

# Gulf Weekly

The community newspaper at the heart of Bahrain

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## Take care!

**B**AHRAINI musician May Alqasim, who recently suffered from a severe health scare that started a community-wide blood donation appeal, is now preparing for a life-saving liver transplant.

She is coping with post-traumatic stress, has been placed on a strict meal plan, multiple medication and is preparing to travel to Antalya, Turkey, for the operation.

She is urging fans, family and friends never to ignore their well-being and be persistent when it comes to seeking answers to health issues.

"If you really don't feel right, don't stop looking for answers," she said. "I'm hoping to achieve a healthy new life and a new chance at it. This adventure to Turkey is going to be challenging and I am determined to beat this!"

The 29-year-old singer and vocal coach has cirrhosis, scarring of the liver caused by long-term liver damage. She was diagnosed with the disease in 2019 after multiple misdiagnoses and discovered the condition was genetic.

While most of the time, liver damage can't be fixed, if caught early, there are treatments that can help.

May, who works with ILOVE Productions putting together several 'passion projects' such as the ILOVE PARTY online event aimed at raising people's spirits, said: "For the longest time, I knew deep down that something was off. I felt it in my gut."

"I always felt weak and lethargic. I was not digesting food well and just generally felt lousy. No one appeared to have a clue why."

Symptoms of cirrhosis include fatigue, weight loss, nausea, swelling legs and stomach and the risk of bleeding and bruising easily.

She added: "Liver cirrhosis is no joke and can get to the point of no return. There are many reasons for it and mine happened to be the one most beyond my control."

"After so many hospital visits, it was confirmed that my cirrhosis was genetic."

On September 24, May was admitted into the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) Royal Medical Services, Military Hospital from her Riffa home after feeling extreme sharp pain coursing through her, leaving her feeling faint and shaky. The condition had caused her veins to burst in nine different places.

"I was put straight into intensive care and had lost so much blood that I was critically ill," she added. "My heart was stopping and I had to be put on breathing support."

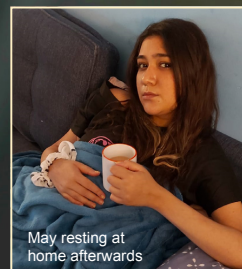
The medical team and her consultant physician and gastroenterologist Dr Sagar Janardhan Adkar found that her haemoglobin levels had dropped from 12 to 2 due to the amount of blood loss. She apparently had also drained all the blood banks of her A- blood type.

May's family and friends rallied to her cause sending out messages via WhatsApp and through social media platforms asking for immediate A-blood donations. Her story went viral and even trended on Twitter.

May was overwhelmed when she found out. She said: "I had no clue what was going on. My case was a code red and no one knew if I would be able to stop bleeding internally. I only found out later and simply felt so loved and supported."

"What would I have done without everyone by my side, praying and fighting for me? The number of donations was overwhelming. It also made people realise how important it is to know their blood type in case of an emergency. My faith in humanity has been restored."

May is no stranger to giving back as the production label she works on falls under the OneHeart-Bahrain umbrella, a community-driven initiative founded by Birthe van der Heijden to spread kindness and love throughout the kingdom.



May resting at home afterwards



**MIGHTY MARIAM**  
Her inspirational story  
SEE PAGE 2



**MICRO MARVELS**  
Artsy cuisine  
SEE PAGE 3



**THINK PINK BAHRAIN**  
Film takes prize  
SEE PAGE 5



**WOMEN ON WHEELS**  
Back in Circuit  
SEE PAGE 7



# An inspiring life



**COMMUNITY REPORT**  
BY REEM AL DAAYISI  
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**M**IGHTY mother-of-two Maryam Shehab has become the video star of a royal initiative and her gritty determination is helping to inspire young people to achieve their dreams no matter what obstacles they may face.

The 32-year-old Bahraini was born hearing-impaired and with her family rallying around her, she has emerged as a successful, empowered career woman fuelled by love, courage, patience and perseverance.

"My childhood was beautiful; I was raised in a household full of love. My parents always believed in me and never made me feel that I was different – it's the secret of my success and strength today," she said.

"Every day has challenges and the answer is to face them and find solutions.



Mariam and her parents during her graduation from Ahlia University with distinction

"Challenges have always been a part of my life, like the air that I breathe, and thanks to Allah I have grown stronger. Every day I have more faith in myself and, by God's grace, I have become an inspiration for others. We're all different and we can all be inspirational in our own way."

