



Barwa Bank Employee Completes Marathon Des Sables to Raise Awareness for Noma

Doha, May 6, 2012 - Barwa Bank, Qatar's fastest growing Shari'ah compliant banking service provider, welcomed back Ziyad Rahim, its Head of Market Risk, who returned from the Sahara Desert in Morocco after participating in the 250km Marathon Des Sables (MdS). Ziyad was the only representative from Qatar to partake in the seven day event. In March, Ziyad also completed the Antarctica Marathon and became the first person to run these two extreme marathons in the space of one month.

MdS is a grueling ultra-marathon and is considered to be the toughest footrace on Earth. Participants cover 250km of the Moroccan Sahara desert over six stages, in temperatures averaging 50 degrees centigrade throughout the day. To compound the physical challenge, the wilderness venue means that competitors have to carry everything they need to survive the event, including all personal belongings and food.

Commenting on the challenge Ziyad said, "This was by far the most intricate race I have ever participated in. We had to run over varied terrain; consisting mainly of rocky mountains, vast sand dunes and salt flats. Over the seven days, we survived sandstorms, over 50c heat, bone-chilling nights and saw fellow competitors drop out through injury, exhaustion and one from cardiac arrest. The race tested me to the limit, both physically and mentally. Sandstorms posed the biggest challenge for the runners. There were days when the visibility was less than two feet which not only hindered the course tracking but also affected our breathing. At times, the winds were so strong that it was impossible to light a fire for meal preparation. Moreover, blisters and sleep deprivation further compounded the challenges".

Ziyad further went on to say, "Completing the MdS is extremely satisfying personally, and doing it in the name of such a worthwhile cause is all the more rewarding. This race has truly changed me as a person and helped me appreciate how comfortable our lives are compared to the poverty I've seen in Africa and their daily challenges that we simply take for granted. The victims of Noma are mainly children under the age of six, caught in a vicious circle of extreme poverty and chronic malnutrition. Doing what I can to draw attention to their great suffering is what pushes me forward and motivates me in the toughest moments".

Finally, Ziyad thanked his employer for sponsoring and supporting him in this challenge and also expressed his desire to work with the Qatari youth by engaging them into sports and a more healthy lifestyle.

Steve Troop, CEO, Barwa Bank Group said, "On behalf of everyone at Barwa Bank I want to wholeheartedly congratulate Ziyad for his outstanding achievements. Completing not just one, but two extreme marathons is a testament to his drive and tenacity, and the fact that it was such a worthwhile cause that motivated him is even more commendable. We were glad to have the opportunity to support him in this challenge and help raise awareness of the suffering of those afflicted with Noma. Barwa Bank will continue to do all that we can to facilitate those who want to make a difference and play an active role in supporting humanitarian causes."

Ends