

Gulf Weekly

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Future force

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

TOMORROW'S young leaders will be offered a guiding hand with the help of leading local experts in the latest international edition of a pioneering project set up in Bahrain and to be held virtually for the first time.

They will also be tasked with coming up with suggestions to tackle environmental issues as the world focuses on Earth Day 2021 and its theme to 'Restore Our Earth'.

Three-days of intensive, interactive workshops will be staged by the Rotary Club of Adliya (RCA), in co-operation with the Rotaract club of Bahrain starting tomorrow.

The Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) 2021, now in its third year and themed 'Agile Leadership', is a programme targeted to help young people become real creative decision-makers in their societies, workplaces and daily lives.

From tomorrow until Saturday, 40 university students from Bahrain, UAE, Lebanon, Jordan, Sudan, Armenia, Georgia, Cyprus, Egypt and Palestine will learn from community leaders, inspirational speakers and peer mentors to unlock their potential and turn their motivation into action ... all while having fun and forming lasting friendships.

AGILE LEADERSHIP

25 - 26 - 27 FEBRUARY 2021



"We have chosen 'Agile Leadership' as the theme which is a fundamental skill required in dealing with the new normal of today's life and keeping in mind the challenges we as a society and professionals are facing," said Dr Ali Follad, president of the RYLA 2021 organising committee, one of the founders and ex-chairman of the Rotary Club of Adliya. "The topic is also intended to develop leaders to adapt to different challenges we all face with new business, societal and environmental realities of life."

"We hope to instil not only leadership qualities in the young generation but an all-important 'agility' aspect to help them adapt to any situation. We believe the programme needs to be rounded-up by utilising the knowledge into a practical project. The candidates will be given an opportunity to present

the practical application of the knowledge they gained during this time, on April 22, which is Earth Day.

"Overall, we hope to bring out young leaders in our country and the wider region to lead and solve problems in the future. We hope to prepare them for wide-ranging challenges and new realities that are setting due to the pandemic and other challenges faced by our society."



Taking place via Zoom, participants will have the chance to work on their communication and problem-solving skills as well as discovering strategies for becoming a dynamic leader in their university or community.

They will also get to connect with prominent leaders and high-profile representatives of international Rotary clubs and districts.

RYLA 2021 will include brainstorming sessions, as well as activities and expert sessions with topics including 'Ripple Effect of Self Development on Economy' and 'Role of Youth in Achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals'.

The list of key speakers includes Dr Mohamed Mubarak bin Daina, the chief executive of the Supreme Council for Environment, and Dr Fatima Al Balooshi, the former minister of social development, Dr Simon Galpin, the senior advisor of investment promotion at

Bahrain EDB, Abdulrahman Ayman, co-founder and chief growth and strategy officer of Educatly and former president at AIESEC Global, and Amal Kooheji, president nominee of RCA, managing director and founder of Human Capital Development Advisory.

The closing ceremony will host Holger Knaack, the 2020-2021 president of Rotary International, addressing the RYLA audience for the first time in Bahrain Rotary Clubs' history, followed by launching a project focusing on Earth Day.

In 1970, Senator Gaylord Nelson created Earth Day to force this issue onto the national agenda. Twenty million Americans demonstrated and it worked! The first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of laws, including the National Environmental Education Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and the Clean Air Act and it became a global movement.

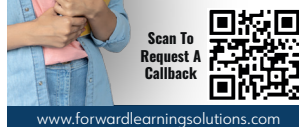
Dr Ali added: "This virtual event will encourage bigger numbers of young people to transform their creative ideas into promising projects and start-ups that will hopefully have positive impacts on the economy and community development."

For further details, @rotaryclubofadliya on Instagram.

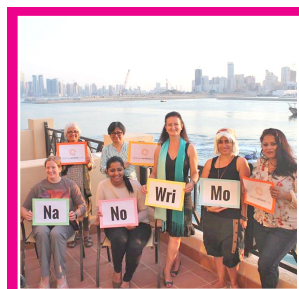
Eco-activists: Page 3

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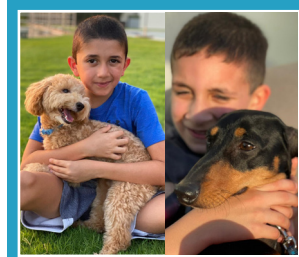
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MARKING 10 YEARS
Aspiring authors
SEE PAGE 2



DULCET 'DECADE'-NCE
New album release
SEE PAGE 4



BIG-HEARTED BROTHERS
Funding strays
SEE PAGE 5



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Literary feat

THE Bahrain Writers' Circle (BWC), which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this month, has not only created a haven for like-minded people wanting to sharpen their story skills but has also helped pave the way for aspiring authors, writes Mai Al-Khatib-Camille.

The group, which was founded in 2011 by best-selling author and former resident Robin Barratt, has flourished over the years with people from all walks of life signing up to join the creative community and its workshops.

