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ASIAN PARA GAMES

Shahov bags double medal haul, Arshid wins silver

Qatar’s delegation comprises of 12 athletes competing in swimming, athletics and goalball

By Sports Reporter
Nagoya

Qatar won three medals at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Para Games yesterday, with swimmer Shamil Shahov claiming a silver and a bronze, while wheelchair racer Ali Arshid added another silver.

Shahov secured silver in the men’s 100m breaststroke SB12 event, finishing in 1:13.17 seconds. Japan’s Genki Saito won gold in 1:12.74, while Iran’s Abadi Karimi Jahan took bronze in 1:13.47.

The Qatari swimmer had earlier opened the country’s medal account with bronze in the men’s 400m freestyle S13, finishing third in 4:33.09. Uzbekistan’s Dmitry Khorlin won gold in 4:21.32, while compatriot Egor Bolotov claimed silver in 4:21.94.

Arshid claimed silver in the men’s 100m wheelchair race T34, finishing in 14.95 seconds. Thailand’s Chaiwat Rattana took gold in 14.84 seconds, setting a new Games record, while the UAE’s Mohammed Othman secured bronze in 15.13 seconds. Qatar’s Mohammed al-Kubaisi also competed in the event, finishing seventh in 16.80 seconds.

The two medals gave country’s 12-member delegation an encouraging start to the Games, which are being held in Japan until October 24, featuring athletes from 45 countries competing across 18 sports.

Qatar’s delegation comprises male and female athletes competing in swimming, athletics and goalball, with the team looking to add to its medal tally in the remaining days of competition.

Meanwhile, President of the Qatar Paralympic Committee HE Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Saud al-Thani expressed pride in the results and praised the athletes, coaches and administrative staff for their efforts.

He said the medals reflected the progress of Para sports in Qatar, supported by the country’s leadership, and would motivate the team to pursue further success at upcoming international competitions.



Qatar’s para swimmer Shamil Shahov (left) celebrates after winning silver in the men’s 100m breaststroke SB13 during the Asian Para Games Aichi-Nagoya 2026 at Nagoya City General Gymnasium in Aichi, Japan.



Shamil Shahov in action in the 400m freestyle S13, where he claimed bronze.

He reaffirmed the Qatar Paralympic Committee’s commitment to supporting its athletes and providing them with the necessary care and resources to represent the country at continental and international championships.



Ali Arshid claimed silver in the 100m wheelchair race T34, finishing in 14.95 seconds.



Jassim bin Rashid al-Buenain, Secretary General of the Qatar Olympic Committee, with Qatar’s contingent at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Para Games.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Guirassy’s nets brace as Dortmund win

Agencies
Baku

Borussia Dortmund got back to winning ways in the UEFA Champions League as they edged past Sabah in an entertaining encounter in Baku. Serhou Guirassy’s brace secured a 2-1 win for the Germans, providing the perfect response to their loss against Bodø/Glimt last time out.

Niko Kovac made four changes from the Dortmund side held to a goalless draw by Union Berlin, bringing in Fabio Silva, Carney Chukwuemeka, Joey Veerman and Ramy Bensabaini. Both sides had been level on points in the league-phase table before kick-off.

Dortmund made the brighter start, with Silva twice forcing saves inside the opening six minutes. The visitors’ pressure told on 10 minutes when Felix Nmecha fired at the keeper, and when Stas Pokatilov could only parry into the path of Guirassy, the striker slotted home from close range to put Dortmund ahead.

Dortmund continued to threaten, with Veerman’s free-kick and a follow-up from Chukwuemeka both tested by Pokatilov, while Steve Solvet picked up a first-half booking for a challenge on Nmecha. Sabah grew into the contest, and after Joy-Lance Mickels had an effort ruled out for offside, the hosts drew level in the 39th minute when Tymoteusz Puchacz swung in a free-kick from the right and Aden McCarthy glanced a header past Gregor Kobel to make it 1-1 at the interval.

