

## Bahrain U23 squad named ahead of Asian qualifiers



Players during a training session

- Bahrain drawn in Group H
- Matches to be held in Doha
- 33 players called up

TDT | Manama

Bahrain U23 head coach Ali Majid has announced a 33-man squad for a local training camp spanning June and July, as preparations begin for the AFC U23 Asian Cup qualifiers in September.

The camp is part of Bahrain's technical programme aimed at building full readiness for Group H, where they'll face Qatar, India, and Brunei. All matches will be hosted in Doha between 1-9

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The final tournament will be held in Saudi Arabia in January 2026

September in a centralised format.

Only the group winners and the four best runners-up across 11 groups will qualify for the 2026 finals in Saudi Arabia.

This stage is considered crucial not just for qualification, but also as a stepping stone for players eyeing a place in the senior national team.

## Tyrese Haliburton joins NBA stars with torn Achilles tendon in playoffs

AFP | Los Angeles

Indiana Pacers star Tyrese Haliburton has suffered a torn right Achilles tendon, the team confirmed, and was set to undergo surgery after becoming the latest star stricken by a severe injury in the NBA playoffs.

The 25-year-old point guard went down on Sunday in a Game 7 loss to Oklahoma City in the NBA Finals and is at risk of missing the entire 2025-26 campaign.

The Pacers said that Haliburton would have surgery on the tendon in New York.

# ‘Not at the level’: Atletico left to ruminate after knockout

Griezmann concedes Atletico Madrid’s level not enough after elimination

- Griezmann scores but Atletico out
- Goal difference seals early exit
- Players blame questionable refereeing

AFP | Madrid

For all the excuses -- and there have been many -- one line from Antoine Griezmann cut straight to the heart of the matter after Atletico Madrid’s Club World Cup elimination.

“We have to look at ourselves and see that there are times when we are not at the level and we have to resolve that,” said the veteran French forward.

Griezmann’s goal earned Atletico a 1-0 win over Botafogo on Monday but the Brazilian side progressed ahead of the Spaniards on goal difference to reach the Club World Cup last 16.

Atletico were left licking their wounds, just like they were after failing to win a major trophy this season.

Their controversial Champions League last 16 elimination by Real Madrid after Julian Alvarez’s “double-touch” penalty left Atletico raging at referees, UEFA and their arch-rivals.

They spiralled and blamed that for their capitulation in La Liga, which they led at Christmas, while Simeone insisted a Copa del Rey semi-final defeat by Barcelona was something the club had to accept.

“We are trying to keep improving to get closer and closer to the teams above us and to accept the place we are,” said the Argentine coach.

However Atletico, who won La Liga in 2014 and 2021, and finished runners-up in the 2014 and 2016 Champions League



Botafogo’s Brazilian goalkeeper #12 John and Atletico Madrid’s French defender #15 Clement Lenglet fight for the ball

final, have been far closer to the elite than they are right now.

Some players at the club understand that, like Griezmann and goalkeeper Jan Oblak, while others do not seem to.

“We’ll keep rattling the cages of those at the top,” pledged Marcos Llorente after the group stage elimination in the United States.

Atletico were upset that some penalty appeals were ignored during the win over Botafogo in Pasadena.

“I’ve never seen anything like it, to be honest, I think we should have been awarded two penalties,” complained winger Giuliano Simeone, the coach’s son.

“I think the decisions are not favouring us at all -- in all the debatable ones, we have to play against that.”

### ‘It takes work’

It was Atletico’s opening 4-0 thrashing by Champions League winners Paris Saint-Germain that cost them qualification and also showed how far they are from the game’s peak.

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Griezmann’s goal against Botafogo ended his 18-game drought, but couldn’t prevent Atletico’s earliest Club World Cup exit since 2018 - highlighting their decline from Champions League finalists to struggling contenders

Simeone has been in charge since 2011 and many would say he is the greatest coach in the club’s history, but in recent years questions have grown around whether he is the man to drive Atletico further.

The last trophy they won was La Liga four years ago.

“I’m sad to be eliminated, we

got six points from three games. We won two,” said Simeone.

As has so often proven the case in recent years, it was not enough.

In some quarters of the Spanish media, former Rojiblanco defender Filipe Luis, coach of Brazilian side Flamengo -- who have made it through to the last 16 -- has been linked as a future Atletico coach.

“They’ve had a long season... let’s hope the next one is better for them,” said retired Atletico great Sergio Aguero, but with the team not progressing, some fans are losing their hope.

Griezmann, who signed a new contract with Atletico at the start of the summer and ended a 18-game goal drought against Botafogo, believes it will take elbow grease.

“It takes work, and it’s a problem deeper and more to do with in the team than the referees,” he added, as Atletico packed their bags for home.

“We have to focus on what we have to improve, on what we have to do to win these games.”

# AVC chief visits executive committee of Asian Youth Games - Bahrain



Asian Volleyball Confederation President (AVC), Ramon Suzara, meets members of the Executive Committee of the 3rd Asian Youth Games

TDT | Manama

Asian Volleyball Confederation President (AVC), Mr. Ramon Suzara, paid an official visit to the Executive Committee of the 3rd Asian Youth Games - Bahrain 2025, currently preparing for the major continental event set to take place in the

Kingdom of Bahrain from October 22 to 31.

Suzara, who also serves as head of the Philippine delegation to the Games, was welcomed at the official Headquarters of the organising committee by Yousif Duaij, Chairman of the Executive Committee, in the presence of Vice-Chair-

man Ahmed Mohammed Abdul Ghaffar, Chairman of the Technical Committee Lounes Madene, and Mohammed Al Thawadi, Vice President of the Bahrain Volleyball Federation and Director of Volleyball Competitions for the session.

During the meeting, Duaij praised the pivotal role of

the Asian Volleyball Confederation in advancing the sport across the continent and commended its active collaboration with the Games’ organising committees in arranging both indoor and beach volleyball competitions for men and women.

He emphasized the commit-

tee’s commitment to delivering a high-quality sporting experience and ensuring the volleyball events are held to the highest standards.

In response, Suzara expressed his strong confidence in Bahrain’s capability to successfully host the Asian Youth Games, citing the Kingdom’s impres-

sive track record in organizing international and continental volleyball events.

He affirmed the AVC’s full support for the Games and noted that the Philippines is preparing to participate with a substantial delegation of approximately 200 athletes across 11 to 12 sports disciplines.