"When I founded the BWC 10 years ago, it was a way of bringing together like-minded souls to share our journeys as writers and help and inspire each other," said Robin, a true crime writer who now lives in the UK. He launched an anthology titled *My Beautiful Bahrain* showcasing words from different BWC members and its sequel, *More of My Beautiful Bahrain*, continues to hold its own on the Amazon best-seller list.

Many members gained from the BWC as well, such as authors British aircraft engineer Glen Stansfield, Jordanian Muna Rabieh and Bahraini Noor AlNoaimi who found the

workshops worthwhile and have published books.

"I joined the Bahrain Writers' Circle in 2015 to hone my writing skills and gain confidence in sharing my writing," explained Muna, a 34-year-old author living in Amwaj Islands. "I think it's an amazing community filled with talented members and I learned so much from the Creative Writing workshops."



Robin

Since then, Muna's written two children's books and says that she wouldn't have published either had it not been for the BWC.

She added: "Rohini Sunderam, a freelance copywriter who kept the BWC going around 2013 and was the brainchild of the popular 'Confluence - Where Words and Images Meet' event, was and continues to be an amazing mentor to me."

"She really helped me come out of my shell. My advice to anyone looking to nurture the writer within them is to join this wonderful group!"

Noor, a 34-year-old librarian, also found the courage to publish a novella and a children's book after joining BWC in 2012. She said: "The driving forces behind the BWC, Rohini

to be specific, read a piece of mine and made it bleed. It was the best thing to happen to me. I was a young, wide eyed soul and thought I had this writing thing down until I unlearned that and started again. It is a space where you can invent and reinvent yourself as a writer and I think a default stop for anyone writing in Bahrain."

Recently, Noor answered an open call for Arab women writers made by Saqi Books, an independent publisher in London that publishes books from the MENA region, and made their finalist list.

Glen also found the group to be supportive and now runs the Creative Writing workshops online.

The 63-year-old from Janabiyah joined in 2014. He said: "I went to a meeting to hear a published author talk on using social media to sell books. At the time, I was on the verge of publishing my first novel."

"I was so impressed by the welcome and immediate acceptance that I signed up on the spot."

"I think it would be hard to find a more supportive group. A wide array of literary, cultural and employment backgrounds create an immense wealth of knowledge within the group, which is freely shared amongst the members and sometimes to the outside world



Muna



Glen



Rohini



Noor

in our events."

In May 2020, Rohini stepped down and handed over the BWC to co-directors Saira Ranj and Melissa Nazareth, director of PR and communications, Claudia Hardt, director of the sub-group the Second Circle Poetry Group, Parvinder Kaur and director of digital and Creative Writers' Workshop, Glen.

'The Business of Writing', 'The Second Circle' and 'The Creative Writing' workshops are held on Zoom.

The annual exhibition, 'Confluence - Where Words & Images Meet' held at Harbour Gate is currently being planned for October 2021.

For more information, membership enquiries and details of meetings visit www.bahrainwriterscircle.net.



Patients living in Bahrain were looking for contact details about Hospitals and Private Clinics on ABC Bahrain in 2020

Did your medical facility get to treat any of these prospective patients?



