

QATAR FLAG RELAY

GATHERS MORE THAN

4000 PARTICIPANTS



P.30

SUCCESSFUL 2019 FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP

REAFFIRMS QATAR'S SPORTS ORGANISATION PROWESS

P.6

QATARI WINS

ASIAN HANDBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

FOR THE FOURTH TIME IN A ROW

P.20

HE SHEIKH JOAAN HONOURS ATHLETES AT QOC SPORTS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

P.26



SPORT FOR LIFE

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE
QATAR OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

A group of basketball players in maroon jerseys are huddled together. The image is overlaid with a large, semi-transparent red diagonal shape. The word "Contents" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image. On the right side, the number "3" and the text "QAT SAIF" are visible on a player's jersey.

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QAT
SAIF

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Without any doubt, the challenges of the last few months occasioned by the COVID 19 pandemic has affected global sports in an unprecedented manner. Never in the history of the world have we witnessed such a large scale disruption and rearrangement to the global sporting calendar like we are now having.

As you all know, many events have either been cancelled or postponed with the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, which has now been shifted to 2021, among the main casualties. It is rather painful to see months of planning, years in some cases, going down the drain and organisers forced to go back to the drawing board all because of an unseen enemy that caught the world unawares.

Despite the several challenges, I see light at the end of the tunnel and I doubtlessly believe the battle will surely be won sooner than later and sports will emerge stronger and better at the end of the day. Societies have always undergone affirmative and profound transformations at various levels when sport becomes a way of life which individuals practice and institutions engage in, and generations, as well as communities and cultures, communicate.

Sport gains its importance from its great results on the individual and the society. Its tremendously impact on public health ensures the continuity of life and productivity at the lowest cost as it is a means of human and cognitive-communication that positively affects the development and advancement options of countries and peoples.

For these and other reasons, the State of Qatar has included major sporting goals in its strategic development plans as enshrined in the National Vision 2030, which stipulated in its targeted goals "care for both physical and mental health" and stressed the pursuit of a "physically and mentally healthy population" in the State of Qatar "in order to be able to build a prosperous society."

This great interest was embodied in the Emiri Decree No. 80 of 2011, which stipulated the adoption of an annual sports day for the state as an official national holiday, and that this day is Tuesday of the second week of February of each year.

The National Sport Day (NSD) has, during the past nine years, become a constant feature on the agenda of every citizen and resident in Qatar, and it has become an opportunity to evaluate the national efforts and enhance the growing awareness year after year of the importance of sport and its role in the life of the individual and the society.

In parallel to this, it is important to mention another essential fact, which is the qualitative leap witnessed by the State of Qatar in the field of manufacturing, professionalism and sports infrastructure.

It is not surprising what Qatar has attained in terms of sporting achievements with the absolute support and great interest from the national leadership. The country has evolved to become a force to reckon with in sports, not only in the continent, but globally, which is further reaffirmed in one of the most important achievements this year which is the victory of the Qatari handball team at the 19th Asian Men's Championship held in the sisterly State of Kuwait where the team emerge continental champions for the fourth time in a row.

Thanks to God, above all, and thanks to the generous patronage from His Highness the Emir and the competencies of the sports administrative bodies, the Qatari flag has continued to fly higher in all international and continental sporting events and tournaments.

This year, Doha is very prepared, and the necessary plans are in place to assert its eligibility as the "World Sports Capital", as it hosts several sporting events and championships - the most prominent of which are the FIFA Club World Cup, which will be held at some of the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar stadiums for the second year in a row in December. There is also the Katara World Beach Volleyball Cup, as well as other international, continental and Gulf tournaments.

Hosting and organizing this large number of world championships would achieve one of the major goals relating to developing the Qatari administrative competencies which are to help develop the required expertise and organizational skills needed to manage and organize the largest international events - most importantly the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar.

Joan bin Hamad Al Thani
President Qatar Olympic Committee



**HH the Amir
crowns winners
of the 32nd HH
the Amir Sword
Festival**

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani crowned the winners of the 32nd HH the Amir Sword Festival at an impressive ceremony held at the Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club in Al Rayyan on February 22.

The races and the crowning ceremony were attended by HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al Thani, HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa al Thani and HE Sheikh Jassim bin Khalifa al Thani.

The event was also attended by a number of their excellencies Sheikhs, ministers, heads of diplomatic missions, owners of the horses and equestrian fans. HH the Amir awarded the golden sword to HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al-Thani, owner of the Julian Smart-trained Ebraz, who not only completed a treble of the HH the Amir Sword after winning in the 2,400m race for Purebred Arabian (4yo & older PA) feature, but also won the Triple Crown, having won at Goodwood and Longchamp last year.

His Highness also presented the award to HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa Al-Thani, owner of French King, who won the Thoroughbred feature for the second straight year.

Khalifa Sheail Al Kuwari, owner of Lady Princess, was awarded the silver sword by His Highness the Amir after a

spectacular run on the long home straight saw the horse complete a hat-trick in the four-year-old Purebred Arabian category.

HH the Amir also crowned the winners of the horse obstacles competition Salman Mohammed Al Emadi, Mubarak Youssef Al Rumaihi, and Faleh Suwaid Al Ajami. His Highness crowned Abdullah Mubarak Abdullah Al Madheed, Abdulrahman Ali Al Shahwani, and Mohammed Kanaan Said Al Khayarain winners of the traditional category.

HH the Amir also honoured sponsors of the competition, after watching parts of the final events of the competition including one of the closing stages of the purebred race, and the final run of the heritage championship.

The 32nd HH the Amir Sword Festival was held over three days - February 20-22 and the event attracted a large number of international participants.

QREC Chairman His Excellency Issa bin Mohammed Al Mohannadi said that QREC seeks to continue to enhance the events associated with the Festival and to bring more joy to the race-goers. He added that the huge turnout gave tremendous value to the event and that the successes of Qatari horses against their counterparts from other countries indicated the growth of the sport in Qatar.





