

HH Shaikh Khalid calls for increasing support and talent discovery programmes

TDT | Manama

HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, President of the General Sports Authority and President of Bahrain Olympic Committee instructed to increase support and talent discovery programmes as he visited the premises of Bahrain Football Association (BFA) and Bahrain Athletics Association (BAA).

These visits were His Highness' first inspection tours to the national sports associations and federations since His Highness was appointed as President of the General Sports Authority.

Present in the visits were HH Shaikh Salman bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, Vice President of the General Sports Authority, President of Bahrain Combat Sports Council and Dr Abdulrahman Sadiq Askar, CEO of General Sports Authority.

The aims of the visits are to



HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa kicks a ball during his visit

review the plans and the programmes of the national associations and federations as well as their efforts to promote sports in the Kingdom in line with the policies of the Authority.

HH Shaikh Khalid met during His Highness' visits with Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, President of BFA and Mohammed Abdul Latif bin Jalal, President

of BAA as well as members from both organisations.

His Highness praised the great efforts made by the two organisations towards holding local events and competitions and creating the ideal atmosphere for preparing the national teams to participate in various tournaments in an honourable manner, which pushes the teams



HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa with officials during a meeting

to compete to achieve more accomplishments that can be added to the sports record in the Kingdom.

His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa said: "Through our visits to the national federations and clubs, we seek to be close to members and affiliates of all sports bodies, to promote the open-door policy,

and to emphasise the approach through which the sports system will proceed during the coming period, which is based on work in the spirit of one team to develop sports."

His Highness listened to a briefing from the President of BFA and the President of the BAA about the plans of the two federations and the future of the two

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HH SHAIKH KHALID BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA

games in the Kingdom of Bahrain, in light of the achievements made by the national teams in both sports, in order to ensure the continuation of the march of success and achievements at all local, continental and international levels.

Messi to leave Barcelona as contract talks collapse

● Lionel Messi to leave Barcelona due to 'financial obstacles' - club statement

AFP | Barcelona

Lionel Messi's time at Barcelona appears to be over. Messi was free to negotiate a transfer with other clubs after his deal ran out at the end of June, but Barcelona had always maintained he wanted to stay with the club.

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The 34-year-old, who has spent his whole career at Barcelona, had been expected to sign a new five-year deal with the Catalan club, which would have included a salary reduction of 50%.

Barcelona needed to financially restructure in order to get the deal over the line, which proved impossible in the end.

The news of Messi's exit comes a day after La Liga agreed in principle to sell 10% of a new-



Barcelona's Lionel Messi celebrates winning La Liga with the trophy

ly formed company housing most of its business to private equity firm CVC Capital Partners for 2.7 billion euros (\$3.2 billion).

"Despite FC Barcelona and Lionel Messi having reached an agreement and the clear intention of both parties to sign a new contract today, this cannot happen because of financial and structural obstacles (Spanish La

Liga regulations)," Barca said in a statement.

"As a result of this situation, Messi shall not be staying on at FC Barcelona. Both parties deeply regret that the wishes of the player and the club will ultimately not be fulfilled.

"FC Barcelona wholeheartedly expresses its gratitude to the player for his contribution to the aggrandisement of the club

YOU KNOW WHAT
Messi, who joined Barca's youth set up aged 13, is the club's all-time top scorer and appearance maker with 672 goals in 778 games in all competitions

and wishes him all the very best for the future in his personal and professional life."

Messi had tried to leave Barcelona in August 2020, making a formal request for an exit after a break down in his relationship with then president Josep Maria Bartomeu but successor Joan Laporta, who presided over the Argentine's rise to greatness, convinced him to stay.

Messi, who joined Barca's youth set up aged 13, is the club's all-time top scorer and appearance maker with 672 goals in 778 games in all competitions.

He remains without a club ahead of the 2021-22 season.

Al Mubarak wins Esport GT series second round



A screenshot of the action from the second round

TDT | Manama

Ebrahim Al Mubarak was once again the man on the top step of the podium after the second round of season three in the Bahrain Esport Gran Turismo Championship.

Driving a Corvette C7 Gr.3 car, Al Mubarak won in a total race time of 23 minutes 02.227 seconds.

The race took place over 14 laps along a virtual version of Japan's Fuji International Speedway, and Al Mubarak claimed his triumph from pole position.

Hussain Hasan finished as the runner-up while Hassan Khalil came third.

Al Mubarak also registered the race's fastest lap of 1:36.742.

With the result, Al Mubarak maintained his perfect start to the new campaign, in which he is gunning for a third straight title.

The series' third season fea-

tures five rounds in all. It is being run on the Gran Turismo Sport video game on the Sony PlayStation 4 or 5 platforms, which is officially licenced by the International Automobile Federation (FIA).

The field is set to return to action for round three today along a virtual version of the Autodromo Nazionale Monza.

Round four is scheduled for August 13, while the fifth and final round will take place a couple of weeks later on August 27.

Prize money is presented to the top three of each meeting, with the winner getting BD50, the runner-up BD30 and third place taking home BD20.

Drivers earn points per event, which will go towards their championship classification. At the end of the season, the winner will get BD500 in prize money, while second place will take home BD300 and third place BD200.



Valentino Rossi of Italy and Petronas Yamaha SRT before a race (file photo)

After 26 years and nine world titles, Valentino Rossi calls it quits

AFP | Milan

Motorcycling legend and nine-time world champion Valentino Rossi confirmed yesterday he will retire at the end of the season after 26 years lighting up the sport.

The 42-year-old Italian signed a one-season deal with Yamaha-SRT for this campaign and it had been mooted he might ride for his own team next term.

However, he told a press conference ahead of this weekend's Styrian Grand Prix that he will call it a day, 12 years on from his

last MotoGP title.

"I have decided to stop at the end of the season," said Rossi. "It's been a very long trip but really great fun."

"It's a very sad moment because it's difficult to say and know that next year I will not race with a motorcycle, I've done that for I think more or less 30 years."

Rossi will finish his career with seven premier class world titles -- just one behind the all-time record of eight held by compatriot Giacomo Agostini.

He has competed in 423 grands

7 premier class world titles were won by Valentino Rossi-- just one behind the all-time record of eight held by compatriot Giacomo Agostini

prix races -- 363 in the top class.

Recent years have seen the man nicknamed "The Doctor" combine competing with ownership of his own VR46 team,

helping to bring on young riders in Moto2 and Moto3 and next season he will be free to concentrate on that mentor role.

Warm praise for his stellar career came from rivals, including French star Fabio Quartararo, his successor at the Yamaha factory team who leads this year's title race.

"I have no words... Big congratulations for your amazing career! I'll remember all my life the first race I ever watch you in Jerez 2005 and you motivated me to be where I am today," tweeted Quartararo.