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For a better tomorrow



COMMUNITY REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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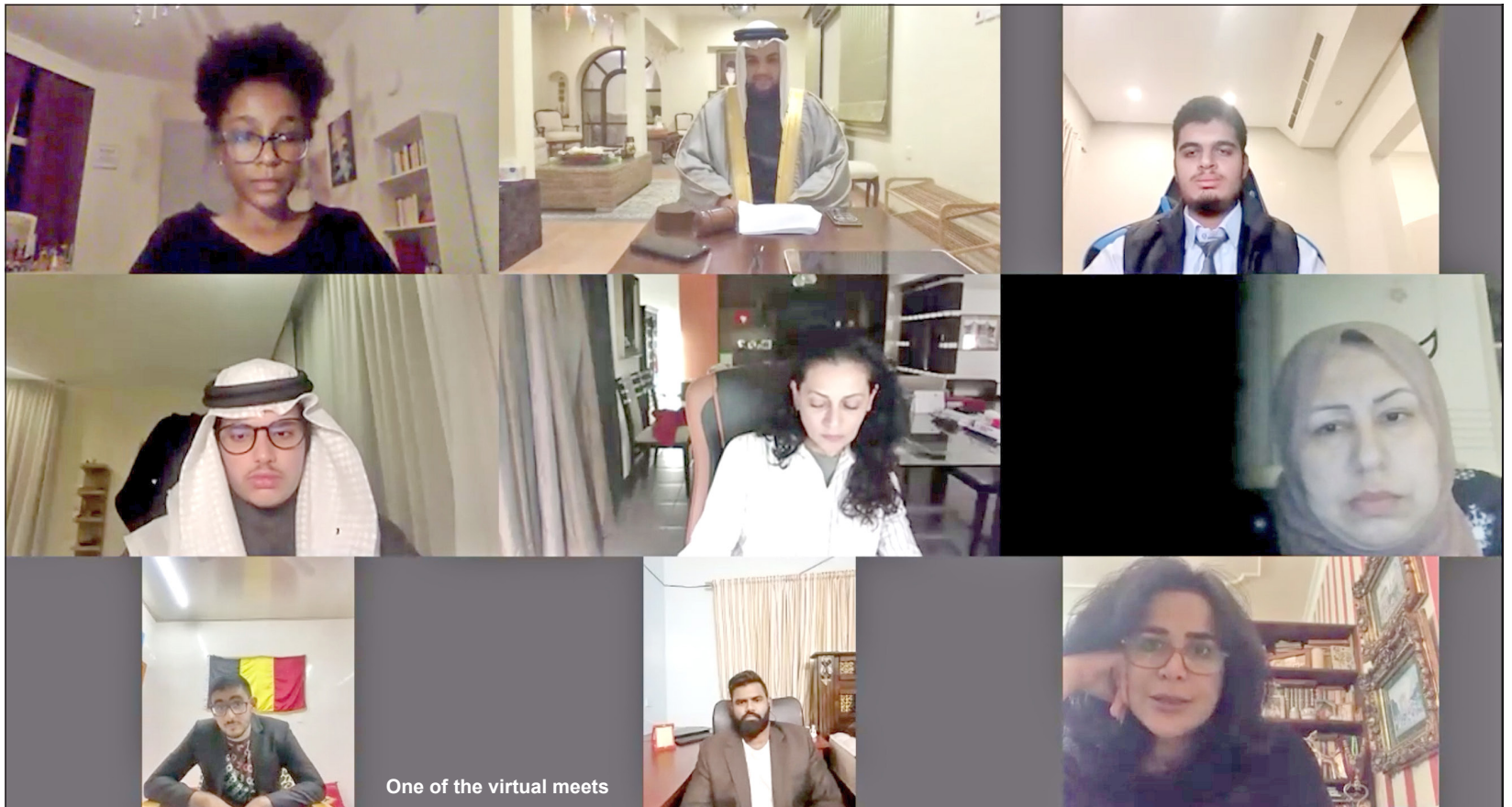
A group of eco-activists in the kingdom are virtually meeting every Saturday to discuss and debate environmentally-ethical issues occurring locally and globally in a bid to make change.

The Council of Environment Improvement (CEI), set up and founded by Shaikh Rashid bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, consists of 13 environmentalists of all ages and nationalities, including deputy speaker and secretary-general Leen Ahmed, working together for a better tomorrow.

"The Council of Environment Improvement consists of members who are teenagers and adults, from those who are still school students to those who have a PhD degree, with the members having different qualities of life," said 17-year-old British School of Bahrain student, founder and speaker, who also founded and was the president of The Fatima Bint Resq (FR) Project in honour of his late grandmother Shaikha Fatima bint Resq bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa. "We are currently planning projects with organisations and institutions to help improve the environment in some way."

The structure of the environmental campaigning body is being adapted similarly to that of the United Nations and Parliament. It includes some members of the FR Project and representatives of Teenagers for Autism - Bahrain, a non-profit initiative.

Projects and procedures



Shaikh Rashid

will be carried out to help overcome environmentally-ethical issues such as water and air pollution, the depletion of natural resources, loss of biodiversity, destruction of ecosystems and global climate change.

Since it was established last month, the group has held three meetings. The

first session was based on people presenting an environmentally-ethical issue that the entirety of the council could focus on in their point of view.

"We held a vote, where members had to pick one of two environmentally-ethical issues that we should focus on," explained Shaikh Rashid. "Everyone voted on pollution. In the second meeting, we held a session on pollution, where members were given a chance to present their opinions."

All sessions are posted as episodes on the group's Instagram page. They also recently dedicated a session to the people of Bahrain on the occasion of the Bahrain National Sports Day. He added: "Members presented

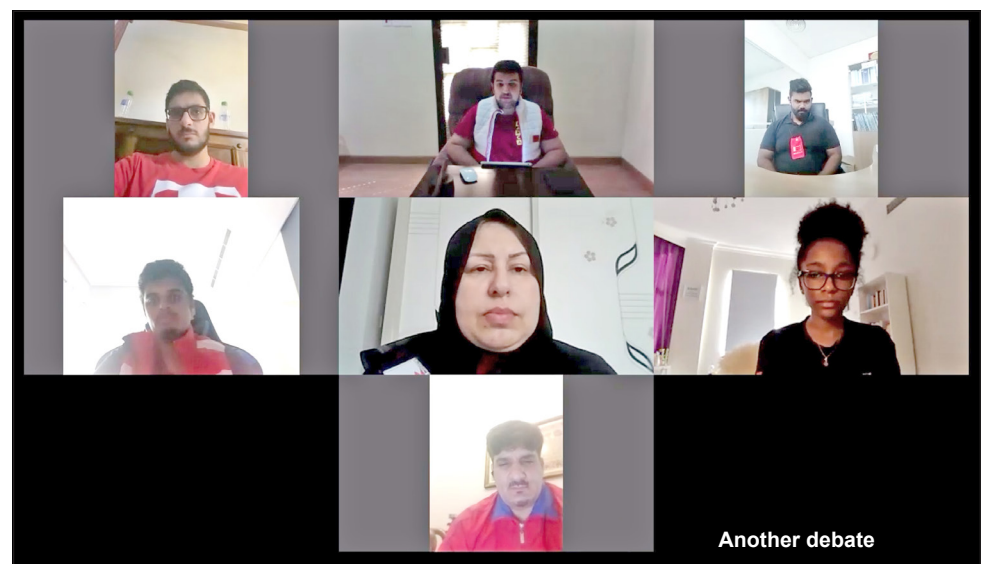
topics such as sports and the environment, the history of sports in Bahrain and how a sport positively affects our mental health.