Mariam was praised by His Majesty King Hamad's representative for humanitarian and youth affairs Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa for her defiance, determination and ability to achieve her goals. She is part of a series of short videos published by the Youth and Sports

Ministry under the hashtag #Be\_Strong highlighting Bahrainis who have overcome the odds and became examples of resilience.

Ms Shehab, who has one brother and two sisters, attributed her strength and determination to the unconditional love shown by her parents.

"My father, for example, never gave up on me and he always believed that I would learn to speak after he was told that I was deaf," she added.

"Those with hearing-impaired disability shouldn't live in isolation. I want them to live like me and enjoy a normal productive life."

Ms Shehab was the first hearing-impaired student in her school to receive a scholarship by Education Minister Dr Majid Al Nuaimi and she graduated from Ahlia University with distinction.

She says she overcame all challenges thanks to her parents' unrelenting belief



Mariam along with her father celebrating 'Hearing-Impaired Child Day'

Challenges have always been a part of my life, like the air that I breathe, and thanks to Allah I have grown stronger.

in her capabilities and is now a proud mother-of-two working full time with the National Bank of Bahrain.

She has extended the same love and support extended by her parents to her daughters.

Her proud father, Fouad Shehab, who is an Ahlia University history and international relations professor, believes the magnificence of a family lies in being transformed into a small society, firmly connected by love.

"Mariam was always a happy child but once she ventured out into the community she felt the difference. However, she was armed with love, kindness, determination and a strong

personality," he said.

"When I was told she was hearing-impaired I hugged her and I told her that I loved her and that she would one day speak.

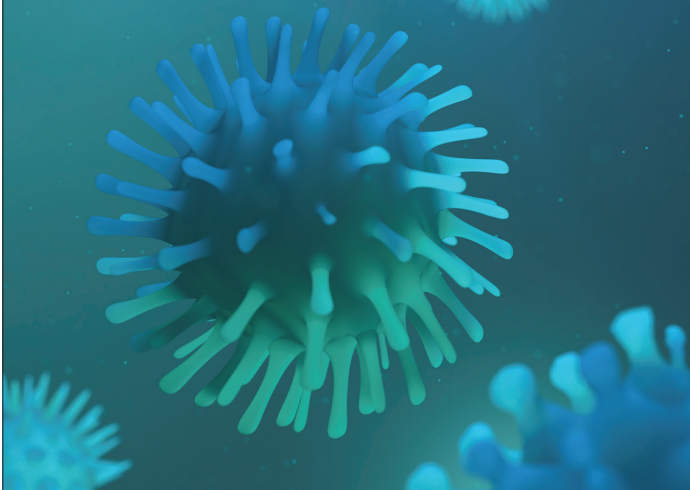
"Her first word was 'Baba' (father) and I waited for her to say it for two years.

"Before Mariam the possibility of hearing-impaired children speaking was somewhat of a fantasy but now we don't accept less than full integration in education and society and it has turned into a reality in our beloved kingdom.

"Her achievements have made me believe that God has chosen me to carry a noble message through her."

**GDN life**  
Bahrain's Social Media Platform

for the latest updates  
about **COVID-19**



As a community initiative during these extraordinary circumstances Covid-19 articles are also being shared from [gdnonline.com](http://gdnonline.com) to our social media platform [www.gdnlife.com](http://www.gdnlife.com)



Mariam along with her parents



# Tasteful trails

Members of the media traversed 'tasteful' trails through the award-winning restaurants of the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain (RCB), culminating in the launch of the five-star property's new Italian pop-up, *Primavera Al Fresco* writes Naman Arora.

*Primavera Al Fresco* has been launched at RCB's beachside pop-up restaurant, which previously played host to *Nikmat*, the hotel's Balinese concept.

Chef Delfino Sanfilippo Chiarello, head chef at the hotel's *Primavera* restaurant cooked up a storm by the beach to give guests a taster of the menus to come.

"The main objective of the event is to set out on a gastronomic journey," said

Jeremy Canivet, director of sales and marketing at the RCB.

"We continue to innovate by adding unique restaurant concepts like the new *Primavera* pop-up, and providing updated menu selections from all of our restaurants."