Successful 2019
FIFA Club World
Cup reaffirms
Qatar's sports
organisation
prowess



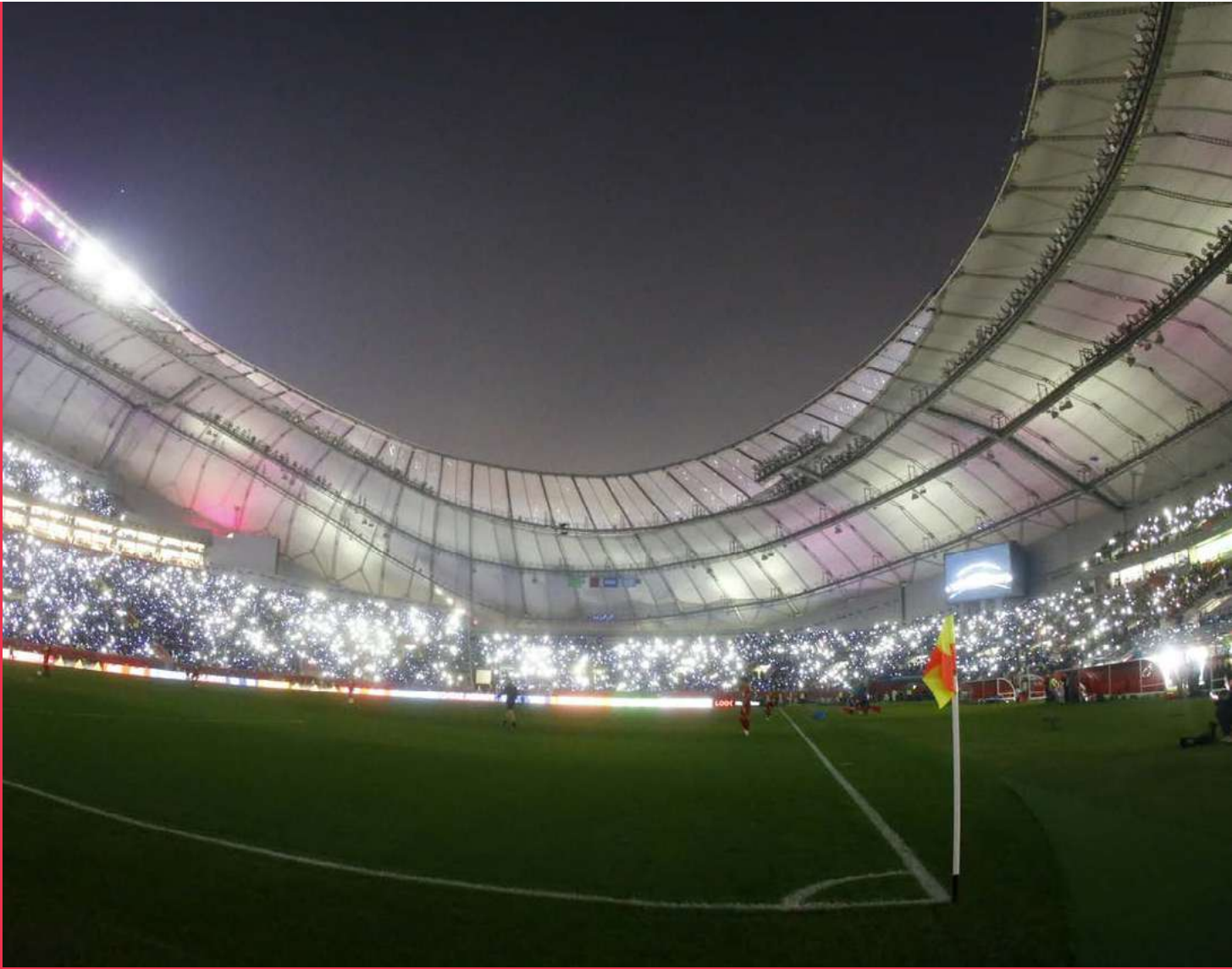
Qatar reaffirmed its position as a major global sporting hub with the successful hosting of the 2019 FIFA Club World Cup in December 2019.

English Premier League club side Liverpool were crowned champions after defeating Brazil's Flamengo in the final of the 10-day tournament on 21 December.

The efforts and work executed by the Organising Committee of the tournament received global commendation and further confirmed that Qatar is more than ready to successfully host the world at the 2022 World Cup. With less than three years to go, the Organising Committee demonstrated a high level of professionalism in all areas, notably stadiums, hotels, training pitches and transportation.

The tournament witnessed the application of all regulations and protocols as expected in all FIFA tournaments, including registering electronically through the FIFA channel for the media, and obtaining tickets before the matches for access to the stadiums, the media centres or press conferences, as well as the mixed zones for interviews.

Tickets sales were also processed electronically, proving an effective way to save significant time and effort compared to the previous time-consuming practice of printing and placing tickets in the market. Electronic sales of tickets have now been adopted for all major events in Qatar and it will be one of the key features of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.



On a technical level, the Club World Cup was a great success. As widely expected, European champions Liverpool were crowned winners after defeating Brazil's Flamengo with the lone goal scored by Roberto Firmino in extra time after a goalless regular time.

Liverpool star Mohamed Salah was awarded the Best Player of the tournament.

Mexican team Monterrey finished in third place after beating Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal 4-3 on penalties after the match ended 2-2 after extra time. Meanwhile, Tunisia's Esperance defeated Qatar's Al Sadd 6-2 to finish in fifth place.

In the first round of the tournament, Al-Sadd defeated New Caledonian team Hienghène Sport 3-1 after extra time. In the second round, Al-Hilal defeated Esperance 1-0, and Monterrey of Mexico defeated Al-Sadd 3-2 in one of the most exciting matches of the tournament.

In the semi-finals, Flamengo defeated Al-Hilal 3-1 and Liverpool overcame Monterrey 2-1.





HE Sheikh Joaan honours athletes at QOC Sports Excellence Awards

“I share the joy of all the achievements and am looking forward to the future. And the immediate future is the Olympic and Paralympic Games.”

Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al Thani

High jump legend Mutaz Essa Barshim and shooting duo Aisha Yousef al Suwaidi and Nusra Mohamed Mahmoud carried home the most prestigious awards of the Best Athletes of the Year at a glittering Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) Sports Excellence Awards night held at the Barahat Msheireb in downtown Doha on 20 November 2019.

As far as the team effort was concerned, the national football outfit, which put up a dominant performance and capped it with the coveted 2019 Asian Cup triumph, topped the table. QOC President His Excellency Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al Thani presided over the annual event and handed the trophies, recognising the hard work, dedication and achievements by various individuals and teams of the country.

In his address, HE Sheikh Joaan commended all the awardees and urged everybody to keep pursuing their goals and glory. “The Asia Cup by our football team really stood out in the list of sporting achievements. Of course, Mutaz’s IAAF World Championship gold medal was another memorable moment.

“This was only possible due to dedicated efforts of athletes, coaches and administrators. Both team and individual sports produced good results. I also appreciate the local organising teams of the IAAF World Championships and the ANOC World Beach Games for the way they hosted events, and everything went well.”

HE Sheikh Joaan added: “I share the joy of all the achievements and am looking forward to the future and the immediate future is the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The sports organisations, trainers and athletes should keep working hard, if we were to achieve new milestones. We are also hoping that they will achieve new landmarks. We are grateful to all the people who helped improving sports in the country.

"I would like to express my gratitude to all those who are working tirelessly to promote sports in Qatar and I hope their dedication will be crowned with more successes," he said.

Barshim recalled how he came through a difficult injury phase and went on to become the first man to defend the high jump gold medal in the IAAF World Championship history. "I had a really tough time when I was recovering from my ankle injury. By God's grace, I was able to get fit and win the gold medal for Qatar at the home world championship.

"I missed many events, including the Asian Games in Jakarta due to this injury. But I want to thank everybody who encouraged me and had faith in me. It was an indescribable moment for me when I retained the high jump gold medal at the home world championships in front my family, friends and fans.

"I will keep working towards winning more titles and medals for Qatar, which has given me so much," said Barshim in an emotional tone. His mentor Stanislaw 'Stanley' Szczyrba claimed the best coach award. The Qatar Athletics Federation also bagged the Golden Federation Award.

Shooter Mahmoud and Suwaidi, who won the gold medals during the Arab championships, were excited to bag Qatar's biggest sports award for the first time. Mahmoud commented: "We're very happy to get this award for the first time. We're proud that we could bring glory to our country. We're not going to stop here. We'll keep working hard for more crowns and titles for Qatar."

Suwaidi said after the event, "I'm proud what we were able to achieve this year. We did well in the Arab championships. Even in the Asian championships in Doha recently, we made a new Qatar record. However our best fell a bit short. Inshallah, we'll try to put in more efforts and

stand on the top of the podium next time." The women's national handball and basketball teams were adjudged the best in the season. Tamim Mohamed Hassan and Al Maha Meshal were declared the most promising male and female athletes of the season.

HE Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Thani was presented two awards - the Recognition Award for Personalities that served sports in Qatar, and the Best Horse Owner of the Season. Ibrahim Saeed al Malki was adjudged the Best Horse Trainer. Faleh Bughanaim won the Top Horse Rider of the Season title.

Jassim Salem Faran bagged the Best Camel Trainer honour, while the Best Camel Owner (Tribal) went to Nasser Abdulla al Mesnad. The national goalball team earned the best team with special needs award. The top male and female para athletes of the season were Saud al Sulaiti and Salma Dhahi Hamad, respectively.

Khalid Rashed al Marri and Ahlam Faraz were honoured with the best male and female sports administrators of the season. Referee of the Season Award was shared by Khalid al Hail and Ali al Yazeedi.

The Ministry of Interior was awarded the Best Governmental Body to support the Olympic Movement in the country. Katara Cultural Village, Aspire, Ooredoo and Sports Corner were also awarded for their contribution to lifting sports. Alkass Channel won the Best Media Partner Award.

Qatar Cyclists was honoured for community activities.









**QOC President
joins National
Sport Day
celebrations**

HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, President of Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), participated in Team Qatar's celebrations of the ninth edition of the National Sport Day (NSD) which took place at Barahat Msheireb on February 11.

For this prestigious occasion, Team Qatar's Sport Village at Barahat Msheireb was well-equipped with all the necessary facilities and services - turning it into a home for sport activities and entertainment for all age groups. Citizens and residents from across the country came together to play and enjoy inspiring games, including athletics, basketball, volleyball, gymnastics, table tennis, boxing, wrestling, taekwondo, karate and judo. Team Qatar's champions, headed by the world and Olympic high jumper Mutaz Essa Barshim, inspired the young Qatari generation during the prestigious event.

Qatar's senior sport officials including the Second-Vice President of the QOC, Dr Thani Abdulrahman Al Kuwari and QOC Secretary-General Jassim Rashid Al Buenain along with Heads of Sport Federations and directors of QOC's departments also participated in the event.

The celebrations also included workshops on various sports including gymnastics, martial arts, female training sessions, as well as reviews of freestyle in football and other recreational numbers.

Dr Al Kuwari emphasised that the QOC's celebration of this year's NSD was different from previous years, praising the great citizens and residents' response to the events.





He extended his thanks to HE Shaikh Joaan, who chose Barahat Msheireb as the home of the Sport Village that hosted the activities of the QOC. For his part, President of the Qatar Swimming Federation, Khalil Al Jaber, affirmed that the NSD is a special event that everyone awaits in the second week of February every year. He noted that physical activity and exercise should not, however, be limited to one day during the year, but rather it should be a lifestyle.

President of the Qatar Basketball Federation, Ahmed Al Muftah, said that the NSD is a very special day and an invitation for all to play sports.

The President of the Qatari and Arab Federations and the First Vice-President of the Asian and International Table Tennis Federations, Khalil Al Mohannadi also praised the QOC for holding its activities in Msheireb, which is one of the important tourist destinations in Doha.