"The main message that

I want to send out to the people of Bahrain is that no matter who the person is, their background, religion, race or age, they should always be treated fairly

like every other human and should be respected for their good intentions."

For updates, follow @cei.bh on Instagram or WhatsApp 32313116.



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Culture



Dazzling de

MUSICAL maverick Ali Malik has launched his debut album after a 21-year-spell performing in the kingdom's musical scene, breaking down the last eight years of his life into eight tracks.

The album, titled *Painted*



MUSIC REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
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Words, is a medley of numerous musical genres, and each of the songs has matured with Ali as he has grown on his journey as a musician.

"None of the songs were exclusively written for this

album but rather at different phases in my life over the last eight years where I penned down my thoughts and emotions," the 34-year old Bahraini musician told *GulfWeekly*.

"Ultimately, as I matured, the songs matured with me until I felt that they were finally ready to be released."

Ali had originally planned to release the album last year, on February 20 (20.02.20), but the impending Covid-19 pandemic delayed it by a year and a day (21.02.21).

Although he started his illustrious journey as a musician in 1999 as a bassist in the band Dive, with his brother Taqi as well as cousins Basil and Hamad, Ali wanted his first solo album to be the perfect distillation of his growth as a person and performer – thus the two-decades-long wait!

"Each song is very different," Ali explained.

"*Ghost of Me* is about self-exploration and defining oneself. Throughout the creation of this album, I was constantly seeking and finding myself. This song is very personal to me because in order to be who I am today, I've had to make some changes along the way.

"*Callous* is comprised of electronic beats, has an alternative structure to most songs and most importantly, is grounded in its lyrics.

"*Fallen* is rooted in spiritual guidance, turning to God despite our situation and finding restitution in him, regardless of our situation, whether it's good or bad.

"*Painted Words* is the heart of the album. Incidentally, it's also the only love song I've ever written. It's a pop sounding song which takes flight towards the end. The melody sticks with you long after hearing it."

Ali cites grunge rock as a significant musical inspiration, musing on bands like Alice in Chains, Soundgarden and Opeth, to create his own unique sound.

To help him record and produce these songs, as well as the four others – *Quietus*, *Odd One*, *Summer of Dilemmas* and *Fly Away*, Ali enlisted the help of Hamad Ebrahim, better known as 7MND on *Instagram*.



Other friends made during his long career also helped along the way. Salah Alawi Sharakhat from the Majaz band and Vian Ernest wrote and recorded the bass lines, singer-songwriter Alejandra Del Pino contributed vocals on *Painted Words*, Joel Dev was the album's designated keyboardist, and Ahmed Baqeri created the guitar solo for *Callous*.

And finally, the album was mastered by Hani Taqi at Studio 77 in Adliya, and for the album artwork, Ishaq Madan took photos of a colour-spattered Ali, with Shanine Mohebat adding the final digital touches.

While he has launched the album on most streaming platforms, Ali also plans to have a launch gig once 'life goes back to normal.'

In the meantime, he has many more ideas and unfinished songs to keep him busy. While he acknowledges that the pandemic has been unkind to entertainers, he has also been witness to the kingdom's musical scene provide a platform to many creators, who kept their spirit alive with online shows and social media content over the

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Ali performing



WORDS

last year.

"Back when I started, there were only a few local bands that you could count on a single hand," he added.

"Over the years, many underground artists and bands came

into the scene and have been active since then. Bahrain has a lot of potential when it comes to any sort of arts, but all we need is a stable platform to reach out to the international market.

"Many artists suffered last year, but nothing can stop you if you don't want to be stopped. Many did online shows, either solo or collaborative. Social media helped us stay connected and keep everyone sane and united.

"My advice to new musicians is to keep doing what you love and be persistent about how you would want to achieve your goals. No matter how long it takes, take your time, embrace every single second of your progress and most importantly, have faith in God and your capabilities."

Painted Words is now available on Apple Music, Spotify, Youtube Music and Deezer. For more details, follow @acemalik on Instagram.



Nasser and Ritchie



Nayef and Oakley



Pink and blue-hued tie-dye T-shirts

Puppy love

BAHRAINI brothers Nasser and Nayef Nass have donated an array of their tie-dye tops to a local shelter with the aim of raising awareness and funds for their strays.

The Ibn Khuldoon National School students from Hamala, who had jumped on the psychedelic-printed tie-dye trend last summer, believed giving back to the Bahrain Rescues was right up their alley, especially as they live in an animal-loving household.

