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GULF TIMES SPORT

Sheikh Joaan chairs meeting with Asian, African and Caribbean Olympic leaders

HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani, President of the Olympic Council of Asia, chaired a joint meeting with presidents of National Olympic Committees from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean on the sidelines of the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. The meeting was held as part of cooperation agreements between the participating organisations, with discussions focused on strengthening partnerships, exchanging expertise and sharing knowledge. The initiatives aim to promote cooperation and support the development of the Olympic movement across the three regions.

Sheikha Hind meets Qatari female athletes

HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad al-Thani, a Board Member of the Qatar Olympic Committee, met Qatari female athletes competing at the 20th Asian Games during her visit to Qatar House in Nagoya. The meeting brought together athletes from Qatar's national teams in volleyball, shooting, table tennis and 3x3 basketball. Sheikha Hind discussed their experiences in Japan, preparations for the Games and their ambitions for the competitions ahead. She praised their dedication and urged them to remain focused and give their best while representing Qatar at the continental event. She also highlighted the continued development of women's sport in Qatar and the important role of female athletes in inspiring future generations. The athletes thanked Sheikha Hind for her support and expressed their determination to perform at their best and achieve positive results for Qatar.

ASIAN GAMES

Mustafa wins silver in karate to open Qatar's medal tally

'I dedicate this medal to my family, who stood by and supported me throughout this journey'

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Abdulrahman Mustafa won Qatar's first medal at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games, taking silver in the men's under-60kg karate competition in Japan.

Mustafa produced a strong run to reach the final, defeating Uzbekistan's Mukhriddin Turakhunov 4-1 in the round of 16 before beating Vietnam's Chu Van Duc 10-4 in the quarter-finals. He continued his impressive campaign with a 7-1 victory over Malaysia's Hari Sankar in the semi-finals.

However, Kuwait's Abdullah Shaaban proved too strong in the final, winning 8-0 to claim the gold medal and leave Mustafa with silver. The result is a significant achievement for Mustafa, who is regarded as one of the promising athlete of Qatar's karate team. He previously won gold in the under-21, under-60kg category at the 24th Asian Karate Championships for Cadet, Junior and U-21 athletes.

Qatar's karate campaign continues today, with Yaman Ashraf competing in the under-67kg category. He will face Bangladesh's Islam Monirul in the round of 16. Abdullah Rashad will compete in the under-84kg category.

Mustafa said he was proud to have won a medal and raised the Qatari flag at the Games. "I am extremely happy to have won the silver medal. While I had hoped for gold, it was God's will," he said.

"I dedicate this medal to my family, who stood by and supported me throughout this journey, as well as to my coach, the Qatar Karate Federation family, and everyone who encouraged and backed me in reaching this moment."

He added: "The competition was fierce. I gave it my all to achieve the best possible result, and I am delighted to have made it to the podium and raised the Qatari flag at this major Asian event."

TAMER BREAKS NATIONAL RECORD

Qatari swimmer Ali Tamer qualified for the men's 100m freestyle final after finishing second in his heat in 48.65 seconds. Tamer's time broke his previous national record of 49.10 seconds. He eventually finished seventh in the final.

The Qatar team is also scheduled to compete in the 4x200m freestyle relay. The six-member squad comprises Mohamed Mahmoud, Tamer, Saad El-Din, Emile Mounir Fouzai, Abdullah al-Ghamri and Mohamed Aziz Jilani.

BIG WIN FOR HANDBALL TEAM

Qatar began its Asian Games handball campaign with a commanding 40-17 victory over Hong Kong in Group A. Hong



Qatar's Abdulrahman Mustafa lost to Kuwait's Abdullah Shaaban in the men's under-60kg karate final at the Asian Games in Toyohashi, Japan.



Abdulrahman Mustafa poses with his silver medal.

Kong stayed level with Qatar at 3-3 in the early stages, but the Qatari side gradually settled into the match and took control. Improved defending and more accurate finishing helped Qatar open a 6-3 lead before going into the break 19-8 ahead.

Qatar continued to dominate after the interval to complete a 23-goal victory and collect its first two points. The team faces China today before taking on Japan in its final group match next Friday.

Qatar are seeking a fourth consecutive Asian Games gold medal after winning the title in Incheon in 2014, Jakarta in 2018 and Hangzhou in 2022.

AL-YAFEI SETS PERSONAL BEST

Shooter Retaj al-Yafei recorded a personal best of 620.8 points in the women's air rifle competition. Al-Yafei finished 39th overall, while teammate Maha al-Ali placed 51st. Qatar's shooting team continues its campaign today with the men competing in individual and team air rifle, as well as individual and team skeet events. Qatar won three shooting medals at the Hangzhou 2022 Asian Games.

Nasser Saleh al-Attiyah, Masoud Saleh al-Athba and Rashid Saleh al-Athba won silver in the men's team skeet, while al-Attiyah took individual bronze. Rashid al-Athba and Reem al-Sharshani also won bronze in the mixed team skeet.

TABLE TENNIS TEAMS SUFFER DEFEATS

Qatar's men's table tennis team lost 3-0 to China and will face Macau today. The women's team also suffered two 3-0 defeats, losing to Thailand in its opening match before going down to Lebanon.

The table tennis competition continues over the coming days, with Qatar represented in the men's and women's singles and team events.

BEACH VOLLEYBALL TEAM BEGINS TITLE DEFENCE

Qatar's men's beach volleyball team begins its today, with the defending champions aiming to retain the gold medal



Qatar's swimmer Ali Tamer finished seventh in the men's 100m freestyle final.