Guests delighted in a variety of dishes starting with *Nirvana*'s heavenly hors d'oeuvres including *Jheenga Til Tinka* – deep-fried Gulf prawns, tossed in sesame seeds, accompanied with sweet chili sauce.

The Thai restaurant was next with Vietnamese spring rolls, popcorn shrimp and tom yum soup.

The penultimate pit stop was *La Plage*, where the

hotel's management joined the 14 members of the Press in devouring lobster rolls and Alsatian *Flammenkuche* – a thin-crust tart served with sour cream, beef bacon and chives.

The scrumptious spree ended at the breezy *Primavera Al Fresco*, where guests enjoyed a spread of Italian delights including *Antipasto 'Nikmat'* – Italian mixed grilled vegetables antipasti with buffalo mozzarella and olive taggiasche, capping off the evening with velvety tiramisu and crunchy cannolis.

Jeremy added: "2020 has been an unprecedented year due to the global pandemic.

"To adapt, we keep our focus on constant innovation. And with our insatiable



Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain management - from left, Alper Kucukbaycan, assistant director of food and beverage, Yasser Mazouz, assistant director of sales and marketing, Bernard de Villèle, general manager, Andrea Colla, the hotel manager, Jeremy and Yann Bernard Lejard, executive chef.

quest for excellence, we will most certainly continue to elevate our guest experience by creating new culinary adventures for years to come."

The menu at the new Italian pop-up will build on the finger food offered at the beachside, integrating the outdoor setting into the live cooking

experience with a variety of grilled offerings.

*Primavera Al Fresco* is now accepting reservations for up to 20 guests.

# Finger food



ART REPORT  
By NAMAN ARORA  
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**A** Bahrain-based polymer artist is debunking the American dream of 'bigger is always better' with her miniaturised food and cultural art pieces.

Alifya Zakiuddin, 33, started miniaturising some of her favourite dishes a year ago and has now created bite-sized and delicious-looking models of dishes, including sunny-side up eggs, pizza, Indian street food favourites dosa and idli.

"I like making things which look realistic and play with perspective," Alifya told *GulfWeekly*, "I love the problem-solving challenge that comes with trying to figure out how to get miniatures to look realistic.

"Staying in Bahrain, I don't always have access to specialised tools and liquids that make it easy to craft fake food. So, I have to look for alternatives like kitchen knives, rolling pins and sewing pins to add texture to my food."

The Indian mother-of-two started playing with polymer



Alifya



Chaat

at the age of 23, when she was pregnant with her eldest daughter, Ruqaiyah.

She has expanded her polymer palette to model her palate over the years, honing her detail-focused process with every piece.

She added: "After I have conceptualised the design, it takes three to six hours to create one miniature depending on its intricacy.

"The clay that I use is made from scratch at home. I start by conditioning the clay, then start sculpting and texturing each piece of the design, adding colours using special pigmented pastels. After that I assemble all the different pieces together. And, finally, if I use liquids for a more

realistic look I have to bake it, otherwise I air-dry it."

Encouraged by her family and especially her husband Yousif Zakiuddin and father-in-law Zakiuddin Abbas, she plans to introduce new designs in the coming months including her favourite Bahraini foods, like falafel, kanafah and baklava.

"My family is always mesmerised by my creations and have been my backbone on this journey," she added.

"They were kind of stunned when I first miniaturised sunny side up eggs in a pan and pizza because it quite looked so real! My favourite pieces are Baraf Gola (Indian ice candy), masala dosa and idli."

While Bahrain has its share of clay artists, food miniaturists are few and far between. However, the art form is seeing a surge of

popularity in the Indian sub-continent, which is where Alifya finds her inspiration.

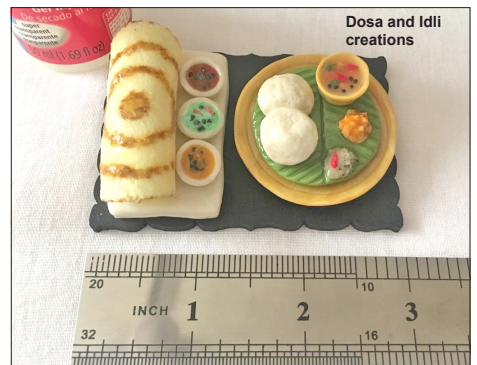
Her decade-long journey through the medium has also taken her through the personalised crafting of keychains, nameplates, jewellery and more. She has also seen success amongst her community with her hand-crafted 'namakdanis,' which is a bowl that holds salt, unique to the Dawoodi Bohra Muslim community.

