

Gulf Kings on course for Arab supremacy

Bahrain Punch Ticket to Arab Cup with Win Over Djibouti

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TDT | Manama

The Bahrainis secured their place in the FIFA Arab Cup 2025 with a 1-0 win over Djibouti in yesterday's one-off qualifier at Doha's Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium. The Gulf champions took the lead in the 36th minute through Mohammed AlRomeihi, and a first-half red card for Djibouti's Ahmed Zakaria left the visitors with ten men, making Bahrain's path to victory clearer.

The result ensures Bahrain will compete in the group stage of the Arab Cup, which will also be held in Doha, Qatar, from December 1 to 18. Fans had turned out in force, urging their team to secure qualification after a year of mixed fortunes. The Bahrainis have twice finished as runners-up in the Arab Cup,



AlRomeihi fires Bahrain ahead

in 1985 in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, and in 2002 in Kuwait, and will now aim to improve on those achievements.

The match began slowly, with few clear chances in the first half. AlRomeihi opened the scoring in the 36th minute after Djibouti goalkeeper Mouktae Youssef spilled a dangerous delivery from Mohammed Marhoon. And on the stroke of half-time, Djibouti's Ahmed Zakaria was shown a second yellow card following a VAR review. The booking came after he pushed Bahrain's Mehdi Abduljabbar while pressing the goalkeeper, who had already collected the ball. The referee deemed it a reckless challenge, reducing Djibouti to ten men, stripping them of their main attacking threat and severely denting their hopes of a comeback.

Bahrain arrive in the Arab

Cup as Gulf champions, having lifted the 26th Gulf Cup in January, but also carrying the disappointment of missing out on FIFA World Cup 2026 qualification and a run of poor results in friendlies. Head coach Dragan Talajic was confident heading into the tournament, saying, "We have come here to show that we were winners of the last Gulf Cup – we are the best in the Gulf, and now we want to show we are the best in the Arab world."

After exiting at the group stage in 2021, Bahrain will be looking to make amends and push further in this year's competition. Placed in Group D, they will face defending champions Algeria, Iraq, and the winner of Lebanon versus Sudan, carrying both the pride of their Gulf Cup success and the weight of a nation's expectations.

IOC chief Coventry in tears as 2026 Winter Games torch relay sets off



Greek actress Mary Mina (R), playing the role of the High Priestess, takes part in the flame lighting ceremony of the Olympic flame, for the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026, at the Museum of ancient Olympia, in Olympia

AFP | Olympia

New International Olympic Committee chief Kirsty Coventry fought back tears on Wednesday as she urged nations to come together in the 2026 Winter Games, as the torch relay set off from ancient Olympia in Greece.

Addressing guests during the torch ceremony at the Olympia archaeological museum, as the first woman to head the Olympic movement, a tearful Coventry stressed the power of sport to unite.

"I wasn't supposed to get emotional, but this place is very special," she added to applause.

"In a divided world that we live in today, the Games hold a truly symbolic place. It is our duty, our responsibility, to ensure that the athletes from around the world can come together peacefully," she said. Coventry repeatedly veered from her prepared speech to stress her emotional connection to the Games.

The torch was carried initially by Greek rower Petros Gaidatzis and then jointly with Italian cross-country skiing champion Stefania Belmondo

as the relay began the countdown to the Milan-Cortina Winter Games, which will open on February 6.

The pair ran from the museum to the grove in Olympia, the birthplace of the ancient Games, where the heart of modern Olympics founder Baron Pierre de Coubertin is kept, and handed over the torch to Italian luge great Armin Zoeggeler.

The flame ceremony was flanked by sculptures from the Temple of Zeus, the patron god of the ancient Olympics.

The ceremony to light the Olympic flame is usually held among the ruins of the 2,600-year-old Temple of Hera, near the stadium where the Olympics were born in 776 BC.

But a rainy weather forecast -- which proved mistaken -- raised concerns that the sun's rays would not be able to sufficiently heat up the parabolic mirror used by actresses dressed as ancient priestesses to light the flame.

That forced organisers to head indoors for Wednesday's ceremony where they used a flame lit on Monday, during an outdoor rehearsal under the sun.

Two-Day Racing Festival Kicks Off in Bahrain for Arabian Horse Foundation, Redex Cup

TDT | Manama

The Rashid Equestrian and Horse Racing Club is hosting a special two-day racing festival this week, featuring the fifth and sixth race meetings of the 2025/2026 season on Thursday and Friday, November 27 and 28, 2025. The event offers two consecutive evenings of competition for the Arabian Horse Foundation Cups for Equestrian and Veterinary Services, and the newly established Redex Company Cups for .

The fifth race meeting, commencing Thursday at 5:30 PM, will feature nine races, including intense challenges across various classes. Key anticipation surrounds the first race, the Arabian Horse Foundation Cup (sponsored by Car de Martin) for purebred Bahraini Arabian horses, where Al Hamdani 1810 is tipped as the strongest contender. Later in the meeting, the Rashid Equestrian and Horse Racing Club Cup for Class 1 imported horses over 2200 meters is expected to be a tactical battle, with Zagato, Cracking, and Banning for Gold among the favourites.



The excitement continues at 4:00 PM on Friday for the sixth race meeting, which marks the debut of the Redex Company Cups, signifying a new partnership for the prestigious sport. The eight-race card includes the Redex Industries Cup - Bahrain over 1600 meters for top-class imported horses. The race fea-

tures a strong field including the renowned Bay Line from Al Adiyat Stables in its season debut, facing competition from Royal Simetar and Juantina. The meeting will also feature the Redex Maiden Cup and the Rashid Equestrian and Horse Racing Club Cup, with Zil, Al Nawaf, and Sun of Zeus high-

lighted as contenders in the latter.

In addition to the high-stakes racing, the Club is hosting an entertainment village and public competitions, including the "Select 6" fan prediction contest, which offers valuable cash prizes. Tickets are available online and at the club entrance.

India's Ahmedabad to stage 2030 Commonwealth Games

AFP | London

The Indian city of Ahmedabad will stage the 2030 multi-sport Commonwealth Games, it was confirmed on Wednesday.

The choice of Ahmedabad, also known as Amdavad, was ratified by the Commonwealth Sport General Assembly in Glasgow following a recommendation from the executive board.

"We are deeply honoured by the trust shown by Commonwealth Sport," said Dr PT Usha, president of the Commonwealth Games Association of India.

"The 2030 Games will not only celebrate 100 years of the Commonwealth movement but also lay the foundation for the next century. It will bring to-



A cotton candy seller walks past a billboard featuring potential sporting events in Ahmedabad

gether athletes, communities and cultures from across the Commonwealth in a spirit of friendship and progress."

Ahmedabad is the key city in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat, home to a 130,000-seater are-

na which is the world's biggest cricket stadium. The venue is named after the Indian premier.

India has its eyes on a bigger prize, having submitted a formal letter of intent last year to the International Olympic Committee to host the 2036 Summer Olympics.

The future existence of the Commonwealth Games was in doubt last year when the movement struggled to find a replacement host for 2026 after the Australian state of Victoria withdrew for cost reasons.

The Scottish city of Glasgow stepped in and will stage a slimmed-down version of the multi-sport format, meaning that Britain will have hosted two editions in a row, after Birmingham in 2022.