



## **Barwa Bank Employee Breaks Guinness World Record**

*Fastest time to complete a marathon on each continent and the North Pole*

**Doha, May 21, 2013** - Barwa Bank, Qatar's fastest growing Shari'ah compliant banking service provider, congratulates Ziyad Rahim, its Head of Market Risk, who recently broke the Guinness World Record for the Marathon Grand Slam in just 41 days, smashing the previous record of 324 days which stood for over six years.

Rahim, 39, started the challenge on 26th February, 2013 in Punta Arenas, Chile and then a day later travelled to the southernmost continent of the world, Antarctica, to complete the 26.2 mile race in sub-zero temperatures. He then continued to travel the globe, running the Cyprus Marathon in Europe; the LA Marathon in North America; The Dual Trail Marathon in New Zealand; the 56K Two Oceans Ultra marathon in South Africa; the Dead Sea Marathon in Jordan and finally the last marathon at the North Pole on April 9th 2013. During the 41 day challenge, Ziyad travelled a total distance of 140,700km, more than 300 hours of flying time and transit. Due to work and family commitments, most of his travels were over the weekends.

Rahim, a banker based in Qatar, is the first Qatari resident to complete marathons on all seven continents, for the first time in 2012 and then again during this Grand Slam challenge. He is also the first person in the world to complete two extreme marathons; in Antarctica (-20c) and the Sahara Desert (+50c), within one month. To-date, Ziyad has participated in over 100 long-distance races in 32 countries. As part of his marathon running, Ziyad has previously raised money and awareness for Noma disease in Africa in 2012 and for the flood victims of Pakistan in 2010.

Commenting on his accomplishment, Ziyad said, "It was probably the most difficult challenge I have ever undertaken. Apart from the different demands associated with completing marathons in very varied temperatures, it was the constant travel and jet lag that made it so difficult. I travelled to Los Angeles, Auckland and Cape Town on weekends, which meant that after a 20 plus hour flight, I would run a marathon and then immediately fly back to get to office to resume work. I was lucky that I never sustained an injury during this time - apart from the last race in North Pole where I suffered frost bite on my nose and ears as temperatures dropped below -40c during the race."

When asked which race he found the most intriguing and challenging, he responded: "All races were different and posed different sets of challenges. The course in Antarctica was hilly with mud and ice, underfoot. In Cyprus, it was a historical route with the race starting at the birthplace of Aphrodite and running along the Mediterranean; Los Angeles was magical as we ran down Sunset Boulevard and Beverly Hills. In New Zealand, we ran on the volcanic island over lava rocks while the Two Oceans Marathon in South Africa is considered the most beautiful "ultra" in the world. In Jordan, we completed the race at the lowest point on Earth, the Dead Sea and then finally there is nothing more satisfying than completing the race at the geographic North Pole. It was by far the hardest race. At times, we were in knee deep



snow; my shoes froze during the race and I constantly had to change my facemask as it was restricting my breathing.”

Rahim is an Ambassador for CARE, a charity educating underprivileged children in Pakistan. He says he runs to promote health and fitness and to raise awareness for people less fortunate. Rahim says “As a father, I understand the importance of educating the young and giving them the opportunity to make a change in their lives. CARE educate children for as little as £1 per child, per month through their Government school adoption programme and we have a mission to get 1 million children off the streets and into classrooms”.

Steve Troop, CEO, Barwa Bank Group said, “We are all inspired by what Ziyad has achieved for a very worthy cause. Ziyad is a truly outstanding athlete and his personal dedication to being the very best reflects the values that we aspire to at a corporate level. Barwa Bank encourages all our employees to take part in exercise, and we have recently launched a staff fitness program to help further promote a healthy life-style.”