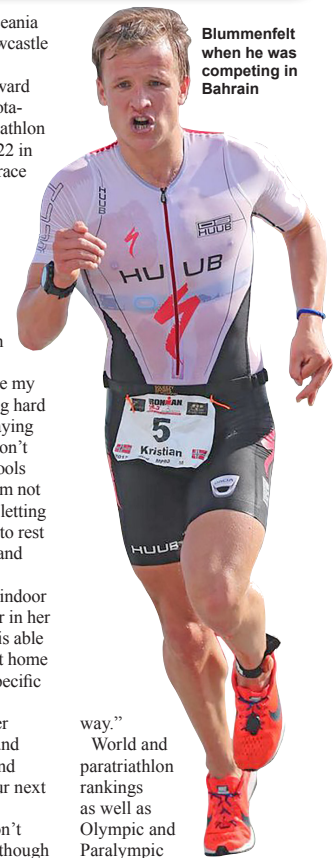
She is training on her indoor rollers and bike trainer in her home garage and she is able to do gym workouts at home incorporating swim specific exercises.

"I would advise other athletes to stay calm and positive in this time and keep focussing on your next event." She added.

"Set a goal if you don't have one and train as though the next competition is on. Put things in perspective, if your race is cancelled, overcome that because there are people dealing with worse situations in the world. Find a way to keep training and active. There's always a

way."

World and paratriathlon rankings as well as Olympic and Paralympic qualification rankings have been frozen alongside the suspension of races. The Bahrain Endurance 13 hope to see the world healthy again soon and these athletes back on the starting line.



Blumenfeld when he was competing in Bahrain