Dortmund began the second half as they had the first. Within nine minutes of the restart, Veerman whipped a cross toward the back post where Guirassy finished first-time to make it 2-1 in the 53rd minute. Sabah kept pressing forward and almost found a leveller when Orphe Mbina was played through one-on-one with Kobel but shot wide. Dortmund also had openings to ex-



Borussia Dortmund’s Serhou Guirassy scores against Sabah in Baku. (AFP)

tend their lead, with Chukwuemeka setting up Guirassy for a chance that was blocked by McCarthy at point-blank range.

A late penalty claim against Dortmund’s Nico Schlotterbeck was waved away, and the hosts could not find the goal that would have forced extra effort from Dortmund, who saw out the match for a 2-1 win.

Meanwhile, Pavel Kacor scored a stunning late equaliser for Slavia Prague to deny Fenerbahce a much-needed Champions League win. The substitute scored his first senior goal for the club with a brilliant volley when he met Emmanuel Ayaasi’s cross in the 90th minute.

Kacor, 20, managed to get his boot high

enough to meet the ball in and beat former Manchester City goalkeeper Ederson as the Czech side came from two goals down to earn their first point in the competition this season.

Fenerbahce, who now have two points from three games, had raced to a two-goal lead after just 11 minutes and looked set to bounce back from last week’s 6-0 thrashing by Aston Villa with ease.

Oguz Aydin scored a sublime goal from 25 yards in the fourth minute when he cut in from the right and curled home left-footed into the top left corner. Mason Greenwood got his seventh of the season with a fine finish just seven minutes later.

ATHLETICS

Diamond League 2027 to open in Doha

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Doha will kick off the 2027 Diamond League season on May 7, with the detailed schedule of disciplines for all 14 meetings confirmed as athletes begin planning their campaigns for one of athletics’ biggest titles.

The publication of the Diamond Discipline allocation sets the Road to the Final for next year, outlining the meetings at which the 32 disciplines will be contested as athletes compete for points and a place in the season-ending final in Zurich.

The series will open in Doha before moving to Shanghai on May 15 and Xiamen on May 22. Rome will host a two-day meeting on May 27-28, followed by Rabat on May 30. The circuit will then head to Oslo on June 3-4, Stockholm on June 6-7 and Paris on June 25-26.

The season will continue in Eugene on July 3-4, Monaco on July 9-10, Lausanne on July 13-14 and London on July 17. After a break, the series will resume in Silesia on August 14-15, followed by Brussels on August 20-21, before concluding with the final in Zurich on August 25-26.

Athletes in 32 disciplines will compete for points across the 14

series meetings, with the most successful qualifying for the final.

Each discipline will be staged at between four and eight meetings during the Road to the Final, giving the world’s leading track and field athletes multiple opportunities to compete against their top rivals.

The confirmed allocation allows athletes to map out their campaigns across the season, with the competition offering a chance to secure one of the sport’s most prestigious titles.

The Diamond League will also provide a season-long test of form ahead of the World Athletics Championships in Beijing in September 2027.

The premier global one-day athletics series brings together leading track and field athletes at some of the sport’s most iconic venues, spanning four continents and 15 cities during the season.

2027 Diamond League season schedule: Doha – May 7; Shanghai/Keqiao – May 15; Xiamen – May 22; Rome – May 27; Rabat – May 30; Oslo – June 3; Stockholm – June 6; Paris – June 25; Eugene – July 3; Monaco – July 9; Lausanne – July 13; London – July 17; Silesia – August 15; Brussels – August 20; DL Final in Zurich – August 25-26

FOOTBALL

Only wins can ease doubts over Man Utd future: Carrick

'I don't need any reassurance. I know the role, I know the responsibilities'

AFP
London

Manchester United manager **Michael Carrick** said he needs no reassurances from the club's hierarchy as he knows winning games is the only way to silence speculation over his future.

Ahead of a Champions League trip to Italian side Como today, United have won just two of their 10 games in all competitions this season.

The Red Devils are off to their worst start to an English top-flight campaign in 40 years, were knocked out the League Cup by Brighton last month and comfortably beaten at Atletico Madrid last week in the Champions League.