He said that the culture of sports has been strengthened and changed considering the number of participants who came out to engage in different sporting activities which were undoubtedly due to the great decision of the wise leadership of the country.





A group of men, including players and officials, are celebrating a victory. They are wearing white and red handball jerseys with the Qatar national emblem and Arabic text. Several men are wearing gold medals around their necks. In the background, a large white banner features the 2019 Asian Handball Championship logo and the text 'KOWA'. The scene is set in a stadium at night, with blue seats visible in the background and confetti on the floor.

Qatar wins Asian Handball Championship for the fourth time in a row



Qatar's men handball team emerged champions of Asia for the fourth time in a row after defeating South Korea 33-21 in the final of the 19th AHF Asian Men's Handball Championship, held from 16-27 January in Kuwait City, Kuwait.

The victory was witnessed by the President of Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, Qatar Handball Association (QHA) President Ahmed Mohamed Al Shabi and other officials.

Qatar was three-times defending champions going into the tournament, having swept aside all opposition since 2014 when they won the title for the first time, before repeating the feat in 2016, 2018 and now 2020.

Whilst congratulating HH the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and the Qatari people on the team's victory, HE Sheikh Joaan said that this achievement

is the fruit of the efforts of all, including the players, the technical and administrative bodies and the Qatar Handball Association (QHA). HE Sheikh Joaan said: "We are proud of our national team winning the Asian Championship title as it is a big tournament, where the national team AI ADDAM proved, excelled and strengthened its position on the throne of the Asian continent, and that with the strong and distinguished performances they showed during the tournament, by beating all the teams they faced."

HE Sheikh Joaan praised the performance of the players during the matches and said: "All the players were champions and played with a high fighting spirit in all the matches that our team played in the tournament."

Qatar swept through the group stage with wins over China and Japan before accounting for South Korea,



Iran and Kuwait in the quarter-final league to qualify for the last-four stage where they beat Bahrain to make the final.

Qatar's first task was to qualify for the World Championship and having achieved that objective by booking their spot in the semis at the Asian Championship, they were determined to go the distance against South Korea.

It reflected in their play as they upped the tempo late in the first half after the teams were tied 10-all at the 25-minute mark.

In the next five minutes, Qatar swamped the South Korean defence to score four more goals to edge the first half 14-11.



The South Koreans were expected to put up a strong show in the second half but were thwarted by the fortress-like Qatar defence, which foiled raid after raid, with goalkeeper Danijel Saric proving particularly effective.

The oldest man in the team at 42, Saric produced several saves to deny the South Koreans at crucial moments of the match, much to their frustration.

At the same time, Qatar's forwards kept peppering the rival goal, taking a 21-14 lead after 10 minutes in the second half and effectively putting the match beyond South Korea's reach. Qatar was soon 31-17 ahead but with time running short, the Koreans, aiming for a

10th continental title, had to be content with second place as the final score finished 33-21.

Earlier in the day, Japan edged out Bahrain by a scoreline of 27-26 in the bronze medal match. The top four teams have all qualified for the 2021 World Men's Handball Championship, which is due to take place in Egypt from 14-31 January next year.

Team Qatar shines at GCC Women's Games with 34 medals

Team Qatar claimed a total of 34 medals including 9 gold, 14 silver and 11 bronze to post a very impressive outing at the 6th GCC Women's Games held in Kuwait from October 20 to 30, 2019.

Qatar's athletics team won eight medals while the shooting team clinched three medals and the fencing team bagged two silver medals in Foil and Epee classes.

On the same track of glory, the Qatar handball team claimed the gold medal, the table tennis team clinched five medals and the taekwondo team secured four medals in different weight classes.

Qatar's athletics team for people with special needs also made their mark at the Games by winning seven medals.

The Team Qatar delegation at the Games was led by Lolwa Al Marri, President of Qatar Women's Sports Committee, and it included 132 athletes, administrators and technical staff members.





Sheikh Joaan honours Team Qatar's GCC Women's Games athletes

The President of the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al-Thani, honoured Team Qatar's female athletes who claimed 34 medals at the GCC Women's Games.

A total of 9 gold, 14 silver and 11 bronze medals were won by Team Qatar at the event in Kuwait from October 20 to 30, 2019.

HE QOC First Vice President Sheikh Saud bin Ali Al-Thani, HE QOC Second Vice President Dr Thani Abdulrahman Al Kuwari, HE QOC Secretary General Jassim Rashid Al Buenain, President of Qatar Women's Sports Committee (QWSC) Lolwa Al Marri, and Directors of Departments and staff of QOC attended the honouring ceremony.

HE Sheikh Joaan congratulated the athletes on their achievements and said that the feat confirmed the importance of Qatari women's participation in sports at all levels. HE QOC President added that the achievement also reflected the evolution of women's sports thanks to the support and effort of the wise leadership of QWSC and the sports federations.

HE QOC President affirmed QOC's support to women's sport as part of its plan to support all sectors and categories.

HE Sheikh Joaan thanked the members of the administrative and technical bodies and all the athletes for their great

effort in raising the name of Qatar at the competition.

HE QOC President urged the athletes to redouble their efforts to further improve the level of women's sport in Qatar to achieve more in future competitions most notably the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.







Fares Hassouna
bags two gold
medals, qualifies
for **Tokyo 2020**
Olympic Games

Qatar's Fares Ibrahim Hassouna bagged two gold medals and secured his spot at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the 6th Qatar International Cup Weightlifting Championships, held at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Doha from 19 -24 December 2019.

The competition, which was a qualification event for Tokyo 2020, was hosted by the Qatar Weightlifting Federation (QWF) under the aegis of the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) and witnessed the participation of over 150 lifters representing 44 countries.

Fares, who is a junior world champion and a world silver medalist at the senior level, won the 96kg class much to the joy of the Qatari fans at the event.

The 21-year-old Qatari weightlifter was also selected as the competition's best athlete alongside India's Mirabai Chanu.

Fares beat Iranian competitors for his gold medals, lifting 228kg in the clean and jerk and 404kg in total.