Qatar handball team cruised to a 40-17 victory over Hong Kong.

won at the previous edition in Hangzhou, China.

Qatar 1, represented by Cherif Younousse and Ahmed Tijan, opens its Group A campaign against the Philippines. Oman are the other team in the group.

Younousse and Tijan will be looking for a strong start as they begin their bid to defend the title they won in Hangzhou. A positive opening result would boost their confidence and strengthen their hopes of reaching the knockout stages.

Qatar's second team, Mousa al-Khair and Mohamed Ihab, will also begin their campaign today, taking on South Korea in Group D. Thailand and Sri Lanka are the other teams in the group.

In the women's competition, Qatar 1, comprising Haya Ashraf and Laila Mohamed, suffered a straight-sets defeat against hosts Japan in their opening match. Qatar 2 will face Thailand today.

QATAR 3X3 TEAM STARTS CAMPAIGN

Qatar's men's 3x3 basketball team begins its Asian Games campaign today with matches against Indonesia and Chinese Taipei. Qatar arrive in Aichi-Nagoya with ambitions of building on their silver-medal finish at the previous Asian Games in Hangzhou. The team, comprising Mohammed Hashim, Hamad Yassin, Nizar Mahmoud and Mubarak Jama, will look to make a strong start to the competition.

GYMNASTICS EVENTS BEGIN

Qatar's gymnastics team begins its campaign today, with Rakan al-Harith and Mehrdad Ghadimi competing in the men's individual all-around qualifiers at Nippon Gaishi Hall, also known as Rainbow Hall, in Nagoya. The duo prepared for the competition at a training camp in Armenia and will now look to put their preparations into practice on the continental stage.

CRICKET

Inglis, Ellis shine to steer Australia to one-wicket win

THE VISITORS SHOW FIGHTING SPIRIT TO EDGE PAST ZIMBABWE

Reuters
Harare

Josh Inglis scored his second One-Day International century and Nathan Ellis his highest score in the format with an unbeaten 36 from 44 balls as Australia claimed a dramatic one-wicket victory over hosts Zimbabwe with a ball to spare in Harare yesterday.

When Ellis was joined at the crease by number 11 Spencer Johnson (7 from 13 balls), the tourists needed 27 runs to reach their victory target of 272, something the pair managed at a run-a-ball to take their side to the win.

Zimbabwe will rue Westley Madhevere dropping Ellis in the penultimate over when he could have sealed victory for them, as he then failed to defend nine runs in the final over when Ellis hit a six off the first ball.

Australia, who rested several of their regulars for the tour, claimed the series 3-0 and now move on to South Africa for three ODI fixtures that begin in Durban on Thursday.

“Great game of cricket,” Australia captain Mitchell Marsh said. “I thought Zimbabwe probably deserved to win but the boys got the job done at the end there and that was fantastic to see.

“We’re aware we need to keep improving as a team. I thought the way we played over the three matches, albeit today we got lucky, but there’s lots of positive signs with our group. We’ve got some young talent which is ex-



Australia's Josh Inglis raises his bat to celebrate after scoring a century during the third ODI against Zimbabwe at the Harare Sports Club yesterday. (AFP)

citing for the future,” Marsh said after the match.

HOME SIDE ELECTED TO BAT FIRST

After the home side elected to bat first, Zimbabwe’s innings was anchored by an unbeaten 81 from 72 balls by captain Sikandar Raza, to go with half-centuries for Craig Ervine (59 from 79 balls) and Innocent Kaia (55 from 66 balls).

Kaia retired hurt with a hamstring injury, with the score on 148 for three, as he could no

longer run between the wickets. Seamer Ellis was also the pick of the Australian bowlers with 3-50 in his 10 overs. Australia were always up with the run rate in their reply but when openers Travis Head (6) and Marsh (8) fell early, it set the tone for an innings where they lost wickets at regular intervals. But Inglis scored a superb 103 from 102 balls as he struck 11 fours, with the next highest scorer Ellis on his unbeaten 36.

Zimbabwe all-rounder Brad Evans was the pick of the home

bowlers with 4-47 in 10 overs. “I thought 280-290 was par with the bat so to make a game out of 272 was a great effort,” Raza said. “As a captain I’m really proud. Plenty to learn. I’d rather have a game like that than for the Aussies to just chase it down in 40 overs.”

BRIEF SCORES

Australia 272 for 9 (Inglis 103, Evans 4-47) **beat Zimbabwe 271 for 8** (Raza 81*, Ervine 59, Kaia 55 ret hurt, Ellis 3-50) **by one wicket**

DAVIS CUP

Great Britain, Germany book finals spots

AFP
Paris, France

Great Britain stamped their ticket to the Davis Cup finals with a 3-0 win over Ecuador in London on Sunday, while US Open champion Alexander Zverev sealed Germany’s place in the last eight.

Henry Patten and Neal Skupski wrapped up the victory for Britain with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Diego Hidalgo and Gonzalo Escobar, consolidating the work put in in the singles the day before by debutant Toby Samuel and Arthur Fery.

Top-ranked doubles player Patten and his partner Skupski, the world number three, secured a sole break of serve in the first set to take control against their 91st and 93rd-ranked opponents.

In the second set, the British duo got their noses in front in the ninth game, before promptly serving out for the 10-time Davis Cup champions.