They have three dogs, four ponies, three parrots, 10 rabbits and a sugar glider.

"We were thinking



COMMUNITY REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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about a charity that we could donate to and because of the love we have for animals we decided to help a local shelter," explained Nayef, seven. "We made shirts for the Bahrain Rescues because we wanted to create a fun way to raise money for the shelter."

Tie-dye, synonymous with the hippie heydays of the 60s representing peace and love, particularly grew in popularity during quarantine time as many picked up the do-it-yourself colourful craft while stuck at home.

The process typically consists of folding, twisting, pleating, or crumpling fabric or a garment and binding

with string or rubber bands, followed by application of dye.

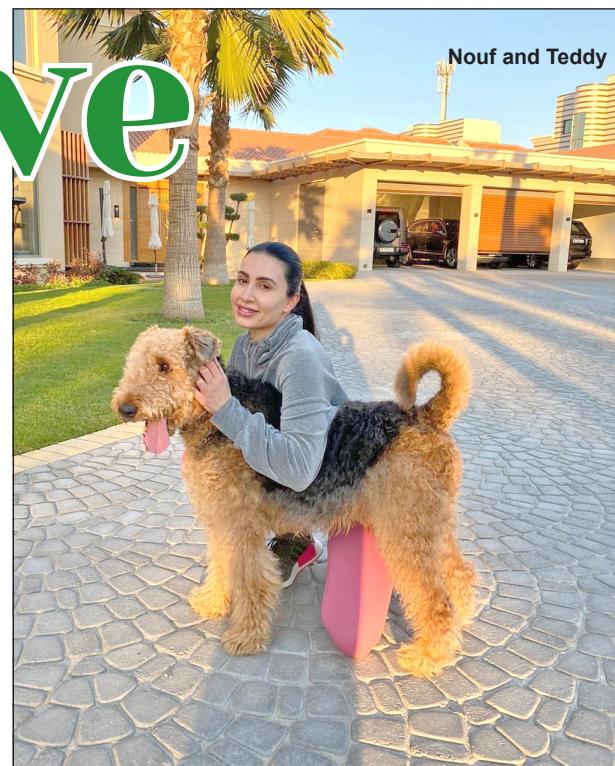
The do-it-yourself craft is characterised by the use of bright, saturated primary colours and bold patterns. These patterns include the spiral, mandala, and peace sign as well as the use of multiple bold colours.

With the help of their mum Nouf Abdulrahim, 35, a director at sanitary ware products, accessories and bathroom design companies, they managed to donate 30 T-shirts in several shades of tie-dyed pinks and blues with hints of green, featuring the Bahrain Rescues logo.

The Bahrain Rescues is a non-profit organisation that includes around 20 volunteers that use their own resources and donations to buy food and litter, to pick up, treat and rehome animals that have been injured or abandoned. They have around 50 dogs and around 20 cats living in a shelter, as well as a donkey.

In the past few years, the group has helped rehome more than 100 animals – everything from Rottweilers to hamsters. However, many of the animals living there need medical care and they use all the funding they can muster to cover the cost.

Their plight was particularly important to the Nass family as Nouf herself grew up with animals as a child and her boys also want to encourage kindness and



Nouf and Teddy

empathy towards strays.

Nouf added: "The children believe being kind to animals is very important because animals are helpless and need our love and care. Animals that are on the streets face a lot of challenges and we are very grateful to the local shelters such as Bahrain Rescues and government bodies for all their efforts in helping out animals in need. It is also part of the community's responsibility to also help out and add to their efforts.

"I grew up in a home with a lot of pets as a young child, and I could say that animals teach you a different type of love and understanding that you cannot get from human interactions alone. I wanted my children to experience the same and that is the reason why we love and appreciate animals so much.

"Nasser and Nayef hope to see more people involved with the cause, especially children, in order for them to understand a different meaning of love, empathy, affection and the gift of giving."

Of the 30 T-shirts, only two remain for sale at the shelter. For details, message @bahrain_rescues on Instagram.

Meanwhile, the big-hearted brothers are planning to create more merchandise to support the furry cause.

"We definitely plan to create more fun merchandising for Bahrain Rescues to help them raise money for their animals and perhaps encourage other children to do the same," added nine-year-old Nasser. "I hope this will encourage other kids to do a fun activity for a good cause too."