Carrick was only appointed manager on a permanent basis in May after an impressive spell as interim boss in the second half of last season. But he has quickly become just the latest manager under pressure at Old Trafford at a club that has fallen from grace since Alex Ferguson's retirement in 2013.

"I know we've got to win football games for everything to flow and everything to fit into place. That's the great thing about it, we can do something about it," Carrick told his pre-match press conference in Italy. "I don't need



any reassurance. It's pretty clear. "I know the role, I know the responsibilities. I don't need anyone else to kind of tell me that or tell me when it's going well or when it needs to be better. I know that myself."

Carrick's hopes of turning things around have not been aided by a growing injury list.

Lisandro Martinez started Sunday's 1-1 draw at Leeds, despite his stinging criticism of the club's lack of transfer activity following

defeat at Atletico, but had to be replaced at half-time.

The Argentine international will miss the trip to Como, as will Luke Shaw, Kobbie Mainoo, Marcus Rashford, Benjamin Sesko, Patrick Dorgu and Ayden Heaven.

Kulusevski a 'different man' after emotional Spurs return

Dejan Kulusevski said he felt like a "different man" after a 17-month injury layoff as he made an emotional return for struggling Tottenham. The Swedish midfielder was introduced to deafening noise in the 87th minute of the club's 3-1 victory against Coventry on Monday at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

Kulusevski had multiple setbacks after knee surgery in May 2025. But a second procedure in March finally set the 26-year-old on the road to recovery.

"Everything feels great. I have been working harder than you can ever imagine," Kulusevski said after Tottenham's first Premier League win

of the season, which lifted them off the foot of the table.

"The journey felt impossible. It was the most difficult it could be, but I had a feeling I was going to come back to play football. I just had to believe and that is what I do."

He added: "I kept working, 10 hours every day when no one is watching, so when everything was impossible and everyone gave up I never gave up because of this that happened today."

"I am so grateful that (fans) miss(ed) me play. It means a lot and I am here to show them a better me. And a better me will be a better Spurs so we will be good."

Tottenham had managed only three home league wins during Kulusevski's lengthy absence and narrowly avoided relegation on the final day of the 2025/26 campaign.

He missed the club's Europa League triumph in 2025 and Sweden's World Cup campaign, but is now ready to make up for lost time.

"It has been an amazing journey even if it is hard sometimes," he said. "Hard is beautiful and I am so grateful that I had to experience it."

"Now I am ready to play football. I see myself a little different now. I think I am a different man now. Same guy, same guy that wants to play football, but a little bit smarter."

SPOTLIGHT

Emery adamant injury problems 'no excuse' for Aston Villa

AFP
London

Aston Villa manager **Unai Emery** is determined to avoid using his squad's injury problems as an excuse ahead of their Champions League tie at home to Viking today.

Villa endured a difficult start to the season but have won four of their last five matches in all competitions, with Johan Manzambi's first-half header securing a 1-0 Premier League win at Newcastle on Saturday.

But 21-year-old Switzerland international Manzambi was substituted in the 72nd minute and Emery said Tuesday he will play no part against Viking because of a "small injury."

Manzambi joins the likes of defenders Matteo Ruggeri and Aaron Wan-Bissaka on Villa's injury list.

"We are accepting of the injuries we had before," Emery told a pre-match press conference.

"So many players we had injured in our process here and now we're still having some, like (Amadou) Onana for a long time, like Matteo for more or less two months.

"Coming back and joining us is Ian Maatsen, he's joined us and is training with us this week.

"Manzambi has a small injury, he's not available for tomorrow. Aaron has an injury as well, more or less we expect three or four weeks."

The Spaniard added: "We have enough players, no excuses, and tomorrow we'll find solutions in case we need to get our performance, of course, collectively and individually in each position."

Villa thrashed Fenerbahce 6-0 last week and will be looking for a third successive European win when they host Viking.

But the Norwegian side arrive at Villa Park buoyed by a 3-3 draw with German giants Bayern Munich last week.

"Every team that plays Champions League because they deserve it, and they are dangerous," said Emery.

"Viking drew against Bayern Munich last week, they lost against Stuttgart. They are with Bodo/Glint in the league first and second with the same points.



