

Youth basketball team set for rescheduled Gulf qualifiers



Onoduenyi and Abdulkadir during a training session at the Bahrain Basketball Association Arena

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Bahrain's youth men's national basketball team will begin their quest for qualification to the FIBA U18 Asia Cup later this week after the Gulf Basketball Association (GBA) U18 Championship was rescheduled.

The regional qualifying tournament will now be held from July 25 to 30 after being postponed from its original dates of July 17 to 22. Qatar will host the five-team competition, which also features Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman.

The tournament serves as the Gulf qualifying event for the FIBA U18 Asia Cup, with three places available at the continental finals, scheduled to take place in Ahmedabad, India, from August 13 to 23.

Bahrain head into the competition full of confidence after successfully defending their title at the Arab Youth Men's Basketball Championship earlier this month in Tunisia.

Coached by veteran tactician Salman Ramadhan, the nation-

al team is expected to field a squad similar to the one that lifted the Arab crown, spearheaded by tournament Most Valuable Player Somto Patrick Onoduenyi and fellow stand-out Hassan Abdulkadir.

The Bahrainis continued their preparations with training sessions at the Bahrain Basketball Association Arena in Um Al Hassam Sports Complex ahead of their departure.

The tournament will be played in a single round-robin format at the Al Gharafa Sports Club Arena in Al Rayyan, with Bahrain opening their campaign against Saudi Arabia at 6pm, before facing Kuwait at 4pm, Oman at 4pm and hosts Qatar at 6pm.

Bahrain will also be aiming to improve on their bronze-medal finish at the previous Gulf qualifying event in 2024, when they narrowly missed out on a place at the Asian Championship.

A return to the continental stage would mark Bahrain's first appearance at the FIBA U18 Asia Cup since the 2018 edition in Thailand.

Bahrain eye top-two finish against hosts China

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Bahrain's junior men's national handball team will look to carry their momentum into the knockout stage when they take on hosts China in their final Group A preliminary-round match at the 19th Asian Men's Junior Handball Championship today.

The match is scheduled for a 1pm Bahrain time start at the Chuzhou International Handball Arena, with both sides having already secured their places in the quarter-finals.

Bahrain booked their spot in the last eight with an emphatic 33-23 victory over Oman on Monday, improving their record to three wins from four matches. Coach Hussam Madan's side have also defeated Chinese Taipei and Hong Kong, with their only defeat coming against group leaders Saudi Arabia.

China, meanwhile, also ad-



Mahmood Yusuf fires at goal during Bahrain's previous outing

vanced despite suffering a 35-30 loss to the unbeaten Saudis in their previous outing.

With qualification already as-

sured, today's encounter offers both teams the opportunity to build momentum ahead of Friday's quarter-finals while also

battling for a higher finishing position in Group A.

Ahmed Eid starred in Bahrain's victory over Oman with eight goals to earn Player of the Match honours. Mohammed Aadam, Ahmed Alsamaheji and Ahmed Abdulla each added four goals, while Abbas Ali and Abuthar Yateem chipped in with three apiece.

Bahrain produced a dominant second-half display against Oman, turning a narrow 15-13 halftime lead into a comfortable 10-goal victory after outscoring their Gulf rivals 18-10 after the break.

The quarter-finals will be played on Friday, followed by the semi-finals on Saturday. The tournament concludes next Monday with the gold and bronze medal matches.

The championship also serves as the Asian qualifier for the 2027 IHF Men's U21 World Championship in North Macedonia, with the four semi-finalists earning qualification.

Former MotoGP champion Quartararo to make Honda switch

AFP | London

Former MotoGP world champion Fabio Quartararo will join Honda on a two-year deal next season, the team announced yesterday, as the Frenchman bids to reignite his career.

The 27-year-old is set to leave Yamaha after eight seasons.

He won the MotoGP title in 2021 and finished runner-up the following year but has since struggled to maintain that level.

"Honda Racing Corporation

(HRC) are pleased to announce the signing of Fabio Quartararo for the 2027 and 2028 MotoGP World Championship seasons," the team said in a statement.