Alifya explained: "A traditional Bohra meal starts and ends by tasting a pinch of salt. We believe that salt clears the gut, cleanses the palate and help fighting several diseases. So the cup element of the design is intended to be filled with salt.

"As for the aesthetic element, in our community, during big events like weddings, birthdays and baby showers, 'namakdanis'



Burritos, pizza, BBQ chicken and eggs



Dosa and Idli creations



Alifya at work

are customised according to the occasion."

Her deliciously detailed designs have fascinated both Bahrainis and expats and she hopes to expand her client base beyond her community.

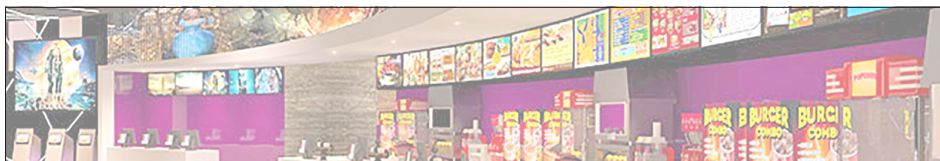
She also helped raise awareness about breast cancer with a Think Pink giveaway on her *Instagram* account, along with her friends @manmun\_creations

and @libobeeep\_bh.

"We have lost some near and dear ones to this disease due to a lack of awareness. By working together, we want to encourage everyone to learn more about it and express solidarity for those who in the midst of their journey."

To check out Alifya's art, follow @alf\_creation on *Instagram*.





# Culture



**Rohini**

timeless clocks

about me

freedom

spread away

letting go

wishing matters

without clocks

larks or lightnings

clocks of other eras

wishes

letting go

wishing matters

without clocks

larks or lightnings

clocks of other eras

wishes

**Confluence 2018**

# Tuning across time zones



# HEAD TO YOU



Xenai x Karik

As for what's next for the 26-year-old Xenai, the musician said: "I'm conceptualising a new album but it's a big project that will require a lot of time and



# Weekly



what the artist and I wish to convey about the nature of time."

The exhibition runs until tomorrow at 8pm. It can also be viewed online at <https://bahrainwriterscircle.net/events/confluence-2020/>

## ones

### R Toes



Scan the QR Code to watch the music video.

commitment so I'm going to continue to release singles along the way until it is ready.

"Right now I'm trying to build up my online music catalogue so that fans have a lot more to discover and listen to when they land on my page."

Follow @xenaimuzik on Instagram for more details.

# The power of pink



#### FILM REPORT

By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE  
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**P**ROUD producer Mahmood Al-Yousif's mission to raise awareness about breast cancer by recording Think Pink Bahrain's journey has won international film industry recognition.

The *Thinking Pink: Resetting The Ngo Model* took the prize for 'best documentary' in the science and education category of the North Europe International Film Festival, beating several submissions including one by globally-acclaimed Sir David Attenborough.

Mahmood, founder of Arabia Video, said: "I'm thrilled at this honour and more importantly the resonance it had with international audiences and judges."

"I was inspired by Think Pink Bahrain's Julie Sprakel and Tahera Al Alawi and how these two young women had a spark of an idea to help people."

"They managed to achieve a lot in such a short space of time. This is proof that taking action and having



Julie and Mahmood with the award

determination can achieve great things. Anyone with these qualities can push through many barriers to achieve their objective."

The hour-long documentary, which took around two years to complete, captured the trials, tribulations and successes of Think Pink Bahrain in a bid to motivate others.

"The main objective has always been to raise breast cancer awareness, which is the central message of Think Pink Bahrain," he added.



Film crew capturing research

"It has been a rewarding journey of inspiration.

"Interacting with brave women who have gone through breast cancer and, in most cases, beating it and emerging stronger, is humbling."

"We hope that this award is going to increase the chances of it being more widely shown and increase breast cancer awareness across the region."

Julie, the founder and president of Think Pink: Bahrain Breast Cancer Society, attended a festival in London to receive the award.

The Australian-born intensive care nurse started the society in 2004 to help educate people about breast cancer after her grandmother, aunt and mum suffered from cancer.