"Viking are a new team as well with the capacity to draw with Bayern Munich and compete against Stuttgart and compete against us tomorrow. This is the Champions League and it is very difficult."

TENNIS

Swiatek ends season after pulling out from Ningbo with a thigh injury

Reuters
Warsaw

Iga Swiatek ended her season yesterday after withdrawing from the Ningbo Open with a thigh injury, a decision that also ended the six-time Grand Slam champion's hopes of qualifying for the WTA Finals.

The 25-year-old Pole, who described the campaign as the most demanding of her career, finished the year without a Grand Slam title. Her last major triumph came at last year's Wimbledon.

Swiatek, who has played at every edition of the WTA Finals since 2021 and won the season-ending championships in 2023, needed to reach at least the quarter-finals in Ningbo to have any chance of displacing Czech Karolina Muchova from the last qualifying spot.

"After careful consideration, I've decided to withdraw from the tournament," Swiatek said in a statement posted on the Ningbo Open's social media.

"I've been experiencing an ongoing problem with my left thigh over the past weeks and I feel that giving myself the time to rest and recover is the right decision."

The injury also troubled Swiatek during her 7-5 6-1 semi-final defeat by compatriot Maja Chwalinska at last week's Wuhan Open.

Swiatek finishes the season with a 39-15 record and one title, at the Canadian Open. She also failed to progress beyond the quarter-finals at any of the four Grand Slams.

"This has been one of the most demanding seasons of my career, with a lot of challenges, chang-

QNA
Doha

Doha ready to host FIP World Cup Qatar 2026 from November 2 to 7

Doha is fully prepared to host the FIP World Cup Qatar 2026 from November 2 to 7 at the Khalifa International Tennis and Squash Complex, the Qatar Padel Federation has announced.

The tournament will bring together 32 national teams, with 16 competing in the men's competition and another 16 in the women's event, featuring some of the world's leading padel players.

The championship, which follows the previous editions held in 2021 and 2024, further reinforces Qatar's reputation as a leading destination for major international sporting events and highlights the country's growing prominence on the global padel stage.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), Qatar Tennis, Squash and Badminton Federation (QTSBF) Secretary-General and tournament director Tariq Darwish Zainal said preparations had been completed, with organizers ready to deliver a high-quality championship for players, officials and spectators.

He said all organizing committees and operational teams had finalized their logistical and technical preparations to ensure the smooth running of the tournament and provide an enjoyable experience for fans.

Zainal highlighted Qatar's growing expertise in hosting major international sporting competitions, noting that the successful staging of the 2021 and 2024 editions had helped build valuable experience among local officials and organizing personnel.

He also pointed to Qatar's continued efforts to promote padel across the region and Asia, particularly through its annual hosting of a major Premier Padel event that attracts leading male and female players from around the world.

Turning to Qatar's participation, Zainal said the national team, ranked among the world's top 10, would enter the competition with ambitions of building on its recent achievements.

Qatar's preparations follow its gold-medal success at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games in Japan, where padel made its debut on the continental multi-sport event's programme. The national team will seek to deliver another strong performance on home soil and secure a high finish against some of the world's leading sides.

Zainal noted that the World Cup would feature several highly ranked national teams with considerable international experience, setting the stage for a closely contested championship.

Meanwhile, QTSBF Executive Director Saad al-Mohannadi said the tournament courts had been fully prepared and customized for the competition.

He added that tickets were available online through official platforms, making it easier for local residents and international visitors to attend the matches and contribute to a vibrant atmosphere throughout the event.

With preparations complete and leading national teams set to converge on Doha, the FIP World Cup Qatar 2026 is expected to further strengthen the country's standing as a host of premier international sporting competitions while promoting the continued growth of padel worldwide.



Iga Swiatek lost last chance to qualify for the WTA Finals after withdrawing from the Ningbo Open yesterday.

es and lessons along the way," Swiatek said on social media.

"I'm especially proud of the work we've done in the second half of the year and the progress that came with it. It gives me a lot of confidence in what's ahead.