“WE ARE FEELING GREAT” “We’re feeling great,” Patten said on-court. “We’re very, very happy to get it done on the first match.”

On Saturday in the British capital, 23-year-old Samuel overcame Andres Andrade and Wimbledon semi-finalist Fery saw off Alvaro Guillen Meza to set up the victory.

Germany’s Zverev then put the elation of claiming the second

Grand Slam of his career firmly behind him as he led his country into the finals.

The world number two beat 103rd-ranked Croatian Dino Prizmic 6-2, 6-4 to take Germany one step closer to a first Davis Cup title since 1993.

Zverev broke his 21-year-old opponent three times, without facing a break point himself, to win in 77 minutes in Halle.

A WINNING START

The 29-year-old had got the Germans off to a winning start against Croatia on Saturday with a straight-sets success against Matej Dodig.

Prizmic hit back instantly for the away side but Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz’s win in the doubles rubber tipped the tie back in Germany’s favour.

Spain also stand on the brink of a return to the finals as they lead hosts Chile 2-0 in Santiago following Daniel Merida and Rafael Jodar’s victories in Saturday’s singles rubbers.

Jaume Munar and Pedro Martinez will meet Tomas Barrios Vera and Alejandro Tabilo in the first of three possible matches on Sunday.

The winners of that final tie will join triple defending champions and finals hosts Italy, as well as Britain, Germany, Czech Republic, South Korea, Austria and Canada in the Davis Cup Final 8, which will run from November 24-29 in Bologna.



Germany's Alexander Zverev celebrates after winning his match against Croatia's Dino Prizmic and qualifying for the Davis Cup finals at Heristo Arena in Halle, Germany, yesterday. (Reuters)

CYCLING

Reusser retains world T-T title in Montreal



Switzerland's Marlen Reusser celebrates on the podium after finishing in first place in the Women Elite Individual Time Trial during the 2026 UCI Road World Championships in Montreal yesterday. (AFP)

Reuters
Montreal

Swiss Marlen Reusser retained her world time-trial title in Montreal yesterday as her main rival Demi Vollerling finished a disappointing eighth.

Time-trial queen Reusser celebrated her 35th birthday with an ultimately comfortable victory, but not before Briton Zoe Backstedt gave her a scare.

Backstedt had been quickest at the first two intermediate time-checks on the 39.2km course but Reusser powered away in the second half of the race to beat the 21-year-old by 40 seconds, with German Franziska Koch finishing third, a further six seconds back.

Double world champion Reusser has been virtually unbeatable in races against the clock in the last few years.

She is a four-time European champion and has won time-trial stages at the Tour de France

Femmes and Giro d’Italia Women. It was an unusually long time-trial for a women’s race, where they are usually closer to 20km.

“Apparently I coped well but it made me really nervous,” said Reusser.

“I was really nervous and I was not really sure because we don’t have time trials like this often.

“I’m used to 20km and we had huge discussions with the team, with performance coaches, like ‘what is good pacing?’

“Until an hour ago, I was not 100 percent sure, and also on the course, I was not 100 percent sure.”

Backstedt had been a junior and twice under-23 world champion in the discipline but this race was around 12km further than any previous time-trial she had competed in.

Koch’s bronze medal continued a dream season for the German, who won Paris-Roubaix in April.

Vollerling, the European road race champion, was never in the running for a medal.

MOTOGP

Acosta beats Martin for maiden win in Austria

Reuters
Spielberg, Austria

Pedro Acosta claimed the first MotoGP victory of his career in the Austrian Grand Prix yesterday, bouncing back from his sprint-race crash to beat world championship leader Jorge Martin at KTM’s home Red Bull Ring circuit.

The 22-year-old Spaniard, who qualified third before crashing out while leading Saturday’s sprint, seized the lead from polesitter Martin on lap nine of the 28-lap race and never looked back.

Aprilia’s Marco Bezzecchi completed the podium, while Trackhouse rider Ai Ogura finished fourth. It was an emotional moment for Acosta, nicknamed ‘The Shark,’ who arrived in MotoGP with huge expectations after winning the Moto3 world title in 2021 and the Moto2 crown in 2023.

“The first one is always special,” Acosta said. “Nice way to close a season like this with KTM in front of all Austrian fans. Super happy for them because they deserve it even more than me.”

Acosta is set to leave KTM at the end of 2026 to join the factory Ducati team.

Martin, the 2024 MotoGP champion, got off to a brilliant start but was overtaken



Winner Red Bull KTM Factory Racing Team’s Spanish rider Pedro Acosta celebrates on the podium after the Grand Prix of Austria at the Red Bull Ring racetrack in Spielberg yesterday. (AFP)

by teammate Bezzecchi for the lead at Turn One on lap two. The 28-year-old responded immediately, reclaiming top spot at Turn Three on the same lap. However, Acosta’s pace proved decisive and he passed Martin for the lead on lap nine before pulling away.

“I want to congratulate Pedro. He fought a lot during the last few years to get this victory. This feeling is amazing for him, so I’m really happy for him,” Martin

said of his fellow Spaniard. “For myself, I think I did a great race. I was trying to manage the fuel. Then Pedro took me but I thought everything was under control. But step by step, he was stepping away. I tried to push a bit more but my rear tyre was completely destroyed. I did my best.