She was in her 20s when she received two cancer scares herself and when she discovered there wasn't a dedicated charity for the



Mahmood

cause, she set out to start her own.

Together, with Tahera, the vice chairperson, and a group of unpaid volunteers, they have been able to achieve several milestones which were highlighted in the documentary.

One of the milestones includes a Breast Cancer Clinical Guideline, sanctioned by the Supreme Council of Health, to provide a robustly-developed, high-quality, reliable,

internationally-recognised compliant resource which can be used by both clinicians and patients for shared decision-making in the management of the condition.

An iCheck (Think Pink Bahrain) Arabic and English mobile app is in use. Included in it are Decision Aids, also bilingual to help patients make better informed medical choices.

Think Pink Bahrain also raised funds to buy and install a BD499,900 1.5 T digital MRI at Salmaniya Medical Complex's Radiography Department.

Mahmood hopes the documentary will now get picked up by local and regional TV channels. He added: "This story - breast cancer - touches every person on earth and deserves more awareness. I hope that this exposure will entice people to get themselves checked. Early detection can save lives."



Julie with the award in London



Julie and Tahera



DELL | EMC<sup>2</sup>

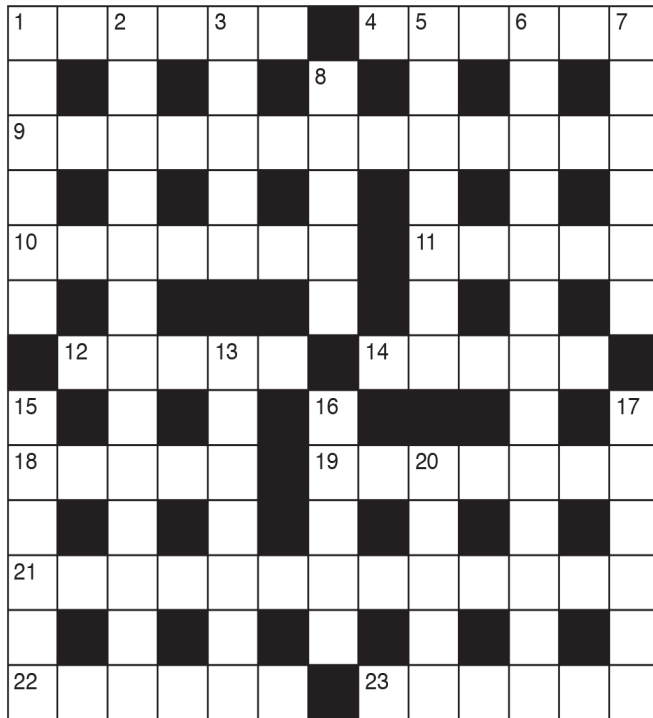
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# cerebrally crust & crema

## crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

## ACROSS

1. Cordial (6)
4. Accident (6)
9. Forecast (13)
10. Voter (7)
11. Change (5)
12. Banquet (5)
14. Memorise (5)
18. Compel (5)
19. Confidential (7)
21. Motionless (2,1,10)
22. Encourage (6)
23. Heaviness (6)

## DOWN

1. Occur (6)
2. Exemplary (5,8)
3. Dogma (5)
5. Mimic (7)
6. Grievous (5-8)
7. Verse (6)
8. Seize wrongfully (5)
13. Shield (7)
15. Obliterate (6)
16. Disburse (5)
17. Pill (6)
20. Publish (5)

### who, what, where, when

WHO ... is married to Ben Affleck?

WHAT ... is another name for calcium oxide?

WHERE ... would you find the Willis (formerly Sears) Tower, the world's 5th tallest freestanding structure?

WHEN ... was Sunday Trading legalised in the UK?

WHO ... fell off a horse on her 47th birthday in 2008?

WHAT ... is logophobia a fear of?

WHERE ... in 1987 did Michael Ryan shoot and kill 14 people?

WHEN ... did Martin Luther King deliver his 'I have a dream' speech?