"Quartararo will race for the factory Honda HRC team as the 850cc era of MotoGP begins from 2027."

His move to Honda had appeared increasingly certain for weeks after other teams confirmed their rider line-ups for next season.

The Japanese manufacturer, which has been rebuilding since



Fabio Quartararo

the departure of Marc Marquez to Ducati in 2024, is banking on the Frenchman to help revive

its fortunes.

The 2027 season will usher in new technical regulations, reducing engine capacity from 1,000cc to 850cc, a change that could reshuffle the competitive order and potentially end the dominance enjoyed in recent years by Ducati and now Aprilia.

Quartararo's first season in MotoGP was in 2019 and he quickly established himself at the highest level, two years later becoming the first French rider to win the premier-class world championship.

Muhammad Idrisov set for new challenge as Alinson Ochoa steps in for BRAVE CF 107 showdown

Manama

BRAVE Combat Federation™ (BRAVE CF), the world's fastest-growing and most global mixed martial arts organization, has announced an update to the BRAVE CF 107 lineup, confirming a new bantamweight matchup for its return to the Burgas Arena in Bulgaria on Saturday, August 1, in partnership with Bulgarian Fight Agency (BFA).

Bahrain's Muhammad Idrisov will now take on Venezuela's Alinson "El Chompiras" Ochoa after Nikolay Atanasov was forced to withdraw from the contest because of an injury. This pairing adds another intriguing battle to an already stacked card as both athletes look to seize a valuable opportunity on one of the promotion's biggest European events of the year.

Muhammad Idrisov, BRAVE CF Athlete, stated: "I am just happy that I still get to compete at BRAVE CF 107. Preparing for an event like this takes a lot of sacrifice, so I appreciate everyone who worked to keep me on the card. I also want to thank Alinson Ochoa for stepping in. That shows courage, and I look



forward to sharing the cage with him."

Alinson Ochoa, BRAVE CF Athlete, stated: "I am grateful for this opportunity because competing in BRAVE CF is something every fighter wants. I accepted this fight because I believe in myself, and I am ready to prove that I belong among the best."

Idrisov has steadily built his reputation as one of Bahrain's emerging stars. The 12-2 stand-out has finished half of his victories before the final bell, recording three knockouts and three submissions.

Much of his development has unfolded under the BRAVE CF banner, where six of his 14 cage appearances have taken place. During that stretch, he collected four victories, most recently earning a convincing decision over Marciano Ferreira at BRAVE CF 101 in November 2025.

Standing opposite him will be Ochoa, who welcomes another opportunity to showcase his abilities on the international stage.

The Venezuelan first introduced himself to BRAVE CF fans when he faced former BRAVE CF

Flyweight World Title contender Gerard "The Animal" Burns at BRAVE CF 97 in July 2025.

Carrying a 6-4 professional record that includes two knockout victories and one submission, Ochoa now aims to capture his first win inside the BRAVE CF cage.

With Idrisov looking to strengthen his standing and Ochoa determined to make a lasting impression, the newly announced contest promises an action-packed encounter when BRAVE CF 107 takes over the Burgas Arena on August 1.

CHERY Bahrain Hosts Exclusive FIFA World Cup Final Screening for Customers



CHERY Bahrain, operating under The Bahraini Asian Motors W.L.L. by Motorcity, hosted an exclusive FIFA World Cup Final screening for CHERY owners at EPIX Cinema as part of its ongoing efforts to engage with customers through community initiatives. The event welcomed customers to an evening of entertainment, featuring pre-match activities before a live screening of the FIFA World Cup Final on the big screen. Guests also enjoyed complimentary snacks and refreshments throughout the evening. The initiative was organized as a gesture of appreciation for CHERY customers, bringing owners together to share the excitement of one of the world's biggest sporting events while reflecting CHERY's ongoing commitment to enhancing the ownership experience through exclusive initiatives that foster a stronger sense of community and connection with the brand.