“This is what we have to do every weekend for the rest of the season, and the fight is on. So I am really looking forward to continu-

ing like this.” Martin now has 306 points in the standings, a 12-point lead over compatriot and reigning MotoGP champion Marc Marquez ahead of next month’s Japanese Grand Prix. Italian Bezzecchi is third with 264 points. Marquez endured a frustrating weekend as Ducati lacked the outright pace of the Aprilias. The seven-time MotoGP champion qualified second but slipped back on the opening lap and eventually finished fifth.



MOTORSPORT

Team Qatar secures second place in 24H European Series Championship

By Sports Reporter
Barcelona

Team Qatar by QMMF and HRT Performance has completed an impressive 2026 Michelin 24H SERIES European Series campaign by finishing second in the 992-AM class at the Michelin 24H BARCELONA, the fifth and final round of the championship, and officially securing second place in the overall 992-AM European Series standings.

The result represents another significant achievement for Qatari motorsport on the international endurance racing stage, with the Qatari-supported Porsche 911 GT3 Cup #974 completing the demanding 24-hour season finale at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya with a strong podium finish. The Team Qatar driver line-up of Abdulla al-Khelaifi, Julian Hanses, Ahmad Alemadi, Faesal al-Yafei and Jassim al-Thani combined experience, consistency and strong race pace throughout

the season to establish the team among the leading competitors in the highly competitive 992-AM category. The Barcelona weekend once again demonstrated the competitiveness of the QMMF by HRT Performance entry. During qualifying, Hanses set the 2nd fastest 992-AM lap with a time of 1:43.485, underlining the pace of the Porsche and the team's preparation for the season finale.

The 2026 campaign has been particularly successful for the Qatari squad, which entered Barcelona having already established itself as one of the leading 992-AM contenders. The official 24H SERIES preview highlighted the QMMF by HRT Performance Porsche among the leading 992-AM entries and noted its victories earlier in the season at Mugello and Spa-Francorchamps. The European campaign has therefore produced a strong sequence of results, combining class victories and podium finishes against a highly competitive international field of Porsche 911 GT3 Cup cars.

The Barcelona podium marks the culmination of a demanding season of international endurance racing, with the five drivers sharing the driving duties across the long-distance events and contributing to the team's consistency and championship success.

Al-Khelaifi, Julian Hanses, Ahmad al-Emadi, Faesal al-Yafei and Jassim al-Thani can now celebrate a well-earned second place in the 2026 992-AM European Series championship standings, following a season that saw Team Qatar compete successfully at some of Europe's most demanding circuits.

The result adds another important achievement to Qatar's presence in endurance racing and underlines the continued commitment of the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation to competing at the highest levels. Team Qatar now concludes its 2026 European Series campaign with a podium finish in Barcelona and second place in the championship, bringing another successful international endurance season to a close.



Team Qatar driver line-up of Abdulla al-Khelaifi, Julian Hanses, Ahmad al-Emadi, Faesal al-Yafei and Jassim al-Thani celebrate on the podium.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Man City outgun Sunderland 5-3

Brobbe scores hat-trick for Sunderland, Man United scrape draw

AFP
Manchester

Manchester City went top of the Premier League despite Sunderland's Brian Brobbey's hat-trick in a 5-3 thriller yesterday as Matheus Cunha rescued Manchester United from another damaging defeat at Fulham.

City took advantage of Arsenal's shock 3-0 defeat at Brighton on Saturday but made life hard for themselves despite taking the lead three times at the Etihad Stadium.

Enzo Fernandez opened the scoring with his first goal since equalling the Premier League transfer record with a £125mn (\$167mn) move from Chelsea.

The Argentine midfielder's free-kick caught out Robin Roefs at his near post. Sunderland won their first European match for 53 years against AZ Alkmaar in midweek but showed little sign of tiredness as City could not shake off the Black Cats. Brobbey slotted home Enzo Le Fee's pass for the first of his treble.

Quick feet and a slick finish from Rayan Cherki restored City's advantage, but Brobbey again replied within four minutes at the end of a fine Sunderland move.

Antoine Semenyo smashed City back in front before half-time and thought he had settled the game with another accurate left-footed finish just before the hour mark.

Brobbe completed his hat-trick after Nilson Angulo beat Gianluigi Donnarumma to a ball over the top. A couple of nervy moments from the Italian goalkeeper nearly led to a Sunderland equaliser as Ruben Dias was forced to clear off his own line. However,



Manchester City's Antoine Semenyo shoots to score their fourth goal during the Premier League match against Sunderland at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester yesterday. (AFP)

Erling Haaland finally got involved in the goalfest to seal the three points and ensured he has scored against every side he has faced in the Premier League. Victory extends Enzo Maresca's perfect start to the daunting task of succeeding Pep Guardiola at City boss.

"To be honest, I prefer to win 1-0 than 5-3 but I expected a very difficult game," said Maresca.

United head into a three-week international break just two points outside the relegation zone as they failed to ease the pressure on manager Michael Carrick in a 1-1 draw.

But it could have been even worse for the Red Devils after a calamitous Lisandro Martinez own goal put Fulham on course for their first league win of the season. Senne Lammens parried Calvin

Bassey's strike back into the danger area and then could not clear when Martinez inadvertently turned the ball towards his own goal.

Cunha's 89th minute equaliser also took a wicked deflection off David Affengruber to save United's blushes. The Red Devils have taken just five points from their opening five games and were dumped out of the League Cup by Brighton in midweek after surrendering a 2-0 lead at home for the first time in 50 years.

A point is enough to edge Fulham off the foot of the table as Tottenham drop to the bottom.