"The past few months, or actually the past couple of years, have been incredibly intense and I feel I need to rest and recover my body fully. So that's exactly what I will do, a bit longer this time. I've

decided to end my season here, which means I won't be playing any more tournaments this year...

"As always, I'll come back with passion and motivation to keep improving..."

The former world number one, who has slipped to ninth in the rankings, served a short suspension in late 2024 after an inadvertent doping violation linked to contaminated melatonin, a sleep medication.

SPOTLIGHT

Ronaldo let Man United down, says former coach Ten Hag

AFP
London

Former Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag has accused Cristiano Ronaldo of letting the team down during his time in charge. Portugal star Ronaldo was in his second spell at United when Ten Hag was hired in 2022.

Ten Hag's relationship with Ronaldo quickly became tense and the striker refused to come on as a substitute in a win over Tottenham in the October 2022.

Ronaldo was dropped for a subsequent match against Chelsea, prompting him to give an explosive television interview in which he said he felt betrayed by United and did not respect Ten Hag.

The former Real Madrid forward's contract at United was mutually terminated the following month.

"He let the team down, and he let me

down, because we planned with him," Ten Hag said in an interview with The Athletic. "Obviously, he's one of the best in football history. I respected him a lot. But at that time, as a manager, I had to make a rational decision and keep the players I admire in."

Ten Hag said Ronaldo pulled out of training sessions and did not complete the full run that players were set after they were beaten 4-0 by Brentford early in his reign. "I confronted him with this. Many times I say, 'Ronnie, everyone wants to work for you to bring you in the right position, but if you can't bring yourself in the box, you can't score.' He was not capable to do this," Ten Hag said.

"It's the wrong idea to put this to me that I expected him to do the pressing, that he's exhausted. But he couldn't. He ran neither in possession nor out of possession. The reason was because he didn't prepare himself."

Ten Hag also claimed promises made by

United's owners went unfulfilled before he was sacked in 2024, shortly after signing a new contract. Although United won the FA Cup just months earlier with a surprise final victory against Manchester City, Ten Hag was axed with the team languishing in 14th place in the Premier League.

The Dutchman blamed the United hierarchy of some of his problems, saying he was left humiliated when Scotland midfielder Scott McTominay was sold to Napoli without his consent. Ten Hag also said he wanted to sign Harry Kane, Declan Rice and Frenkie de Jong during his spell at United.

"They promised me loyalty, they promised me backing, they promised communication, that we get aligned. We spoke about the issues. But the promises, they didn't keep," he said. "I said, 'No selling Scott McTominay! And in the end they sold him. I got, of course, very embarrassed and disappointed."



Portugal star Cristiano Ronaldo was in his second spell at Manchester United when manager Erik Ten Hag was hired in 2022. (Reuters)

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

PSG heartbreak fuelling Arsenal, says coach Arteta

Bayern could be without coach Kompany, Neuer and Kimmich

AFP
Berlin

Arsenal coach Mikel Arteta said last season's Champions League final defeat by Paris Saint-Germain was fuelling his side this campaign, admitting he had tried but failed to get over the heartbreak. Arsenal play at Bayern Munich, one of the favourites for the tournament alongside the Gunners, today. Arteta's side took an early lead against holders PSG in Budapest in May's final but conceded a second-half equaliser and then lost on penalties.

"I've tried, but I haven't managed," Arteta told reporters when asked if his side was over the defeat. "That's the reality. So I tried for many weeks during the summer, but even today, and when I see the ball, when I (hear) the music, when I see the scenes, I want it so badly. We know that we have to go step by step, but I think that's fired up the team, and all of us individually, because we know that because of a penalty, we are not the champions of Europe. So, yeah, let's try again."

The English champions have won 10 from 11 matches in all competitions to start the season and face a short-staffed Bayern. Already without the suspended Michael Olise and the injured Jamal Musiala, Bayern come into the match with doubts around ill coach Vincent Kompany, captain Manuel Neuer and midfielder Joshua Kimmich.