Iran's Kianoush Rostami finished second while his compatriot Ali Miri was third.

Rostami won the snatch title with 178kg. Miri's best in the snatch was just 162kg.

Fares beat Rostami in all the three attempts in the clean and jerk to ensure his first gold medal. While the Qatari recorded 213, 223 and 228kg, the Iranian hoisted 210, 220 and 225kg, which allowed Fares to win the second gold with a difference of just one kilo.

Azerbaijan's Minkova Kastova Boyanka made a clean sweep of all the three gold medals in the women's 59kg class, Latvia's Rebeka Koha and Romania's Irina Lacramiora Lepsa was third.

North Korean Choe Hyo Sim emerged the champion in the women's 64kg category, totaling 229kg, eight kilos more than second-placed Italian Giorgia Bordignon's attempt.

The North Korean finished second to Bordignon in the snatch but won the remaining two sections to show her class. The bronze medal went to Indian Rakhi Halder, who was fifth in the snatch but did well in the clean and jerk to finish second with 123kg, which helped her secure the third spot.



Over 4000
participants
celebrate sport
during **Team
Qatar's Flag
Relay**





More than 4000 people of all ages, genders and segments of society participated in the third edition of the Team Qatar's Flag Relay, organised by the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), in celebration of sports, Qatar and its athletes, on December 12 and 13, 2019.

"We are very proud that more people than ever before took part in this year's Team Qatar's Flag Relay. It has been an excellent year for Qatari sport".

HE Jassim bin Rashid Al Buainain

The relay took place as part of the Qatar National Day celebrations and provided each of the 4,000 participants with the honour of carrying the national flag which will be raised at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

The relay was open to all with Qatari athletes and participants from every sector of society all in attendance, reflecting the country's commitment to inclusivity and the power of sports in facilitating unity and building bridges.

The Relay began at 7:00 am from the QOC Headquarters and the flag was transported across Qatar, visiting schools, Doha English Speaking School, Doha College, Ooredoo building, Qatar Foundation and the Katara Cultural Village before finally finishing at the Hamad International Airport where the flag was handed over to be flown to Tokyo for the 2020 Summer Olympic Games.

HE Jassim bin Rashid Al Buainain, Secretary-General of the Qatar Olympic Committee, said: "We are very proud that more people than ever before took part in this year's Team Qatar's Flag Relay. It has been an excellent year for Qatari sport. Our athletes have excelled on the field of play and we as a nation have had the honour of welcoming the world for some of the most prestigious international sports events. Everyone in Qatar has played a part in this success and today was about ensuring everyone feels that sense of pride and unity. When our national flag is raised at Tokyo 2020, everyone who participated today will know that they played a part in getting it there."

Qatar this year hosted the IAAF World Athletics Championships as well as the inaugural ANOC World Beach Games and is currently hosting the FIFA Club World Cup. The national football team won the 2019 Asian Cup in the UAE and notable athlete successes included Mutaz Barshim winning gold in the high jump and Abdurrahman Samba winning bronze in the men's 400m hurdles at the IAAF World Championships.



The relay witnessed the participation of several Qatari athletes including Abdul Rahman Samba, Abu Bakr Haidar and Rami Mohammed Al Rumaihi, the swimming team, athletics Maryam Farid, tennis player Abdullah Al-Tamimi and Al-Ramiyah Nusrah, Muhammad Mahmoud and retired athlete Talal Mansour Al-Rahim.

The event was also largely backed by key stakeholders namely Qatar Foundation, Katara and Hamad International Airport while Abdullah Abdulghani & Bros. Co. WLL, F45, Al Meera Group, CAF Café, GBM and Gulf Crafts were the official suppliers.

Many community ambassadors also participated in carrying the flag of Qatar, most notably Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani, the first Qatari to raise the flag of Qatar on the summit of Everest; mountaineer Sheikha Maryam Al Thani; the Qatari painter and artist Ahmed Al Ma'adhid; and boxer Sheikh Fahd bin Al Thani. The 2019 Team Qatar's Flag Relay was significantly supported by a list of official sponsors including Ooredoo, Qatar Airways, Sports Corner and Al Kass Channels.





Sheikh Joaan honours Team Qatar's Shooting Stars

HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al Thani, President of the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), on November 18, 2019, honoured the Qatari shooting team's medal winners and those who qualified for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the 14th Asian Championship held from November 5 to 13, 2019, in Losail.

The ceremony was attended by HE Sheikh Saud bin Ali al Thani, First Vice-President of QOC; Dr Thani bin Abdulrahman al Kuwari, Second Vice-President of QOC; Jassim bin Rashid al Buainain, Secretary-General of QOC; President of Qatar Shooting and Archery Association (QSSA) Ali Mohamed al Kuwari, as well as members of the Board of Directors of QSSA. Those honoured at the ceremony included the men's skeet shooting team, comprising Nasser Saleh al Attiyah, Rashed Saleh Hamad and Masood Saleh Hamad, bronze medallists from the men's trap team, Mohammed al Rumaihi, Rashid al Athba and Saeed Abu Sharib, and the women's team skeet competition athletes, Fatima al Muraikhi, Ghalia al Maliki and Amna Al Shirawi.

HE Sheikh Joaan also congratulated Mohammed al Rumaihi on his qualification for Tokyo 2020.



An Interview with **Bahia Al Hamad** **Qatar's first female Olympic athlete**



Qatar's Champions are able to win medals at the 2021 Olympic Games



Bahiya Mansour Al-Hamad is one of the most renowned names in the female Qatari sports scene. She shone brightly at the Arab Games hosted by Qatar in 2011, where she won five medals in shooting. She was named the Best Female Athlete of the Year 2011-2012 by the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC).

She qualified for the 2010 Youth Olympic Games, where she served as the flag bearer at the Opening Ceremony. Al-Hamad then made her Olympic debut at the London 2012 Olympic Games, where she once again served as the Olympic flag bearer at the Opening Ceremony. She placed 17th of 56 in the 10m air rifle competition.