Liverpool won 1-0 on Andoni Iraola's return to Bournemouth thanks to Alexander Isak's winner.

Iraola was given a warm reception after leading the Cherries into

Europe for the first time in the club's history. That success led to the Basque being snapped up by Liverpool but he has endured an up and down start at Anfield and needed a victory to ease tensions before the international break.

Liverpool's performance was again far from convincing but they got the only goal when Cody Gakpo's cross sat up for Isak to fire in his fourth of the season.

"To win here is very difficult, I know it very well," said Iraola. "Overall we've improved, definitely since the first games."

Victory moves Liverpool up to sixth and within a point of third-placed Brighton. Leeds missed the chance to go third themselves after being held 0-0 at home by Crystal Palace.

AL SHAQAB INTERNATIONAL ARABIAN HORSE SHOW RETURNS THIS NOVEMBER

Al Shaqab, a member of Qatar Foundation, is set to host the fourth edition of the Al Shaqab International Arabian Horse Show, supported by the Social & Sport Contribution Fund (DAAM), from November 4 to 7 2026 at Al Shaqab's Outdoor Arena. Held under the patronage of HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani, President of the Qatar Olympic Committee and Chairman of Al Shaqab's Board of Directors, the four-day championship will once again bring together distinguished Arabian horses, leading studs, owners and breeders from Qatar and around the world for a celebration of the beauty, heritage and enduring legacy of the purebred Arabian horse. Building on the outstanding success of its third edition last year, the championship returns with a growing international reputation and an increasingly prominent presence on the Arabian horse show calendar. The previous edition attracted strong participation from different countries and featured an exceptional standard of competition, further establishing the championship as an important meeting point for the international Arabian horse community.

The Al Shaqab International Arabian Horse Show is classified as a Category B Show under the supervision of the European Conference of Arab Horse Organizations (ECAHO), offering participating horses the opportunity to qualify for international shows of higher classifications. This recognition further underlines the championship's growing stature and its role in providing a competitive platform for some of the finest Arabian horses. Registration for the fourth edition opened on Sunday and continue until October 1, welcoming owners and breeders seeking to showcase their horses and compete on an international stage at Al Shaqab. Commenting on the upcoming edition, Khalid al-Jehani said: "This year's



championship embodies Al Shaqab's continued commitment to preserving the heritage of the purebred Arabian horse and strengthening its position on the international stage. The strong presence of participants from different countries around the world reflects the prestigious status the championship has achieved within a relatively short period of time."

Al-Jehani added that the championship has become one of the key fixtures on the Arabian horse show calendar, highlighting the high standards of organisation and the strong level of competition among participating studs. He noted that the fourth edition aims to build on the success of previous years and further strengthen the championship's international standing.

More than a competition, the Al Shaqab International Arabian Horse Show serves as a platform that brings together owners, breeders and Arabian horse enthusiasts from across the world, united by their passion for the purebred Arabian horse. It also provides an opportunity to celebrate the breed's remarkable beauty, distinguished characteristics and deep-rooted cultural heritage. Through the championship, Al Shaqab continues its longstanding mission to preserve and promote the legacy of the purebred Arabian horse while strengthening Qatar's presence on the global equestrian stage and reinforcing the country's position as a leading destination for the international Arabian horse community.

Juventus beat Atalanta as Frosinone fairytale run continues

Goals in either half from Francisco Conceicao and Bremer earned Juventus a 2-0 home win over Atalanta in their Serie A clash yesterday, while Frosinone continued their dream start to the new campaign and Napoli were held in Florence. Juventus climbed to sixth in the table with a third win of the season that leaves them on 10 points, while for Atalanta it was a third defeat of the campaign already as they languish in 12th with six points. Conceicao's first-time shot from 10-yards on 28 minutes gave Juve the lead, before Bremer's header from a corner doubled that advantage deep into the second half.

Billy Gilmour scored his first Serie A goal for over a year but Napoli could only manage a 1-1 draw with Fiorentina. The home side hit the woodwork twice early on as Arthur Atta and Nicolo Fagioli were both denied by the frame of the goal. Luck deserted both sides as Mathias Olivera also hit the post for Napoli, before Gilmour's volley from a corner handed the Naples club the 1-0 halftime lead. But six minutes after the restart, Alex Jimenez's speculative effort from range took a deflection and ended up in the back of the net. Napoli have seven points from their five games and lie in ninth, while Fiorentina have four points from the same number of games and are in 17th. Goals from Giacomo Calo, with a wicked deflection, and Giorgi Kvernadze helped Frosinone continue their excellent start to the new season with a 2-0 win over Como. The victory moves Frosinone up to fifth in the table with 10 points from their five matches. Como, who suffered a first defeat of the campaign, have the same number of points but are in seventh. Pontus Almquist scored the winner 10 minutes from the end as Parma earned a first win of the Serie A season with a 2-1 home success against second-bottom Genoa. David Romero gave Parma the first-half lead but they were pegged back when Milutin Osmajic equalised for Genoa. Almquist came to the rescue though with a shot into the far corner to extend Genoa's winless run in the top flight to 10 games.

LA LIGA

Atletico beat Real Madrid in tense derby clash

AFP
Madrid

Atletico Madrid edged 10-man Real Madrid 2-1 in a La Liga derby clash yesterday to leave Jose Mourinho's side trailing leaders Barcelona by six points.