Blue and green-hued tie-dye T-shirts

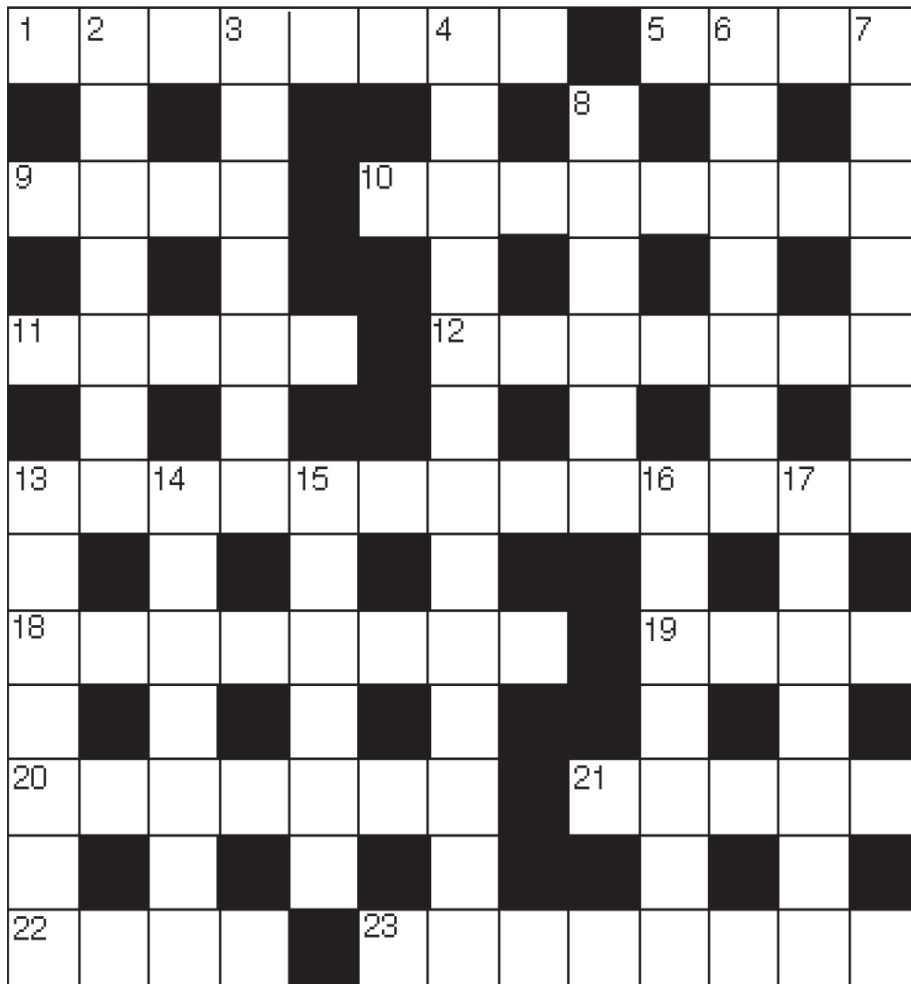
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cerebrally
crust & crema

crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

1. Posture (8)
5. Fete (4)
9. Overtake (4)
10. Values (8)
11. Defend (5)
12. Recount (7)
13. Repeated outbreak (13)
18. Deserted (8)
19. Weapons (4)
20. Red (7)
21. Essential (5)
22. Abate (4)
23. Reprove (8)

DOWN

2. Defame (7)
3. Underwriter (7)
4. Impartial (13)
6. Desist (7)
7. Ascetic (7)
8. Decimal (6)
13. Rejection (7)
14. Shorten (7)
15. Powerless (6)
16. Avoidance (7)
17. Circumference (7)

who, what, where, when

WHO ... wrote the book on courtesy *Talk to the Hand*?

WHAT ... rock group played at Les Battersby's wedding reception in Coronation Street in 2005?

WHERE...has René Préal been elected President for the second time?

WHEN ... was the journalist Carol Thatcher born?

WHO ... released the 2005 album *On the Outside*?

WHAT ... was the name of the robot dog in the television series *Doctor Who*?

WHERE ... in Asia is Lake Urmia?

WHEN ... did Guatemala declare independence of Spain?

just so

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loaf loaf loaf loaf loaf loaf
loaf

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

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

darn tough sudoku

7	6	8	1	3	4	2	5	9
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Sudoku

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Sudoku

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	9			2	4		5	6
	2		8	7				3

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 1 Widest; 4 Cosset; 9 Involuntarily; 10 Salient; 11 Ocean; 12 Appal; 14 Myths; 18 Theme; 19 Repulse; 21 Authoritative; 22 Asleep; 23 League.

Down: 1 Whimsy; 2 Developmental; 3 Salve; 5 Oratory; 6 Spine-chilling; 7 Trying; 8 Unite; 13 Awesome; 15 Strata; 16 Grain; 17 Recede; 20 Place.

JUST SO:

Back to back, Be fruitful and multiply, To coin a phrase, The rain in Spain

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

Ian McMillan; Johannesburg; Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts; 1926; Gelindo Bordin; Abs; Peru; 1977.

Darn Tough Sudoku

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MotoringWeekly

The top motoring and motorsport news

Taking the fast track

MOTORING REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
naman@gulfweekly.com

FORMULA 1
newcomer Yuki Tsunoda is revving up for the F1 pre-season testing, set to take place in Bahrain for the first time since 2014, from March 12 to 14.

The 20-year-old driver is set to take the AlphaTauri seat alongside Pierre Gasly and took some time during the team's car launch last weekend at their head office in Italy to talk about his aspirations for his first pre-season test and his debut F1 season.

"I want to be the first Japanese driver to win a race in Formula 1," the young ace said.

