

Bahrain names squad for Asian volleyball tournaments

Twenty players called up for latest training under head coach Sydney Luciano ahead of Asian Volleyball Confederation tournaments

● **Top talents called up from Dar Kulaib, Al Nasser, Al Ahli, Al Najma, Muharraq and Nabih Saleh**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain have named a 20-player squad for the senior men's national volleyball team that will begin their preparations for major continental championships coming up this summer.

The Bahrain Volleyball Association (BVA) announced yesterday the list of names for the team.

The Kingdom's talents who have been called up include six from Isa bin Rashid Bahrain Volleyball League and Crown Prince's Cup champions Dar Kulaib, five from Al Nasser, four from Al Ahli, two apiece from Al Najma and Muharraq, and one from Nabih Saleh.

The nationals will be prepar-



Bahrain national team star Nasser Anan in action during last year's AVC Cup for Men (File photo)

ing for their upcoming participation in the fourth AVC Men Challenger from July 8 to 15 in

Taipei, Chinese-Taipei and the 22nd Asian Senior Men's Volleyball Championship from August



Bahrainis to compete in fourth AVC Men Challenger from July 8 to 15 in Taipei and 22nd Asian Senior Men's Volleyball Championship from August 18 to 26 in Tehran

18 to 26 in Tehran.

Both are top Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) events featuring the leading national teams from across Asia.

The Bahrainis are to be guided by head coach Sydney Luciano over the coming period. It is Luciano's first stint with the Kingdom's senior national team, although has had experience in Bahrain in the past at the club

level.

Luciano has replaced his countryman Issanaye Ramires, who last year helped Bahrain capture an historic bronze medal in the 2022 AVC Cup for Men, which was held in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand.

The nationals are set to include Mohammed Yaqoob, Ali Habib, Mahmoud Abdulwahed, Hassan Alaiwi, Hussain Sultan and Abbas Sultan from Dar Kulaib; Hussain Mohammed, Ebrahim Mohammed, Hussain Mahdi Al Jishi, Mohammed Omar and Mohammed Jassim from Al Nasser; Nasser Anan, Mahmood Abdhussain, Mohammed Anan and Abbas Al Khabbaz from Al Ahli; Ali Ebrahim and Ayman Haroona from Al Najma; Mahmood Al Afia and Hussain Ali Ehsan from Muharraq; and Sayed Hashim from Nabih Saleh.

In the 2023 AVC Men Challenger in Taipei, the Bahrainis are among a record 17 teams that will vie for the lone berth up for grabs in the FIVB Men's Challenger Cup—a pathway to the FIVB Men's Volleyball Nations

League.

The nationals will be playing in Pool F for the tournament's preliminary round alongside Sri Lanka and Indonesia. Pool A features two teams in hosts Chinese Taipei and Kazakhstan; Pool B comprises Saudi Arabia, Thailand and South Korea; while Uzbekistan, India and Hong Kong are in Pool C. Pool D consists of Mongolia, the Philippines and Macau, with Australia, Pakistan and Vietnam in Pool E.

Meanwhile, in the 22nd Asian Senior Men's Volleyball Championship in Tehran, Bahrain are amongst a field of 18 competing nations.

They have been drawn in Pool D with Chinese Taipei and Mongolia for the event's opening stage. Two-time champions Iran are in Pool A with Hong Kong and Iraq; while Japan, Uzbekistan and Thailand are in Pool B. Pool C consists of China, Kazakhstan and Indonesia; while Qatar, India and Afghanistan are in Pool E. Pool F rounds out the teams with Pakistan, South Korea and Bangladesh.

Klopp calls for coach's challenge in football after Dortmund no-penalty call

AFP | London

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp has spoken out in favour of introducing a 'coach's challenge' for referee calls in football, after Borussia Dortmund's controversial 1-1 draw with Bochum on Friday.

Klopp, the Liverpool manager and former Dortmund coach, has a history of run ins with match officials and is facing charges from the English Football Association for his rant at



Liverpool's German manager Jurgen Klopp (R) jokes with Liverpool's French defender Ibrahima Konate (L)

referee Paul Tierney following the explosive end to Liverpool's 4-3 Premier League win over Tottenham at Anfield on Sunday.

Speaking with German football magazine Kicker yesterday, Klopp said the idea of a coach formally challenging a contentious call has worked in other sports.

"A challenge would be a solu-

tion to avoid something like that happening again in the future," Klopp said, calling it "an interesting idea for football."

"There are many good examples of how this can work", saying "in field hockey, for instance, the challenge has long proven its worth."

American football allows coaches to challenge calls during the game, along with the



In Germany, a refereeing decision last Friday could have cost Klopp's former club Dortmund top spot in the Bundesliga

NBA and other sports such as rugby league, while tennis allows players to review umpire calls.

In Germany, a refereeing decision last Friday could have cost Klopp's former club Dortmund top spot in the Bundesliga.

In the match at Bochum, forward Karim Adeyemi was taken out in the box by defender Danilo Soares. Referee Sascha Stegemann waved off the incident and it was not reviewed.

Kerley challenges Jacobs to head-to-head 100m clash



Fred Kerley Marcell Jacobs

AFP | London

World 100 metre champion Fred Kerley threw down the gauntlet again to Olympic title-holder Marcell Jacobs to stage a one-on-one race but expressed doubt yesterday whether his arch-rival would turn up.

One of the headliners at Friday's opening Diamond League meeting of the season in Doha, Kerley's mind is fixed on the world championships in Budapest in August which could see a Kerley-Jacobs clash. But the American wants a chance before.

Kerley last month proposed a two-man race against Jacobs, who stunned the world with his Tokyo Olympics triumph but then pulled out after the world championship heats last year, during a social media exchange between the two last month.

"If it happens I will be there.

If it happens I will be there. Will he show up? I don't know. I will definitely win. If it happens I will win. Will he show up? I don't know

FRED KERLEY

Will he show up? I don't know," Kerley told a press conference ahead of Friday's meeting.

"I will definitely win. If it happens I will win. Will he show up? I don't know."

Italy's Jacobs has not commented publicly on a potential two-man race, but told Kerley on social media: "Whenever you want and wherever you want."

Kerley, from Texas, would not say if serious contacts have taken place on a one-versus-one race, repeating only "if it happens, it happens".

Smith hopes in-form Vardy can help Leicester beat the drop

AFP | London

Leicester manager Dean Smith says his team have had to play more to Jamie Vardy's strengths as they battle to avoid relegation from the Premier League.

The veteran forward has scored in each of the past two games, draws against Leeds and Everton, to help the club edge out of the relegation zone after Vardy went 19 matches without a goal.

Smith, who replaced Brendan



Jamie Vardy

Rodgers last month with a brief to keep 2016 champions Leicester up, said Vardy was "firing" ahead of Monday's trip to mid-table Fulham.

"People will have seen in his last few performances the hun-

ger and desire he has got, the work rate, the fact his legs are still there and his brains are definitely still there," Smith said yesterday.

The former England forward, 36, has scored 136 Premier League goals in his career but has found the net just three times in the league this season, during which he has struggled to hold down a starting spot.

Smith, who has a contract until the end of the season, added: "I don't think we have had

to rebuild his confidence, we have had to play more to his strengths.

"We know he is an intelligent player with his runs, but he needs the ball to go into the right areas with his runs.

"We have to have a supply line to him and he has to make the runs as well."

Leicester, with four games to play, are 16th in the Premier League table on 30 points, outside the drop zone only on goal difference.