

Bahrain set for 33rd AFC Congress



Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa

● **Bahrain's Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa to run unopposed for third term as AFC president**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa is today set to run unopposed for the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) presidency as the Kingdom hosts the 33rd AFC Congress.

The prestigious meeting will take place at the Gulf Convention Centre.

The congress' agenda includes recommending Shaikh Salman for a third term as the AFC head.

Also to be confirmed are the members of the AFC Executive Committee for the term 2023 to



Flags in Bahrain set up to mark the 33rd AFC Congress



The AFC Congress will deliberate on the host of the AFC Asian Cup 2027, where the focus will be on the Saudi Arabian Football Federation who remain the sole bidder for the hosting rights of the 19th edition of Asia's crown jewel

2027, as well as the AFC's representatives to the FIFA Council.

Furthermore, the AFC Congress will also deliberate on the host of the AFC Asian Cup 2027, where the focus will be on the Saudi Arabian Football Federation who remain the sole bidder for the hosting rights of the 19th edition of Asia's crown jewel.

Representatives from the AFC's member and regional associations will be in Bahrain.

It is the first time they will be gathering physically since the AFC Extraordinary Congress in Paris in June 2019, along with FIFA president Gianni Infantino, who is expected to address the Congress alongside the AFC President.

Bahrain Victorious' Milan claims photo-finish win in Saudi Tour

● **Team Bahrain Victorious riders also set to begin 74th Volta a la Comunitat Valenciana today in Spain**

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Team Bahrain Victorious rider Jonathan Milan powered to a spectacular victory yesterday in the 184-kilometre second stage of the Saudi Tour, part of this year's Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) Asia circuit.

It took a photo-finish to determine the winner as the young Italian sprinter beat stage one winner Dylan Groenewegen to the line.

It was another windy stage in the open desert roads of ALULA, and the peloton remained intact for most of the day, navigating through the headwinds. But 30km from the finish line, the road turned left, and crosswinds split the peloton into three groups. Milan stayed in group one, with the rest of Bahrain Victorious' riders caught in the second group.

In the last km, Milan and Groenewegen duelled, and with a few hundred metres to go, Milan launched his sprint early catching Groenewegen off guard, and managed to hold his effort to the line.



Jonathan Milan, far left, competes in the final sprint to the finish



Jonathan Milan gives a thumbs-up after the race

Bahrain Victorious are competing with seven riders in the Saudi Tour, which is set to feature five stages. Bahraini Ahmed Madan is a part of the squad, as are Santiago Buitrago, Filip Maciejuk, Rainer Kepingler, Andrea Pasqualon and Dusan Rajovic, who claimed second place in the first stage.

Stage three is set today over 159.5km. It will begin at Al Manshiyah Train Station and end at Abu Rakah. The event is scheduled to continue until Friday.

Meanwhile, Bahrain Victorious are set to begin today their campaign in the 74th Volta a la Comunitat Valenciana, which gets the European stage racing season underway on the east coast of Spain. The team includes Pello Bilbao, Damiano Caruso, Mikel Landa, Gino Mader, Matej Mohoric, Wout Poels and Fred Wright.

Bayern Munich sign Cancelo on loan from Man City



Joao Cancelo
AFP | Munich

Bayern Munich have signed Portugal wing-back Joao Cancelo on loan until the end of the season from Manchester City, the German club confirmed yesterday.

Bayern have an option to buy the Portuguese defender for a reported 70 million euros (\$75 million) at the end of the season.

Cancelo, who has scored seven times in 41 appearances for Portugal, arrived in Munich on Monday and completed a medical yesterday for a move that could spell the end of France international Benjamin Pavard's time at Bayern.

The 28-year-old Portuguese defender joined City from Juventus for 65 million euros (\$70 million) in 2019 and has a contract with the English champions until 2027.

Dar Kulaib claim stunning victory over Al Ahli

Dominant performance gives winners three-set sweep of fellow-title contenders in battle of titans in 2022/2023 Isa bin Rashid Bahrain Volleyball League

● **Mohammed Yaqoob scores 16 points to lead victors, Argentinian Juan Barrera adds 15**

● **Dar Kulaib go on decisive 9-0 rally in first set to take control of game and never look back**

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Dar Kulaib powered to a stunning 3-0 (25-12, 25-21, 25-13) sweep against fellow-title hopefuls Al Ahli last night in their round-of-six match of the 2022/2023 Isa bin Rashid Bahrain Volleyball League.

The game took place at a jam-packed Isa bin Rashid Arena at Isa Sports City in Riffa. It was part of the second phase of the league's round-of-six playoffs, which is being played in double round-robin format. The top four at the end of these fixtures move on to the league's semi-finals.

With the result, Dar Kulaib claimed their fifth win in seven outings while



Dar Kulaib's Juan Barrera attacks the triple block of Al Ahli during their match last night

handing Ahli only their second loss. Both sides now have identical 5-2 win-loss records in this stage.

They are ranked on the six-team table behind solo leaders Al Najma, who have a 6-1 mark, and are ahead of Muharraq with 3-4 record, Al Nasser with a 2-5 mark, and Nabih Saleh with a winless 0-7 standing.



With the result, Dar Kulaib claim their fifth win while handing Ahli their second loss, as both sides are now on identical 5-2 win-loss records on the league's round-of-six standings

In last nights' contest, both teams matched each other at the start and they were tied 4-4. But after Ahli took a narrow 5-4 edge, Dar Kulaib rallied to score nine unanswered points, and the game-changing run put them up 13-5.

They continued to dominate, moving ahead 21-10, and later star player Mohammed Yaqoob closed out the opening set with a powerful spike that beat an Ahli double block.

In the second set, Ahli were determined to stay in the fight but still trailed 7-9. Things remained close and Ahli con-

tinued to stay within striking distance at 18-19, but Dar Kulaib scored the next three points to make it 22-18, and Ahli could not recover.

A Mahmoud Abdulwahed spike gave Dar Kulaib the set point to go up 2-0 in the match.

The victors then didn't let up in the third set, going for the kill having smelled blood in the water. Dar Kulaib quickly raced ahead 12-4, and by the time they took a 20-8 lead, they had deflated their opponents' hopes and virtually sealed the win.

Yaqoob applied the final nail in the coffin, scoring the match's final point for the impressive three-set result.

Yaqoob finished as Dar Kulaib's leading scorer with 16 points, while Argentinian professional Juan Barrera added 15 and Abdulwahed had eight points. Also playing key roles for Dar Kulaib were Ali Habib, Ayman Isa, Hasan Alaiwi and libero Hussain Sultan.

For Ahli, who looked overmatched for the first time this season, Ali Alsairafi scored eight points to pace his team in the loss. Ahli also stayed in the game through Mohammed Anan, Naser Anan, Abbas Al Khabbaz, Sayed Mohammed Alabbar, Mahmood Abdulhussain and Canadian import Jerome Cross.