Arteta said he hoped to see Kompany in the opposite dugout, adding his side wanted to face the best version of Bayern in order to test themselves and improve in Europe's top competition. "You want to face the best players in these kind of games and duke it out with the best in the world. First of all, as a team, you see how incredibly well coached they are, the mindset that they have, the conviction that they have in their reaction and then in real quality moments that they can produce throughout the games, when we look at the goals and chances that they generate."

Bayern striker Harry Kane, who enjoyed a decade-long rivalry with Arsenal during his time at Spurs, is in top form and is among the favourites for the Ballon d'Or, which will be awarded in late October in London next Monday. Arteta said Kane was "something else, on another level," but backed his side's defence to take care of the England captain. They get tested a lot in the Premier League and they've already done it in the Champions League."

ARTETA ALWAYS A LEADER, SAYS FORMER TEAMMATE GNABRY

Meanwhile, Bayern Munich winger Serge Gnabry is not surprised former team-mate Mikel Arteta became a successful coach, say-



Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta (right) speaks to assistant coach Gabriel Heinze during a training session in London yesterday. (Reuters)



Bayern Munich winger Serge Gnabry speaks at a press conference.

ing the Arsenal boss was always a leader in the dressing room.

Gnabry, who started his club career at Arsenal, will go up against Arteta's Gunners at the Allianz Arena today in the Champions League. "He was certainly a leader within our team back then. He was the captain during the season we played together," Gnabry told reporters. "I remember him helping us out. He shared a lot of advice with us. He was always very approachable and open. That just goes to

show what a kind person he is. He led the team to great success. It's not that we saw it coming, but he's clearly developed further and has done a fantastic job."

The 31-year-old Germany international admitted it was "strange" to face a team coached by a former teammate, but added: "It's a special match for me - playing against my former club. The club where I spent many years, I grew up there from the age of 16."

English assistant coach Aaron Danks took yesterday's press conference and could step in for Kompany today, but said there would be no extra personal motivation for the match.

"I think it's always Bayern Munich's victory. I know Vince would be really strong on this, it's never about anybody's individual achievements, it's always about the collective, about the group," he said. "When you come to work with a club like Bayern Munich, you know it's much bigger than all of us."

Kompany was on the sidelines for Saturday's 6-1 win over RB Leipzig in the Bundesliga but had difficulty walking and did not take the post-match press conference. "For me, not too much changes," Danks said. "I plan the training sessions every day, and I take quite a lead on the grass. Obviously, when Vincent's not with us, we miss having him around..." You know him as a person, he's a real leader."

FOCUS

Mourinho warns no 'untouchable' stars at Real Madrid

AFP
Madrid

Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho warned Brazilian winger Vinicius Junior and the team's other stars that no-one is "untouchable".

Vinicius has struggled for form this season and is serving a four-match ban in La Liga for hair-pulling, but is available as Madrid host RB Leipzig in the Champions League today. Ivorian winger Yan Diomande, the club's record 140mn euro (\$157mn) signing, has impressed in recent weeks, scoring against Sevilla on Sunday in La Liga in Vinicius's absence.

"Only the club badge is untouchable," Mourinho told reporters when asked if Vinicius's place in the team was in danger given Diomande's form. "I don't like the concept of untouchable players. What makes a player untouchable is not his status, the armband, his years at the club, how much was paid for him, what makes him untouchable is his performance on the pitch."

Mourinho said Vinicius would play on the left wing against Leipzig and he had not yet told Diomande whether he would start as well. Madrid host the Bundesliga side aiming for a third Champions League victory from three matches in the league phase, but in La Liga they are third and six points be-



hind leaders Barcelona, who they visit on Sunday.

Mourinho said the team's level is still a long way from where he hopes he can take it. "A long way off... we've been here three or four months, it's impossible to be where we want to be," continued the veteran Portuguese coach.

"We always have to improve, be it individually or collectively... I understand the demands (at this club) are the maximum. I've been here three years (2010-2013), and so I know perfectly well how things are. I can't lose my direction... (even though) I know there is a lot of work to do."

French defender Ibrahima Konate said the former Chelsea and Manchester United coach commanded respect. "He's a great manager, I think he has this aura that not many managers have, because he doesn't need to speak and everyone will listen and respect him," Konate told reporters.