In this interview, Al Hamad speaks on many topics, including her career, women's sport in Qatar and many others...



Q: You were the first Qatari athlete to participate in the Olympic Games, what are your present plans?

A It was an honour for me to represent my beloved country, Qatar, at the London 2012 Olympic Games. Now I am aspiring to participate in the Tokyo 2021 Olympic Games and I am working to achieve a balance between training and studying in order to reach my goal of representing Qatar at the Olympic Games again.

Q: How did you feel while carrying the Qatar flag at the London 2012 Olympic Games?

A: It was an unforgettable experience for me and I felt extremely proud to carry the flag of my country, Qatar, on a global stage at this important event. The achievement was for all Qatari women in sports, and the whole world could see the commendable height women's sports had reached in Qatar.

Q You were named as the Best Female Athlete of the Year 2011-2012 by the QOC. Did this award put pressure on you?

A: **On the contrary, it gave me greater motivation to achieve more success, and it increased my enthusiasm to do more for my country and to raise the flag of Qatar high in several competitions.**

Q: Do you think that Qatar is paying appropriate attention to women's sports?

A: Of course, the State of Qatar pays great attention to women's sport, and many sports facilities are devoted to women. We also have a lot of Qatari athletes who have had tremendous achievements in their sporting careers.

In general, Qatar is very interested in sports and the support here for it is incredible. We already have many top-class stadiums and facilities and there are others under construction in preparation for hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup. There is an important institution that we look at with great pride, which is the Aspire Academy that has graduated many outstanding athletes who raise the flag of Qatar high at many sports events. For women's sport, we have a lot of places where we practice, and there is a lot of encouragement for women to participate in sports and tournaments.

Q: Did you face difficulties while practicing sport?

A: Yes, I previously suffered a right ankle injury, which forced me to stop my training sessions for a while. But I have already started my physical therapy and rehabilitation period, and will soon resume shooting training sessions to prepare for any upcoming tournaments.

An Interview with Bahia Al Hamad

“

“I’m proud of
Qatar’s achievement
in women’s sport”

”





Q: What is your most valuable achievement so far?

A: Of course, it has to be qualifying for the London 2012 Olympic Games and the five medals I won at the 2011 Arab Games held in Qatar. These are the two achievements that make me so proud, but I am also proud of all the medals that I have won over the past years.

Q: How many medals have you won during your career?

A: I have won a lot of medals! I don't want to disclose the number, but I can say that they were mostly gold medals.

Q: In the 2011 Arab Games held in Doha, you won five medals. How did you feel about this?

A: I felt a great sense of pride because I claimed five medals after training intensely. I was very happy to turn my dream into reality, and to write both my name, and my country's name, in the history of the Arab Games where Qatar has accomplished so many achievements.

Q: Do you think Qatar's female athletes can turn professional one day in the future?

A: Of course, we will reach higher levels because all the sports facilities are available, and because we also have the encouragement and support of everyone in Qatar.

Q: Who is your sports idol?

A: My idol is the Qatari champion Nasser Al-Attiyah.

Q: With the Tokyo 2021 Olympic Games coming up, do you think that Team Qatar's champions will be able to win more medals? Who do you expect to win?

A: I am confident that Team Qatar's champions will be able to claim more medals at the Tokyo 2021 Olympic Games, and that they will do our nation proud! However, I cannot disclose their names because I do not want to put any early pressure on our champions.

Q: What role do you play to encourage girls to practice sport?

A: I advise them to take advantage of their free time to play sports, and I wish them all the best.



14th ASIAN SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIP
3-14 NOV 2019 DOHA-QATAR

ASIAN QUALIFICATION FOR OLYMPIC GAMES

14th Asian Shooting Championship

concluded on a good note for **Team Qatar**

Team Qatar had an impressive outing at the 14th Asian Shooting Championship held under the patronage of HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, President of the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) from 5-13 November 2019 at the Losail International Shooting Complex.

The competition, which acted as the Asian qualifying tournament for Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, brought together more than 1,000 shooters from 32 nations.

A total of 38 Olympic quota places for the Olympic Games were up for grabs across the 15 events in the ten-day championship organised by the Qatar Shooting and Archery Association.

Qatari shooter Mohammed Al-Rumaihi became the first Qatari athlete to qualify for Tokyo 2020 after finishing fifth with 18 points in the men's trap event, while the men's skeet team of Nasser Saleh Al Attiyah, Masoud Hamad and Rashid Hamad claimed the gold medal with a score of 360 in the five rounds event. They were followed by Kuwait, who tallied 358. Kazakhstan and India both finished with a tally of 357.

At the same competition, Qatar's junior women's skeet team of Fatima Saeed al-Muraikhi, Ghalia Ali al-Malki and Amna Ali al-Shirawi brought cheer to home fans with a bronze medal. They combined for a total tally of 250 points, to finish behind winners China (339) and runner-up India (309).

The Qatar Shooting and Archery Association President Ali Mohamed Al Kuwari congratulated the Qatari shooters on their achievement and praised them for their wonderful result.



IG CHAMPIONSHIP

IC GAMES (TOKYO 2020)





**Doha hosts
final meet of
FINA World
Cup 2019**



دورة الألعاب المائية
Doha Aquatics Centre
FINA World Cup 2019





OMEGA
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FINA
Swimming World Cup
Doha (QATAR)
Presented by Al Khor Sports Centre

4

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OMEGA

QNB





Russia's Vladimir Morozov and Australia's Cate Campbell were crowned overall champions as the final round of the FINA Swimming World Cup Doha 2019 held at the Hamad Aquatic Centre from 7-9 November 2019.

The FINA Swimming World Cup consisted of seven rounds, the first was held in Tokyo (2-4 August), then Jinan (8-10 August), and Singapore (15-17 August). After a pause in September, the second cluster witnessed action in Budapest (4-6 October), Berlin (11-13 October), Kazan (1-3 November) and finally in Doha.