Dean Huijsen was sent off early in the second half for Los Blancos before Alejandro Grimaldo and Jonathan David's goals earned Diego Simeone's Atletico victory, with Antonio Rudiger pulling one back late on. Atletico rose to second, five points behind Barca and one ahead of Real Madrid, who chalked up a second defeat of the campaign. The game hinged on Huijsen's red card early in the second period, for pulling down Giuliano Simeone in the box which led to a penalty, tucked away by Grimaldo to set Atletico on their way. Real Madrid were unhappy about challenges from Cristian Romero and Lee Kang-in in the first half. Mourinho started with Aurelien Tchouameni in midfield over Bernardo Silva, opting for de-



Atletico Madrid's Jonathan David (left) celebrates scoring his team's second goal during the La Liga match against Real Madrid at the Metropolitano stadium in Madrid yesterday. (AFP)

fensive clout over creativity.

There was more tension than footballing quality in the first half, with neither side capable of creating any clear chances. The main talking point was an incident between Jude Bellingham and Atletico defender Romero. The England international threw himself into a tackle and Romero trod on his leg, with Bellingham booked initially, but after a VAR review the referee removed the card and issued it to the Atletico man. Madrid were also

unhappy with a heavy tackle by Lee on Federico Valverde, which went unpunished just before half-time. It was a scrappy battle, intense but lacking excitement comparative to the star power on the pitch, especially in Madrid's front line, with Vinicius Junior, Kylian Mbappe and Bellingham kept quiet. The game burst into life early in the second half when Huijsen pulled back Giuliano Simeone's arm as the forward ran through on goal and Atletico were awarded a

penalty. Huijsen was dismissed after a VAR review and Grimaldo beat Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois from the penalty spot. Mourinho reacted immediately by replacing the underwhelming Vinicius and Arda Guler and sending on club record signing Yan Diomande and Rudiger.

It was Atletico who struck next, though, with Canada international David tucking away Giuliano Simeone's raking low cross on 59 minutes for his third goal in three matches. The hosts came close to getting a third but Courtois made an excellent save to deny Julian Alvarez and Ibrahima Konate reacted brilliantly to head Grimaldo's effort from the rebound off the line.

Atletico goalkeeper Jan Oblak saved from Diomande and Bellingham rowed with Giuliano Simeone as Madrid's frustrations showed, impotent to change the course of the game. Madrid pulled a goal back in the final stages with Rudiger heading Bernardo Silva's cross past Oblak. However, it was too little too late for Mourinho's side.

FOCUS

Schoolgirl Yu helps China dominate in pool openers

Olympic champion Zhanle also topped the podium as China won six of the day’s seven finals

AFP
Tokyo

Thirteen-year-old prodigy Yu Zidi announced herself at the Asian Games in stunning style with gold in a record time yesterday as China dominated swimming’s opening day in Tokyo.

Olympic champion Pan Zhanle also topped the podium as China won six of the day’s seven finals.

Yu is hotly tipped to make an impact at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics and she got off the mark at the Asian Games with a comprehensive victory in the women’s 200m butterfly.

Her time of 2min 05.08sec was an Asian Games record, shaving almost half a second off the time set by compatriot Zhang Yufei three years ago in Hangzhou.

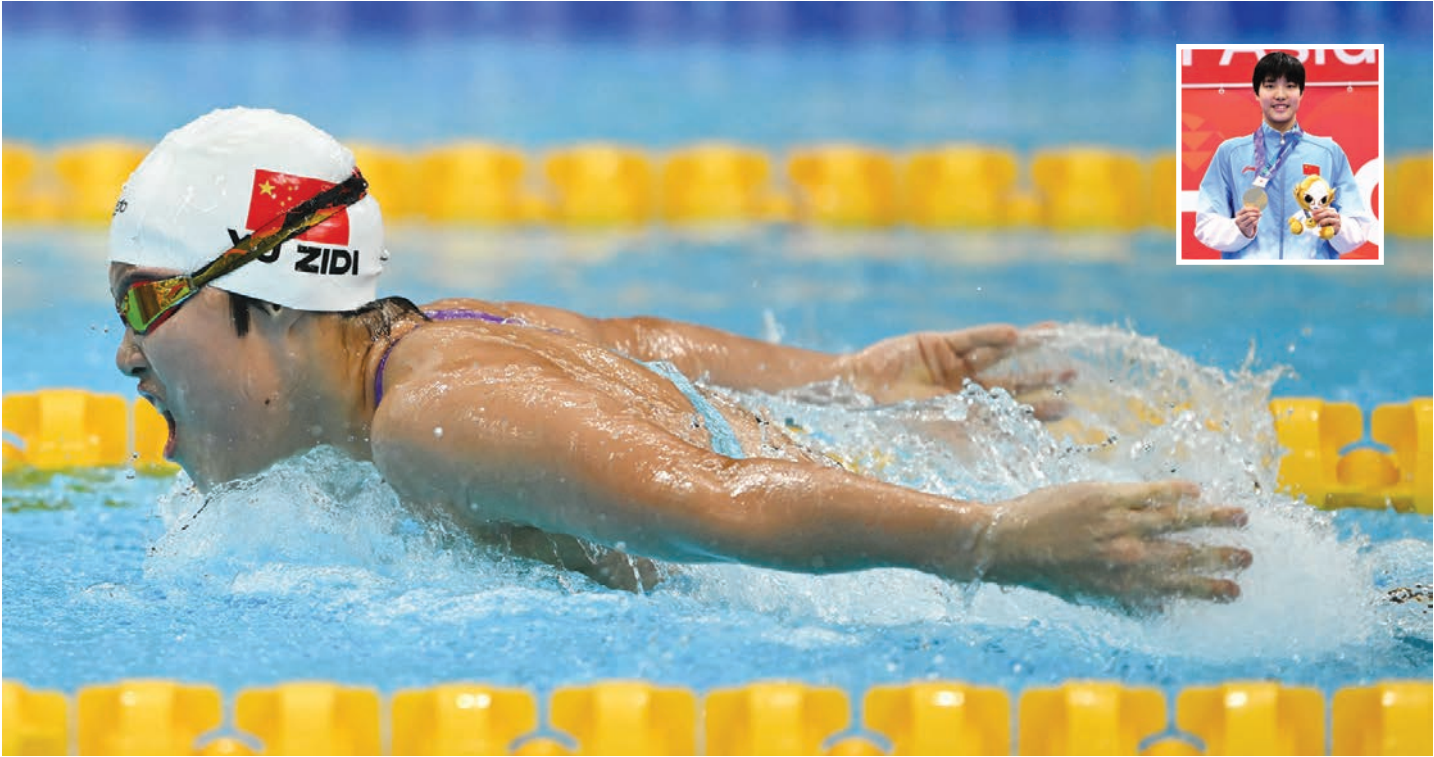
The teenager’s time in winning her first major gold medal was 3.36sec faster than team-mate Chang Mohan in silver.