### just so

**BREAD**  
**knuckle**  
**BREAD**

SH A OT

screwscrewscrewscrew  
screwscrewscrewscrew  
screwscrew screw  
screwscrewscrewscrew

or0 or0 or0 or0 or0 or0 or0  
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## darn tough sudoku

So you think you're good enough at Sudoku to crack this baby? Remember, we were the first in the Gulf to bring you this bit of Japanese mayhem...so we don't kid around

Last week's sudoku

3	4	2	8	1	5	7	6	9
6	7	1	2	3	9	4	8	5
9	8	5	6	7	4	1	2	3
2	9	7	5	6	8	3	4	1
4	6	3	1	9	2	8	5	7
1	5	8	7	4	3	6	9	2
8	2	6	3	5	7	9	1	4
5	3	9	4	8	1	2	7	6
7	1	4	9	2	6	5	3	8

8	1	9	7	4	6	5	3	2
4	5	6	9	3	2	7	8	1
3	2	7	1	5	8	9	6	4
1	4	3	6	7	5	2	9	8
9	7	8	2	1	3	6	4	5
5	6	2	4	8	9	3	1	7
6	9	5	8	2	4	1	7	3
7	3	4	5	6	1	8	2	9
2	8	1	3	9	7	4	5	6

darn tough sudoku

1	3	9	4	2	5	7	6	8
5	8	4	9	7	6	3	1	2
7	2	6	8	3	1	9	5	4
9	1	8	6	4	7	5	2	3
6	7	3	1	5	2	8	4	9
2	4	5	3	8	9	6	7	1
4	9	7	5	1	3	2	8	6
3	5	1	2	6	8	4	9	7
8	6	2	7	9	4	1	3	5

Sudoku

	3		8	4		2		5
		2	3				6	
9				6		8		1
	9				8	5		4
	8		1	2			7	
6		7				1	8	
2		9		8	1			6
				6	7			
7		3		5	4		1	

Sudoku

1					8	2		
5	3			4				8
7		9	3				4	
		5			9		6	
			2		6			
6	9		4			3		2
	2			9	4	8		6
							2	9
	6	7	1					4

### Last Week's Leisure Solutions

## CROSSWORD BREAK:

- Across: 1 Consecration;  
7 Cheat; 8 Eaten;  
9 Ore; 10 Persevere;  
11 Random; 12 Morose;  
15 Posthaste; 17 Ass;  
18 Erect; 19 Untie;  
21 Unacceptable.  
Down: 1 Cartographer;  
2 Ewe; 3 Retire;  
4 Therefore; 5 Outre;  
6 Indefensible; 7 Clean;  
10 Prophetic; 13 Ovate;  
14 Astute; 16 Stern;  
20 Tot.

## JUST SO:

Next to nothing;  
Top of the morning to you;  
Why are we waiting;  
A happy ending.

WHO, WHAT, WHERE,  
WHEN: Charles Dickens;  
Declan MacManus; Texas;  
1512; Eugene Sully; Heat;  
Georgia; 1969.

Darn Tough Sudoku

	4		2		7		8	
			5		6			
5								6
9		2				6		4
				6				
1		5			9	3		8
2								1
				3		4		
	9		7		2		4	



# **MotoringWeekly**

The top motoring and motorsport news

# The podium queen

**MOTORSPORT REPORT**  
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE  
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

**R**ACE ace Martyna Al-Qassab is back in the hot seat as she aims to steer her way to another podium success in the second round of Bahrain International Circuit's (BIC) 2020/2021 2,000cc Challenge being staged this weekend in Sakhir.

The Polish expatriate has been shattering motorsport stereotypes with Team Marte Racing for five years and has started this season in sizzling form.

"As soon as we learned about the new season, we dusted off our cars from storage and got new tyres," said Al-Qassab. Her husband Ramzi is also racing this season alongside her.

"Team Marte Racing's technical support, led by racing legend Abdul Rahman Ghuloom and his team at CoCo car care, did an awesome job for us in such a quick turnaround. The first round was excellent.

"We both ended the first weekend with our fastest lap times ever, which considering the weather and track conditions, was quite an achievement.

"I took second place in Race 1 and third in Race 2 in the Novice category. Let it be noted that with the temperature and humidity, I lost around two kilos while at the track so hydration and health plays factor in performance.

"This season we are digging deeper on using data from our cars ECU and sector



Al-Qassab and her mean machine

timing from BIC's track to help us optimise and accelerate our progress.

"My husband and I are both committed to compete in all 14 races over the seven rounds, which end in April, and are already gearing up for the second round on Friday.