In addition to winning \$150,000 each for their overall victories in Doha, the two top swimmers also sealed cluster 3 wins with 69 and 114 points respectively. Morozov (333 points) was sure to collect the men's overall trophy after completing his haul of three gold medals the second day of three-day meet. But, Campbell (357 points) had to win the 100m freestyle final yesterday to overcome Hungary's Katinka Hosszu in the title race. The Iron Lady finished second with 312 points while Swede Michelle Coleman finished overall third with 174 points.

Lithuania's Danas Rapsys (234) and Dutchman Arno Kamminga (195) completed the top three overall rankings in men's field.

Sixty swimmers from the local clubs and 17 national swimmers participated in the events.



Beck and Olivier
emerge champions
of the first round of
FINA/CNSG Marathon
Swim World Series
2020 in Doha





Leonie Beck of Germany and Marc-Antoine Olivier of France won the women's and men's titles respectively after thrilling races in the season-opening FINA/CNSG Marathon Swim World Series Doha 2020 at Katara Beach on 15 February.

Both the 10km races were exciting with Beck clinching her first major gold medal in a time of 1:56'41.1 in the women's race, which went down to the wire. Olivier clocked an impressive 1:49'46.6 to win the men's race.

The event was attended by HE Mr Jassim bin Rashid Al Buainain, Secretary General of the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) and other officials including Mr Khalil Al-Jaber, President of the Qatar Swimming Association (QSA) and Chairman of the Organising Committee of the competition.

In the women's race, Germany's Beck shocked many top-ranked athletes to win her first FINA Marathon event title. She outpaced last year's Doha winner Ana Marcela Cunha of Brazil - winner of multiple major FINA events - and reigning Olympic champion Sharon Van Rouwendaal of the Netherlands by just one fifth of a second. Cunha secured silver after she was shown slightly ahead of Van Rouwendaal - who took bronze - on camera. Beck's best show came in the final lap of 2km after Van Rouwendaal had led most of the grueling five lap race.

Former European champion Arianna Bridi of Italy was fourth in the race with a time of 1:56'42.4,

while Olympic silver medallist Haley Anderson of the US finished fifth, clocking 1:56'42.9. The overall champion of the FINA series in 2019, Rachele Bruni of Italy, finished sixth

All 53 swimmers finished the women's race.

Meanwhile, in the men's, 24-year-old Olivier, who won bronze at the Rio 2016 Olympics Games, was outstanding as he registered the commending win with a margin of over 12 seconds.

Rob Muffels of Germany won the silver medal in a time of 1:49'59.2, whilst compatriot and world champion Florian Wellbrock, who was also defending his title in Doha, had to be content with a bronze after he finished the race in 1:49'59.3.

Fares Zitouni of France and Gregorio Paltrinieri got fourth and fifth positions respectively, while Ferry Weertman of the Netherlands, who won 2018 meet in the Qatari capital, completed the race in 1:50'02.6 to finish sixth.

Last year's overall champion Kristof Rasovszky of Hungary endured a shaky start to the season as he took 1:52'08.9 to reach the finish line. A total of 75 completed the tiring race.

This was the third consecutive year when Doha hosted this FINA Marathon series event. The second meet of the 2020 series will be held in Victoria, Seychelles, on 3 May.





**Qatar's Beach
Volleyball
Team tops
Asian rankings,
13th globally**

The Qatar beach volleyball team, consisting of Charif Younis and Ahmad Tejan, is currently the highest-ranked team in Asia and ranked 13th globally, according to the latest International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) World Rankings released on February 17.

The duo garnered 4,680 points from the last 12 FIVB recognised events they have participated in, including the World Tour Finals held in Rome in September last year.

Norway's Anders Berntsen Mol and Christian Sandlie Sørum currently top the world rankings with 7,840 points while the Russian duo of Viacheslav Krasilnikov and Oleg Stoyanovskiy are second with 6,400 points. Brazil's Alison Cerutti and Alvaro Morais Filho with 5,640 points are third.

On the Asian level, the Chinese team of Peng Gao and Yang Li, ranked 35th with 2,940 points, are the closest to the Qatari team despite playing at seven more tournaments than them.

The Qatari team is also ranked 11th in the qualifying round for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games with 6,200 points.