"This year, we will only get

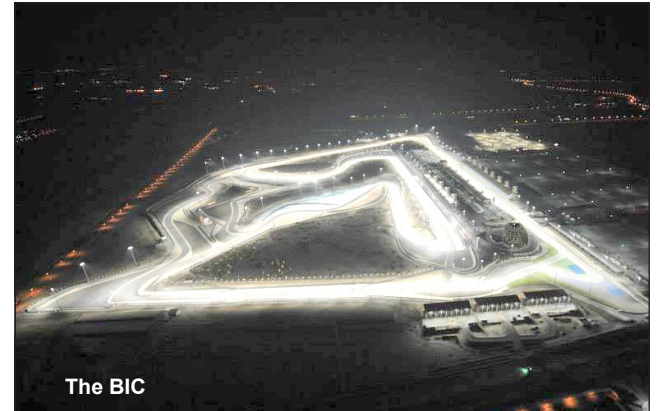


Tsunoda during his first test

one-and-a-half days each for testing in Bahrain. We have a lot of items to test and we are going to be changing some setting or the other in every session. So I am going to be

focusing on their feedback and how we can optimise the setups. Bahrain's going to be really busy for the team and I am looking forward to learning from Pierre. Since I

was watching his pace during last season's Bahrain race, I know his exact benchmarks and data I will be trying to beat, and I am really looking forward to the Bahrain test!"



The BIC

Tsunoda will be one of three rookies to F1, the others being Mick Schumacher, son of the famous F1 world champion Michael Schumacher, and Nikita Mazepin, both of whom will be driving for Haas.

The three drivers, who topped the F2 charts last

season, will be expected to turn the fortunes of their respective teams - Tsunoda and Schumacher in terms of podiums and wins, Mazepin and Schumacher in terms of financial sponsorship.

The pre-season testing will be followed by the season-opener two weeks later, from March 26 to 28.

Asian Para Games coming to Bahrain

Delegates from the Asian Paralympic Committee (APC), which is based in the UAE, visited the kingdom over the weekend to sign the Host City contract and discuss the next phase of preparations for the 2021 Asian Youth Para Games, writes Mai Al Khatib-Camille.

The 2021 Asian Para Games, set for December 1-10, is a multi-sport event held for athletes with disability and it is being staged for the first time in Bahrain. And while preparations have continued behind the scenes, the site visit and signing ceremony had been delayed due to the pandemic.

"I'm delighted that we have finally been able to visit Bahrain and conduct this ceremony," said APC President Majid Rashed. He and chief executive officer Tarek Souei met with Bahrain Paralympic Committee (BPC) chairman Shaikh Mohammed bin Duaij Al Khalifa and secretary general Ali Mohamed Al Majed to formally sign the Host City contract.

"Both organisations have continued to work on the delivery of the Games throughout the pandemic but to be here and to meet



From left, BPC chairman Shaikh Mohammed bin Duaij Al Khalifa at the signing ceremony with APC president Majid Rashed

in person gives us all a huge boost," he added. "The Games are an important stepping stone for young Asian para-athletes on their sporting journey. This journey has had so much disruption over the past year but these Games give us all hope and something to aim for so that they are back on track for Paris 2024 and beyond.

"I'd like to thank His Excellency Shaikh Mohammed bin Duaij Al Khalifa, the Bahrain National Paralympic Committee (NPC) and the

Bahrain government for all their efforts in delivering these Games for Asia's youth."

An estimated 800 athletes under 20 are expected to compete in nine sports consisting of athletics, badminton, boccia, goalball, para taekwondo, powerlifting, swimming, table tennis and wheelchair basketball.

Shaikh Duaij said: "The Asian Youth Para Games event is very important for the athletes and the NPC as we are all eyeing the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

"We have one of the largest youth communities in Asia and it's important to give them an opportunity to compete in a fair 'Games'."

In a meeting following the ceremony, both organisations discussed some key areas such as sport entries, accreditation, accommodation and Covid-19 protocols. They also talked about potentially amending the competition dates to ensure that there is no clash with the International Paralympic Committee's General Assembly which is scheduled



APC president Majid Rashed interacts with Bahrain Para Athlete Zainah Abdulqadeer

for December 11-12. A decision on this is expected in the next two weeks.

In terms of preparation, the BPC has created various committees for the conduct of the Games. The sports facilities have also been approved by the Asian Paralympic Committee.

The sporting event will take place across numerous venues in Khalifa Sports City, a multi-use stadium in Isa Town, and Isa Sports City, the national indoor facility.

Aside from signing the contract, February has been a good month for the Bahraini Para Athletics Team. The team achieved seven medals in the Fazza International Athletics Championships for People with Determination which

was held in Dubai from February 6 to 14.

Para athlete Roba Alomari won two silver medals, Amal Alfardan clinched one silver and one bronze medal, Fatima Abdulrazzaq brought home two bronze medals and Mohamed Jawad secured one bronze medal.

This Championship is considered a stage for the qualifying rounds for the Paralympic Games that will be held in Tokyo later this year and Ms Alomari has secured a seat in the discus throw.

For details on the 2021 Asian Youth Para Games, visit www.asianparalympic.org and visit www.npc.bh for information on the Bahrain Paralympic Committee or follow @bahrainnpc on Instagram.



