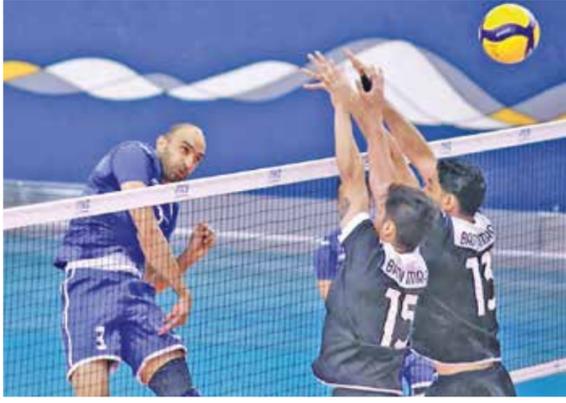


Al Nasser, Muharraq win in volleyball league



Action from Al Nasser's victory last night

● **Al Nasser clinch victory over Bani Jamra**

● **Muharraq registers clean sweep win over A'Ali**

TDI | Manama

Al Nasser clinched a resounding 3-0 (25-17, 25-15, 30-28) victory over Bani Jamra last night in the 2020/2021 Isa bin Rashid Volleyball League.

The victors were the aggressors from the opening serve, and they did well to close out the match in straight sets after Bani Jamra threatened to extend the contest to a fourth.

It was the first victory of Nasser in the league following a loss to Al Najma in their first game. Bani Jamra, on the other hand, fell to their second successive defeat after an earlier loss to Al Ahli.

Meanwhile, in yesterday's other game, Muharraq also registered a clean sweep, defeating A'Ali 3-0 (25-18, 25-23, 25-19).

Muharraq maintained their unbeaten start to the season with the result after beating Busaiteen in their first game. A'Ali were dealt their second straight loss. They bowed to Dar Kulaib previously.

This year's first division



This year's first division league, organised and run by the Bahrain Volleyball Association, is being held in honour of the late Shaikh Isa bin Rashid Al Khalifa, the former Bahrain Olympic Committee president

league, organised and run by the Bahrain Volleyball Association (BVA), is being held in honour of the late Shaikh Isa bin Rashid Al Khalifa, the former Bahrain Olympic Committee president. Games are being played at the BVA arena at Isa Sports City in Riffa.

League action is scheduled to continue on Thursday later this week with two games. A'Ali will look to bounce back when they face Najma at 6pm and then Busaiteen will take on Ahli at 7.30pm. On Friday, Nasser and Muharraq will face off with the aim of extending their winning ways followed by Dar Kulaib playing Najma.

Teams set to arrive for FIBA Asia qualifiers

Seven nations, in two groups, set to play in Bahrain games following the withdrawal of Korea

● **Set to reach Bahrain tomorrow are Iraq, Lebanon, the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia, while India are scheduled to arrive on Tuesday**

TDI | Manama

The men's national basketball teams participating in the upcoming FIBA Asia Cup 2021 qualifiers in Bahrain are scheduled to begin arriving tomorrow, ahead of the start of play on Friday.

The Kingdom will be hosting two groups in this qualification window, including Group D in which the home side are placed alongside Iraq, Lebanon and India; and Group A which features the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia and Korea.

The Koreans have withdrawn from taking part and their games have been taken off the schedule by FIBA Asia.

Set to reach Bahrain tomorrow are Iraq, Lebanon, the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia, while India are scheduled to arrive on Tuesday.

Officials from the Bahrain Basketball Association (BBA) will be receiving the visiting delegations at Bahrain International Airport and will assist them on their arrival formalities. The teams will then be transported to their residence at Gulf Court Hotel.

The qualifiers will be taking place at the Khalifa Sports City arena in Isa Town, while the



Bahrain forward Mohammed Qurban warming up during a previous qualifier held in Bahrain earlier this year

Revised schedule of games

Friday

1pm: India vs Lebanon

4pm: Philippines vs Thailand

7pm: Iraq vs Bahrain

Saturday

4pm: Thailand vs Indonesia

Sunday

1pm: Iraq vs Lebanon

7pm: India vs Bahrain

Monday

4pm: Thailand vs Philippines

national teams will be able to train at Zain Basketball Arena in Um Al Hassam and at Manama Club in Juffair. The games will be held with no spectators in attendance.