It was the first of three individual events Yu is scheduled to compete in.

“It was only so-so,” a smiling Yu said after receiving her medal.

“I hope I can swim even faster. I improved my time by 0.9 seconds here, and I believe I will perform better next time.”

Yu became the youngest swimming world championships medallist in history last year when she



Gold medallist China's Yu Zidi (also inset) competes in the final of the women's 200m butterfly event during the 2026 Asian Games at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre yesterday. (AFP)

won bronze as a 12-year-old as part of China’s 4x200m freestyle relay team.

She also finished a whisker outside the medals in fourth in three world individual events. She has embellished her growing repu-

tation this year, notably with a victory over multiple American Olympic champion Regan Smith in March. But she said her “technique is still slightly lacking” after crushing the field in her Asian Games debut.

“I need to lower my head earlier, reach farther forward and improve the movement of my legs,” she said.

Pan ‘magic’
Pan won gold in the men’s 100m freestyle, the event in which he

won gold and set a new world record at the Paris Olympics. It was a close-run thing and he finished in 46.61sec, 0.04sec ahead of South Korea’s Kim Young-beom.

South Korea’s Hwang Sun-woo

was third, 0.18sec behind Pan. “In the last one metre I felt I would lose,” said Pan.

“It’s magic, maybe.”

Pan is looking to rebound from a disappointing world championships last year in Singapore, where he failed to make the final in either the 100m or 200m freestyle.

“Today was a big competition again, in Asia and the world, so I was a little bit nervous,” he said.

“I think this is good for my training, my future.”

There were also individual golds for China’s Tang Qianting in the women’s 50m breaststroke, Xu Jiayu in the men’s 100m backstroke and Li Bingjie in the women’s 1,500m freestyle.

China completed an impressive night by winning the women’s 4x100m freestyle relay.

Tomoyuki Matsushita prevented a Chinese clean sweep when he took gold for Japan in the men’s 200m individual medley in a time of 1min 55.30sec.

Matsushita needed to dig deep to overhaul Yumeki Kojima on the final straight but he got there by a fingertip, beating his countryman by 0.06sec.

“When I turned at the 50m mark I thought I had it won but then I was overtaken,” said Matsushita.

“I knew I had to take it down to the final touch and I managed to stretch a little farther than Yumeki.”

SPOTLIGHT

South Korea break hosts Japan hearts to win basketball gold

AFP
Nagoya, Japan

South Korea broke Japanese hearts yesterday when they took Asian Games men’s basketball gold with a 67-57 triumph in the final in Nagoya.

Lee Hyun-jun top-scored for the Koreans with 27 points, including five three-pointers, in a scrappy victory helped by some wayward Japan shooting. “I’m unbelievably happy,” Lee said. “More than anything I’m extremely grateful to my teammates.”

There was a raucous atmosphere at a packed IG Arena where every Japan score threatened to raise the roof and every South Korean free-throw attempt was barracked, despite a good contingent of away fans. “We could

hear the voices of the fans who came here from Korea very clearly, and I think their support gave us strength,” Lee added.

The teams were locked 28-28 after an attritional first half but the more experienced Koreans started fast in the third period and stretched out to a 55-47 lead which proved too much for Japan to claw back. There were emotional scenes at the final buzzer as the Korean players celebrated with their Latvian coach Nikolajs Mazurs.

“Our foreign coach, he went through a great deal. He came here alone, without his own full coaching staff, to work in a foreign country,” said Lee, who could not hold back the tears at the end.

“I always seem to cry when I win a championship. The feeling of winning is so wonderful.”

It was South Korea’s first bas-

ketball gold since Incheon in 2014 and their fourth in Asian Games history. Ren Kanechika was Japan’s leading scorer with 13 points.

“I’m disappointed because we were aiming to win gold,” said Kanechika. “We slumped in the second half.”

“Korea came out strong and we lost to that, and we really respect their fight.”

Iran withstood a late fightback to beat China 79-70 and win bronze. China led 31-29 at half-time, but Iran took charge in the third quarter to lead 55-46 and held on to spark ecstatic celebrations.