Stars ready for Olympics



Frodeno in action

SPORT REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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THE Bahrain Endurance 13 team are gunning for gold at the Tokyo Summer Olympic Games with an all-star roster of athletes described by the squad's director of sport as the strongest they've ever fielded.

Michael Gilliam, the team's director of sport for the past seven years, has high hopes for the team, stating that they have been the most successful endurance team in history with more than 18 world titles won in the Bahrain colours and a high-performance culture that has become legendary in sports.

He said: "What started as a vision and a discussion of a future for the sport of triathlon with His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, has become the most valuable racing entity within the sport." The one-of-a-kind team rides under the vision of Shaikh Nasser, His Majesty King Hamad's representative for humanitarian work and youth affairs.

"For this year's 2021-2022 team, we have brought on some of the best young talent in the world, with a big focus on Tokyo Olympic Games success and then to be extremely successful in Paris Olympics," Gilliam added.

"This year's team is strong and experienced but we will bring a new generation of stars along to future proof the teams racing into the next Olympic cycle."

The Games will be held from July 23 to August 8 and the team will be focusing on the two medal events for triathlon – the individual event as well as mixed relay, which will make its Olympic



From left, McCormack, Shaikh Nasser and Gilliam



Ryf celebrating

debut.

Joining Bahrain Endurance 13's Olympic bronze medallist Vicky Holland, silver medallist Javier Gomez and two-time gold medallist and reigning Olympic champion Alistair Brownlee, will be 2016 Olympic bronze medallist Henri Schoeman.

Gilliam added: "We are focused on the team gold medal which I think we will win as part of our team and our strong French athletes."

"There is also a big focus on individual gold medals

with our defending Olympic champion Brownlee back to try and win three Olympic gold medals. Add to our Olympic mix, Schoeman who is an Olympic Bronze medallist from Rio and Tyler Mislawchuk, the winner of the Olympic test event, the team will be all over the front of the Olympic men's race.

"On the women's side both Cassandre Beaugrand and Holland start as favourites to win medals at the Games. The team overall is poised to do exceptionally well.

The global disruption in the sports space has created some obstacles for many athletes, but it has never been more obvious about the power of team, until you face a crisis like we have. I believe the strength of the Bahrain team unit will be even more apparent when we return to racing this season. We will be unstoppable!"

Paratriathlon world champion Lauren Parker has her sights set on gold for triathlon, but also for paracycling as she campaigns for selection in the time trial and road race events. Beyond that, she aims to defend her world title as well as race both the Ironman and Ironman 70.3 world championships.

Dual world champion Vincent Luis wants to add two Olympic gold medals to his resume as part of France's individual and mixed relay team. Compatriot Beaugrand is also part of the mixed relay world champion line-up that won the Tokyo test event to make them heavy favourites.

Kristian Blummenfelt will also feel that much more prepared for an assault on gold and fellow Rio

Olympian Mislawchuk rounds off the new additions to the team as he ramps up to convert his Tokyo test event win into a gold medal.

Most of the team have been preparing out of established training hubs in Europe, Australia and Hawaii. Each athlete has their own training and racing schedule, but Bahrain Endurance provides the support and incentive around this.

He added: "The global pandemic has added an additional stress in preparation and remaining healthy, but the athletes have not wavered from their undeterred ambition to compete against the best and represent Bahrain Endurance 13."

"This is the most prestigious role you can have in being a member of this team, and the ability to plug into the team training assets around the world and train with your team mates has provided a great shield from the difficulties many athletes have faced alone during this pandemic. Bahrain Endurance's global training hubs provide the basis for our team's successful preparations and training and this will be even more evident as our team opens up its racing this year."

Ironman world champions Jan Frodeno and Daniela Ryf once again will lead the team charge in the hunt for major long-course titles, as Frodeno aims for his fourth Kona win and Ryf another world championship double at Ironman 70.3 and Ironman.

Holly Lawrence seeks to

add another Ironman 70.3 world crown to her collection alongside winning the regional championships and perhaps her Ironman distance debut.

After the Tokyo Olympics, both Brownlee and Gomez will need to make a quick transition to long-distance fitness to execute their Kona ambitions. Ironman champion David Plese, who completes the Bahrain Endurance 13 team roster, will join them on the starting line.

Chris McCormack, Bahrain Endurance 13 team CEO, added: "Our team continues to be the gold standard for success and is part of Bahrain's growing involvement in global sport."

"We have seen a huge uptake of sport in Bahrain since 2015 when we first started this team – not just growing interest in swimming, cycling, and running, but also in team sports and other athletic endeavours. We are thankful for Shaikh Nasser's continued support and his commitment towards driving health and wellness not only in the Gulf region, but worldwide."

Gilliam and McCormack also hope to someday have a Bahrain athlete on the team.

"We look forward to the time when a Bahrain youngster will be a part of the high-performance team and win a World Championship as a by-product of being inspired by all we have done," Gilliam said. "We are literally only a few years away from this reality and that is exciting!"