"The 2000cc BIC Championship is the longest regional motorsport championship across the Middle East and it is testament to Bahrain that despite the current challenges, the season started with 17 registered drivers and cars."

When Al-Qassab joined the championship in 2015, she was the only female to race. She also became the first female to take the number one podium championship spot in the Novice category in 2018.

Al-Qassab, who competes in a blue Acrua DC5 RSX with a 2litre vTEC K20 engine, said: "I have

achieved great wins so far but most importantly I am continuously challenging myself to get better. The need to compete is part of my DNA so this sport is perfect and the facilities available in Bahrain are truly unique."

She is delighted that last year, Wiebke Buelow, another female driver, won the same title she did and is competing this season as well.

Al-Qassab, founder of Yalla Banat, a forum aimed at inspiring more females in motorsport, is pleased to see more becoming interested and is currently working on establishing Women in Motorsport Bahrain (WIM).

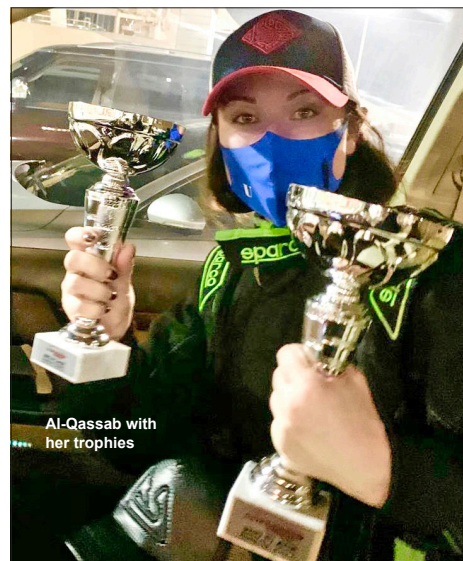
In the meantime, the mother-of-two applauds the organisers, the BIC, the Bahrain Motor Federation (BMF) and Circuit Racing Club (CRC), for their 'excellence in executing' the series.

"It is truly exhilarating to race again," added the Motorsports Marshal

Club Bahrain part-time race control marshal. "We were extremely excited and equally curious as to how it would be executed considering these unprecedented times.

"After reviewing the impeccable safety and social distancing precautions set out by BIC, BMF and CRC, we are over the moon that the races started again. This is, of course, with minimal admission to the BIC for only essential people, drivers' crew and event organisers.

"It is a strange experience to not have crowds but it is an decision we support."



Al-Qassab with her trophies

To limit face-to-face interactions, the CRC established a virtual driver briefing and BMF digital platform.

One race weekend she is particularly looking forward to will be in November. She said: "The CRC and BMF have announced that we may have our November race weekend during the same FIA 8 hour World Endurance Championship that is due

to take place in Bahrain on November 13 to 15.

"I was actually looking forward to supporting Bahrain as a marshal for this international race event but this time round I will have to be a driver instead, so it's not a bad choice to have to make!"

Al-Qassab urges people to watch the race action on Friday @teammarteracing on Instagram and YouTube.

## Lord of the ring

**L**ewis Hamilton nabbed another spot in F1 history last Sunday during the Eifel GP at the Nurburgring, Germany with his 91st victory, matching legendary racer Michael Schumacher's win record, writes Naman Arora.

The 35-year-old Mercedes driver triumphed over Red Bull's Max Verstappen and Renault's Daniel 'Honey Badger' Ricciardo, who came in second and third, respectively.

Hamilton said after the race: "It's tough to put what this means into words. I remember watching Michael winning all those races when I was a kid and playing racing games with my brother and choosing to play as Michael.

"I dreamed of being there myself, but I don't think anyone, and especially me, imagined another driver getting anywhere near Michael's records."

While teammate Valtteri Bottas denied Hamilton the pole position, the British driver overtook Bottas in Lap 13 of 60 after Bottas locked up at Turn 1. Mercedes also had its first 'Did Not Finish' of the season as



Hamilton

Bottas was forced to retire in Lap 19.

Meanwhile, Ricciardo was all smiles as he took the team's first podium since he returned to F1 in 2016 and his first podium since Monaco 2018. Per Ricciardo's bet with his team principal Cyril Abiteboul, Renault's boss is already dreading getting a Ricciardo-designed tattoo, even though he gets to decide the size and placement.

