

Bahrain's win a crucial turning point: HM the King

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His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa congratulated the national team players on winning the 24th Gulf Cup in Qatar for the first time in the history of Bahraini football.

The victory, HM the King said, "represents a crucial turning point in the march of football in the Kingdom of Bahrain."

"The achievement by the Bahraini champions has brought joy to all the people of Bahrain and expatriates as well," said HM the King.

HM the King also congratulated the brotherly Saudi national team, hailing their outstanding performance and wishing them further success in the march.

His Majesty said Bahrain team's high spirit and determination enabled them to honour the homeland and lift the coveted trophy with merit.

His Majesty said he hopes that the achievement would serve as a catalyst to look forward to more trophies in future championships.

HM the King extended thanks and appreciation to HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Representative of HM the King for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, National Security Advisor, and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, hailing his dedicated and strenuous efforts to motivate and en-



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa

courage the national team players to clinch the much-coveted GCC trophy.

He also commended the efforts exerted by the Bahrain Football Association, chaired by Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa for the team's good preparation which ensured their success in winning the trophy.

HM the King praised all national efforts to support and encourage the national team to attain this landmark honourable achievement, hailing the administrative and technical staff.

His Majesty saluted Bahrainis and residents who supported the national team during the championship and encouraged the players to win the historic title, commending the press and the media for supporting the national team.

Meanwhile, HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme



BFA president Shaikh Ali holds the Gulf Cup with BFA vice-president for technical affairs Shaikh Khalid bin Salman Al Khalifa alongside other BFA officials and team members

Commander and First Deputy Premier took pride in the landmark victory which adds to other sports achievements which, he said, reflect the visions and aspirations of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa.

HRH the Crown Prince praised the dedicated efforts of the Government, chaired by HRH the Premier, praying to Allah the Almighty to bless HRH the Premier with abundant health and happiness and long life and Bahrain with further achievements.

HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, Representative of HM the King for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, National Security Advisor, and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, congratulated the leadership on the landmark achievement.



Bahrain's Alaswad looks to control the ball as they take on Saudi



Bahrain defenders Abdulla Al Hazaa and Rashed Al Hooti hug each other on the pitch in celebration after the final whistle in their victory over Saudi



Bahrain fans inside the stadium before the match

Sousa praises players for "heroic performance"



Helio Sousa

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Bahrain head coach Helio Sousa was in jubilant mood last night following Bahrain's historic Gulf Cup victory.

At his post-match Press conference, the Portuguese tactician was rushed by his players, who began chanting his name in unison as they celebrated their achievement.

"It is a great day in the history of

Bahraini football that deserves to be celebrated," Sousa said after his players cleared the conference hall. "This day is the culmination of the tremendous work we started, to create a team that can compete for titles.

"We have fighters in every match. It is a unique moment that we must be proud of."

Bahrain's Gulf Cup triumph was already Sousa's second trophy in just five

months with the squad. It adds to the title they won in mid-August of this year in West Asian Football Federation (WAFF) Championship held in Iraq.

"So far, we have won two championships - the WAFF and now the 24th Gulf Cup; I came here from Portugal to take on such challenges," he said. "We work to compete for championships.

"We played against some of the most prominent teams in the continent, and

we achieved two important titles. I think everyone is a believer in this team and the players who made history."

Sousa added: "I congratulate the Bahraini people on this achievement; congratulate our players on this heroic performance, and our goal is to continue to achieve good results, and to make our way in the double qualifiers for the World Cup 2022 and Asian Cup 2023."