FIBA Asia officials, working committee members, game observers, and referees have already begun arriving in Bahrain.

BBA secretary general Ahmed

Yousef confirmed that strict health protocols will be in place to ensure the safety of all participants to prevent infections from the coronavirus. Aside from the required tests the visiting delegations will need to undertake before their departure for Bahrain and upon reaching the country, rapid tests will also be conducted during the qualifying competition, in cooperation with the Bahrain Olympic Committee, the Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs and the Ministry of Health.

Meanwhile, a minor change in the schedule of games has been done by FIBA Asia following Korea's decision not to travel to Bahrain. The Philippines were previously scheduled to play Thailand on Thursday night, but it has been moved to Friday as part of a three-game schedule on the day.

Home side Bahrain will be playing two games in this qual-

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Rapid coronavirus tests will be conducted during the qualifiers, in cooperation with the Bahrain Olympic Committee, the Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs and the Ministry of Health

ifying window. They will first play Iraq on Friday and then take on India on Sunday. Both fixtures are scheduled for 7pm tip-offs.

The Bahrainis have been preparing for the qualifiers behind closed doors under American head coach and former NBA champion Sam Vincent.

Bahrain have already taken to the hardwood twice earlier this year, including a 68-67 win at home against India, which they followed with a 73-116 loss to Lebanon in Beirut.

The nationals are hoping to finish as one of the top two teams from qualifying's Group D in order to book their tickets to the FIBA Asia Cup. If they finish third, they will have to play in another stage of qualification for a chance to claim one of four other spots up for grabs for the 2021 FIBA Asia Cup. If they finish last, the Bahrainis will be out of the running for a tournament berth.

Isa Town trounce Ittifaq in BFA Cup

TDI | Manama

Isa Town were the big winners yesterday on a busy night of action that featured four matches in the 2020/2021 Bahrain Football Association (BFA) Cup, held at separate venues.

Isa Town hit four past Al Ittifaq in a resounding 4-0 victory.

It was their first victory in Group B of the competition's preliminary round after opening with a draw against reigning Cup champions Muharraq. Ittifaq, on the other hand, suffered their first loss after beating Al Hala in their first game.

Also yesterday, Malkiya narrowly matched Isa Town but gave up a goal to Al Ahli in a 4-1 win in Group C.

Malkiya were able to register their first victory of the tournament after narrowly losing their previous match to Sitra, while Ahli were making their first appearance in the competition and began their campaign



Action from Isa Town's win against Ittifaq

with the loss.

Elsewhere in yesterday's BFA Cup ties, Manama beat Hala in

another Group B clash while Sitra took care of Al Tadhamon 3-1 in the other Group C encounter.

4

goals were scored by Isa Town against Al Ittifaq

This year's BFA Cup features four groups in the ongoing preliminary round, at the end of which the top team in each group moves on to the semi-finals.

Group A features Bahrain Club, Al Ettihad, Al Shabab, East Riffa and Hidd. Group B is composed of Isa Town, Hala, Muharraq, Manama and Ettifaq. Group C comprises Malkiya, Tadhmun, Ahli, Riffa and Sitra, while Group D includes just four teams in Budaiya, Busaiten, Al Najma and Galali.

Thiem ends Djokovic's ATP Finals record bid in London thriller



Dominic Thiem hits a return to Novak Djokovic
AFP | London

Dominic Thiem recovered from squandering four match points in a dramatic second-set tie-break to beat Novak Djokovic in three pulsating sets in the last four at the ATP Finals yesterday.

The Austrian third seed's 7-5, 6-7 (10/12), 7-6 (7/5) win ended Djokovic's hopes of equalling Roger Federer's re-

cord of six titles at the elite eight-man event.

The US Open champion will face either Rafael Nadal or Daniil Medvedev in Sunday's final as he chases the second-biggest title of his career.

The 2019 runner-up, who forced the only break in the first set, faced an uphill battle psychologically after his missed chances in the second-set tie-break.