When asked about it, Ricciardo enigmatically said: "It's real. It's going to happen. We'll have to do some thinking now, but probably it will be something to do with me, but I think with a German flavour. A little tip of the hat to something traditional in Germany as well."



Al Haddad Motors, the official distributor for Mercedes-Benz in Bahrain, launched the new 2021 Mercedes-Benz GLA at its showroom in Salmabad. The GLA is the eighth model to join the line-up and rounds off the marque's current compact-car generation. At the launch are, from left, Al Haddad general manager Warren Hudson with sales manager David Lord and marketing manager Imran Ali.



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TOP OF THE LEAGUE FOR LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL SPORT

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# Run for Beirut

**SPORT REPORT**  
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**R**UNNERS and joggers from across the kingdom laced up in support of the victims of a tragic port blast in Lebanon.

Members of Bahrain Social and Road Runners attended Almoayed Village and the Bahrain National Stadium last week to participate in Beirut's 5km virtual marathon.

The Embrace Beirut charity race was organised by the Beirut Marathon Association as a global effort to help raise funds for the Lebanese Red Cross working on the ground to help blast victims.

Lebanese May El Khalil, founder and president of the Beirut Marathon Association, said: "The blast on August 4 was traumatic, leaving the Lebanese population distressed, many homeless and without resources.

"More than 200 people were killed, more than 6,500 injured and more than 300,000 left homeless.

"We had to be part of the reconstruction effort and we could not stay idle. This is when the idea of a global virtual non-competitive 5km charity race came to light. It was endorsed by sporting federations and supported by runners from around the world."

In fact, runners from 24

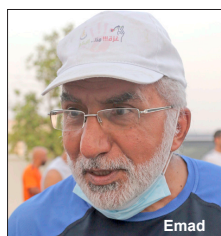


Members of BSR and BRR before setting off at the Bahrain National Stadium

countries registered with a symbolic amount of \$30 each and many donated more by running for the cause.

Emad Almoayed, chief of Bahrain Social Runners (BSR) and an active member of Bahrain Road Runners (BRR), who once completed the Beirut Marathon, said: "We wanted to show our friends in Beirut that we were with them and that we had not forgotten about them. We wanted to help in any way we could. That's what friends are for."

According to Khalifa AlNajem, an active member of BSR and a board member of BRR, 200 runners participated in both runs. The Lebanese ambassador to Bahrain, Dr Milad Nammour, attended the first



Emad



Mazen



Najwa

run and shared his gratitude and words of encouragement before the runners and joggers set off.

Mazen Ahmed Alumran, the district governor of district 2452, also joined the run to show his support as Lebanon is one of the nine countries that falls under his wing.

The past Rotary Club of Manama president is also

the one who initiated the disaster relief fund for Lebanon after the blast and said he and his team collected a 'big chunk' from all over the world to help aid the victims too.

Najwa Abdulrahim, a 57-year-old retired vice president of information and communication technology at Bahrain International Airport, also participated in

the event proudly wearing her Beirut Marathon shirt from Lebanon.

Najwa, from A'ali, said: "Thinking of the blast still hurts me. I ran the marathon two years ago and wore the shirt for the Bahrain run to remind me of my time there. Lebanon is very close to my heart and the least I can do is run 5km and donate towards the cause."

Mohammed Al-Asfoor, 47, a chemical engineer and business development artisan, from Shakhura, said: "The runs were well organised and I was very happy to participate. These events show our solidarity and support to our Lebanese brothers and sisters. Such events are always a source of spreading love, peace and tolerance."

May, who won the Laureus World Sports Academy Lifetime achievement award in Abu Dhabi and was decorated by Lebanese President Michel Suleiman

with the National Order of the Cedar, thanked Bahrain for its support.

She said: "I reached out to all our friends across the globe when we launched our campaign and I was agreeably surprised to see that Bahrain did not hesitate for one second to jump onboard and partake in our fundraising journey."

"It was definitely heartwarming to see. Many underestimate the power of sport to create real changes in society."

"It has become more critical than ever to remind people of what is good and what is important, for peacemaking is not a sprint, but more of a marathon."

"Change starts from within. We cannot expect any major changes to happen overnight. Strength, stamina and resolve are needed to finish long runs and the human spirit is capable of great things."



Some of the runners with the Lebanese ambassador before setting off



Scan the QR code to watch runners in action at Almoayed Village.