“To be honest with you I’m just speechless,” said 202cm (6ft 8in) power forward Arsalan Kazemi, who in 2013 was the first Iranian to be drafted in the NBA by the Washington Wizards, but never made a regular season appearance.



South Korea's players celebrate on the podium with their men's basketball gold medals after beating Japan in the final at the 2026 Asian Games at the Aichi International Arena in Nagoya yesterday. (AFP)

IOC chief impressed by ‘beautiful’ Games wooden huts

IOC president Kirsty Coventry called the shipping container-style huts for Asian Games athletes “beautiful” yesterday - but conceded they were “a little tighter” than similar accommodation at the Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics. Asia’s biggest sporting spectacle, which opened on Saturday in the Japanese city of Nagoya, has split with past Games by having no traditional athletes’ village. To save costs, the more than 17,000 Asian Games participants will stay in temporary huts, hotels and a cruise ship. Some countries have criticised the wooden cabins as too small, with beds that are too short. But after touring the lodgings, International Olympic Committee president Coventry said she could not understand the negativity. “We had similar cabins in Milan-Cortina (Winter Games this year) and the athletes were very happy. And the cabins here are really nice,” said the Zimbabwean former Olympic champion swimmer. “They’re a little tighter.

So, you know, if you want something negative, it’s a little smaller. “But I don’t think it’s a negative thing. I love the village.” About 2,000 participants are staying in the lodgings by the water in Nagoya. Coventry said: “The cabins are quiet, they’re very cool. The air conditioning is working well. The flooring and the walls are beautiful. It’s better than some of the villages I’ve stayed in. So I think to be very fair to Japan and to the organising committee, I was really impressed. “I had only been reading everything that had been said. And I was expecting something completely different to when I walked in.” Asked by AFP if she would happily see the temporary cabins and also a cruise ship serve as accommodation at the Olympics, she said she had not been to the vessel. But she pointed to the accommodation at Milan-Cortina, and said those “very closely” resembled the ones in Nagoya. “It’s not a new concept,” she added.

MYANMAR’S WAI WINS FIRST TEQBALL GOLD

Myanmar’s Wai Khin Hnin (left) in action against Indonesia’s Sumaya during the women’s teqball final at the 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya yesterday. (AFP)

Myanmar’s Wai Khin Hnin yesterday became the first Asian Games gold medallist in teqball, an acrobatic football-table tennis hybrid making its debut at this year’s event in Japan. Watched by Barcelona and Spain football legend Carles Puyol, Wai Khin Hnin beat Indonesia’s Sumaya, who goes by one name, 2-1 in the final to capture the inaugural women’s singles title. Teqball was invented 14 years ago in a garage in Hungary and features players kicking a ball over a curved table, incorporating elements of the southeast Asian sport sepak takraw. The sport has grown quickly and featured at the 2023 European Games. Wai Khin Hnin lost the first set of the final but came back to win 10-12, 12-8, 12-9 and claim gold. “I’m delighted, I’m thankful to my head coach for believing in me and selecting me to play in the women’s singles. I believed that I could do it,” she said. “My next goal is to win the gold medal for Myanmar at the 2027 SEA Games.”

The Philippines men’s team featured three 14-year-olds including Prince Agustin, who lost in the singles bronze-medal match. Japan were represented by Takahiro Nodomi, who also works as a comedian. “I played football until high school, gave up, started teqball in my late 30s, and made it to this big stage at 40,” he said. “If the message that ‘even old guys can work hard’ reached everyone, then I feel I was able to release some ‘old guy power.’”

Indonesia’s Husni Uba represented his country in sepak takraw at four previous Asian Games. “After I was done with the sepak takraw competition at the 2018 Games I didn’t expect to be back again, especially for teqball,” said the 44-year-old.

(AFP)

CRICKET

Mandhana and Verma shine as India beat Bangladesh in semis

AFP
Nagoya, Japan

Smrithi Mandhana became the highest run-scorer in women’s T20 international cricket yesterday as India crushed Bangladesh by 114 runs in the Asian Games semi-finals with fellow opener Shafali Verma hitting her maiden hundred.

Mandhana scored 37 off 19 balls with five fours and two sixes in her side’s 195-4 in 20 overs at the Korogi Athletic Park ground in Nagoya.

In the process she went past New Zealand all-rounder Suzie Bates’s 4,758 runs at the top of the all-time list to stand on 4,788 runs from 171 innings.

Verma was the star on the day for India, scoring 100 not out off 49 balls with three fours and nine sixes - her maiden T20 international century.

Verma reached her hundred off the final ball of the 20 overs, and was emotional as she took off her helmet and raised her bat in celebration towards her applauding teammates on the boundary.

India then skittled Bangladesh for 81 in 15.4 overs.

“It took a lot of years but finally it came, so I’m happy,” Verma said of her first T20 ton for her country.

India will meet Sri Lanka in tomorrow’s final after they earlier chased down Pakistan’s 177-4 with more than two overs to spare. Sri Lanka raced to 178-2 off 17.5 overs largely thanks to captain Chamari Athapaththu’s sparkling unbeaten 83 off 50 balls, laced with six sixes and seven fours.

Pakistan will play Bangladesh for the bronze medal, also tomorrow. Verma says the India fans in Japan can cheer them to gold. “They are the ones who always back us, and that gives us lots of confidence,” she said.

“We are confident and we tried to give everything in that game and just show good cricket.”