Turkiye turn to local coach to replace Montella

Istanbul: The Turkish Football Federation appointed Sergen Yalcin as national team coach, turning back to a homegrown option after two successive foreign managers. Yalcin, 53, will sign a four-year contract along with his staff, the federation said in a statement. He replaces Italian Vincenzo Montella, who was sacked on October 9 after three years in charge of the national side. Montella had succeeded German coach Stefan Kuntz.

The former midfielder takes over a team short on confidence after losing all four of their UEFA Nations League matches so far, beaten twice by Italy and also suffering defeats to France and Belgium.

Turkiye also endured a disappointing 2026 World Cup, finishing bottom of their group with one win from three matches. Yalcin spent his entire playing career in Turkey, notably with Istanbul giants Besiktas.

Fenerbahce and Galatasaray. A Turkiye international with 37 caps and five goals, Yalcin featured at Euro 1996 and Euro 2000 before moving into coaching. After spells at several smaller clubs, he guided Besiktas to the Turkish Super Lig title, becoming the first person in the club's history to win the championship as both a player and a coach.

TURKIYE BANS 147 CLUB OFFICIALS FOR 45 DAYS IN BETTING PROBE

The Turkish Football Federation's disciplinary committee imposed 45-day bans on 147 current and former club officials on Tuesday for violating betting rules, as part of a sweeping investigation into gambling in Turkiye football.

The Professional Football Disciplinary Board issued the penalties after reviewing the cases of 448 officials referred by the federation over allegations they had placed bets while serving at clubs.

BOTTOMLINE

UEFA demands answers from FIFA over Infantino presidency

Reuters
London

UEFA has sent a letter to FIFA seeking answers by November 2 about Gianni Infantino's presidency, including questions over the FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE) project and the FIFA Peace Prize.

European football's governing body UEFA has led calls for Infantino to resign since he proposed the now-abandoned FFE project, which involved creating a company to run the commercial interests of FIFA competitions, including the World Cup, and selling a minority stake to pri-

vate investors. The 56-year-old, who is up for reelection next year, apologised to the FIFA Council last week and told attendees to submit any questions they had about his governance in writing so he could answer them at the next meeting on December 16.

However, UEFA General Secretary Theodore Theodoridis wrote to his FIFA counterpart Mattias Grafstrom on Monday seeking a swift response to 42 questions covering 12 topics.

"These questions require answers now," Theodoridis wrote. "They cannot be deferred until the next meeting of the FIFA Council - nor can future governance reforms substitute for scrutiny of decisions already taken and accountability

for them... We expect FIFA to provide the transparency required by its own governing body and to respond fully within the above deadline."

UEFA did not outline what steps it intended to take should FIFA not meet the deadline, but will hope it adds to the pressure on Infantino before November 18, the cut-off date for any candidates to confirm they are standing against him in next year's presidential election.

The questions were first put to Infantino at the Fifa Council last week, with Infantino then asking that they were submitted in writing.

UEFA requested information on whether Infantino would have held or expected

to hold any position, role or function in FFE, either during or following his tenure as FIFA president. The relationship with Joshua Kushner's Thrive Capital was covered in detail, asking why an agreement granting exclusivity to the company was signed without prior consultation of the Fifa Council. Kushner is the brother of Donald Trump's son-in-law, while the US president was awarded the Peace Prize.

Football Association chair Debbie Hewitt - a FIFA vice-president - said afterwards that "if he doesn't answer those questions, he's not fit to be Fifa president".

A spokesperson for world football's governing body FIFA said: "The FIFA Governance Regulations state that Council meet-

ings and their associated documentation are confidential. While FIFA intends to reply to questions submitted by its Council members it has no intention of breaching confidentiality by commenting on internal communication and/or documentation to media. FIFA considers respect for these Regulations to be a function of respect for the Council itself and for its individual members. FIFA will always maintain this respect and will not be drawn into any exchange with any third parties that undermines this."

UEFA did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Infantino will stand for reelection in March 2027, with a November 18 deadline looming for potential candidates to submit their nominations.