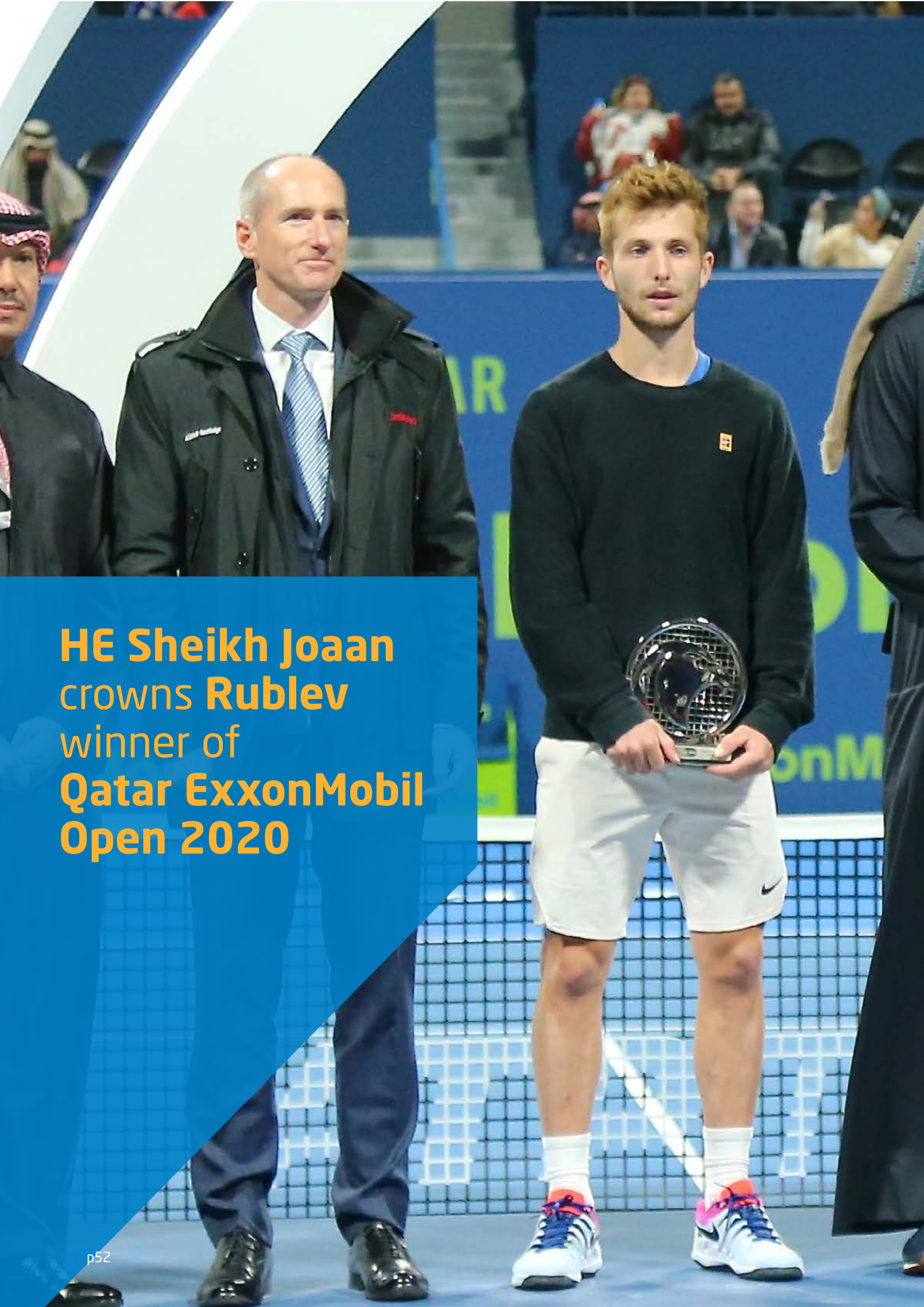
The qualification for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games for beach volleyball teams is based on the points earned through results recorded from September 1, 2018, to June 14, 2020. The 12 teams with the highest number of points secure direct qualification.

Given that requirement, Younis and Tejan will have to persevere and maintain their position or advance to a better position during the coming period.

The Qatari team has achieved many good results since its participation in the 2019 World Tour Finals in Rome where they took ninth position and earned 600 points – the same as they got at the Vienna Tour (5-star) in July. They also collected 400 points at the Tokyo Tour while their participation at the Gstaad Tour also in July, where they finished fifth, gave them 720 points.

They earned 640 points from last June's World Championships and the team also collected 600 points through their participation in the Maoming (China) Championship that was held in May. Before that, they collected 640 points during their participation in the Xiamen (China) Championship in April, in addition to obtaining 480 points during their participation in the Katara World Championship that was held here in Doha in March.





**HE Sheikh Joaan
crowns Rublev
winner of
Qatar ExxonMobil
Open 2020**



HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, President of Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), presented the Andrey Rublev with the Qatar ExxonMobil Open 2020 tennis tournament trophy, following his victory on 11 January.

HH The Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani attended several matches during the tournament, which was held from 6 - 11 January at the Khalifa International Tennis & Squash Complex.

The tournament included the participation of the sport's top players, three-time Grand Slam champion Stan Wawrinka including 2013 champion Richard Gasquet, 2016 Wimbledon finalist Milos Raonic and Doha-resident Fernando Verdasco, the 2009 Australian Open semi-finalist.

Rublev claimed the title after defeating Corentin Moutet 6-2 7-6 (7-3) in the 1 hour 27 minute final. Rublev did not drop a single set throughout the tournament and after taking a 6-1 lead in the second-set tie-break against Moutet he was poised to secure victory.

Moutet beat Milos Raonic in the second round and overcame Fernando Verdasco and top seed Stan Wawrinka in three sets to reach his first final at this level. However, getting the better of Rublev - the runner-up in 2018 - proved too much of a challenge, with the promising 22-year-old kicking off his season by claiming a third ATP Tour title of his career that will send him into the top 20 for the first time. Meanwhile, the Secretary-General of Qatar Tennis Squash and Badminton Federation Tariq Zainal said

that the award of the best ATP 250 Point tournament to the Qatar ExxonMobil for the third time in five years confirms the great success achieved by the championship, both at the level of organisation and participation.

The Qatar ExxonMobil Open, BNP Paribas Open and Abierto Mexicano Telcel presentado por HSBC were named Tournaments of the Year in their respective categories in the 2019 ATP Awards.

Zainal said that the recognition will further challenge the organising committee to do more in the coming years and achieve greater successes.

He explained that at the end of each tournament, the organising committee evaluates its performance and identifies areas of improvement against the next edition.

Zainal noted that the award, which is voted annually by ATP players, recognises the leading standards set across events on the ATP Tour.

He said that this year's edition of the Qatar ExxonMobil Open was a great success thanks to the efforts of the organisers, various institutions and sponsors who contributed to the success of the event, especially the Ministry of Culture and Sports and the QOC.

HE Mr Jassim bin Rashid Al Buenain, QOC Secretary General, congratulated Rublev and noted that this year's tournament featured some of the big names in world tennis, despite the inaugural edition of the ATP Cup taking place at the same time.





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Belarusian Sabalenka lifts Qatar Total Open trophy at debut appearance

The Qatari golf teams won four medals including two golds and two silvers at the Gulf Golf Championships (23rd for men, 12th for youth, the first for cadets, 6th for juniors and the fifth for girls) held in Muscat, Oman from December 26, 2019, to January 1, 2020.

Qatar's Arnaf Jin clinched the boys under 18 gold medal while Qatar's Nada Radwan took the silver medal in the women's event.

Jin won first place with a championship total of 243 during the three rounds coming ahead of Saudi player Khaled Jameel, who achieved a total of 250 and won the silver medal. Third place went to the Emirates player Rashed Al Emadi, who scored 253.

In the boys' team event, Qatar claimed the first place ahead of UAE in second place while Bahrain finished third.

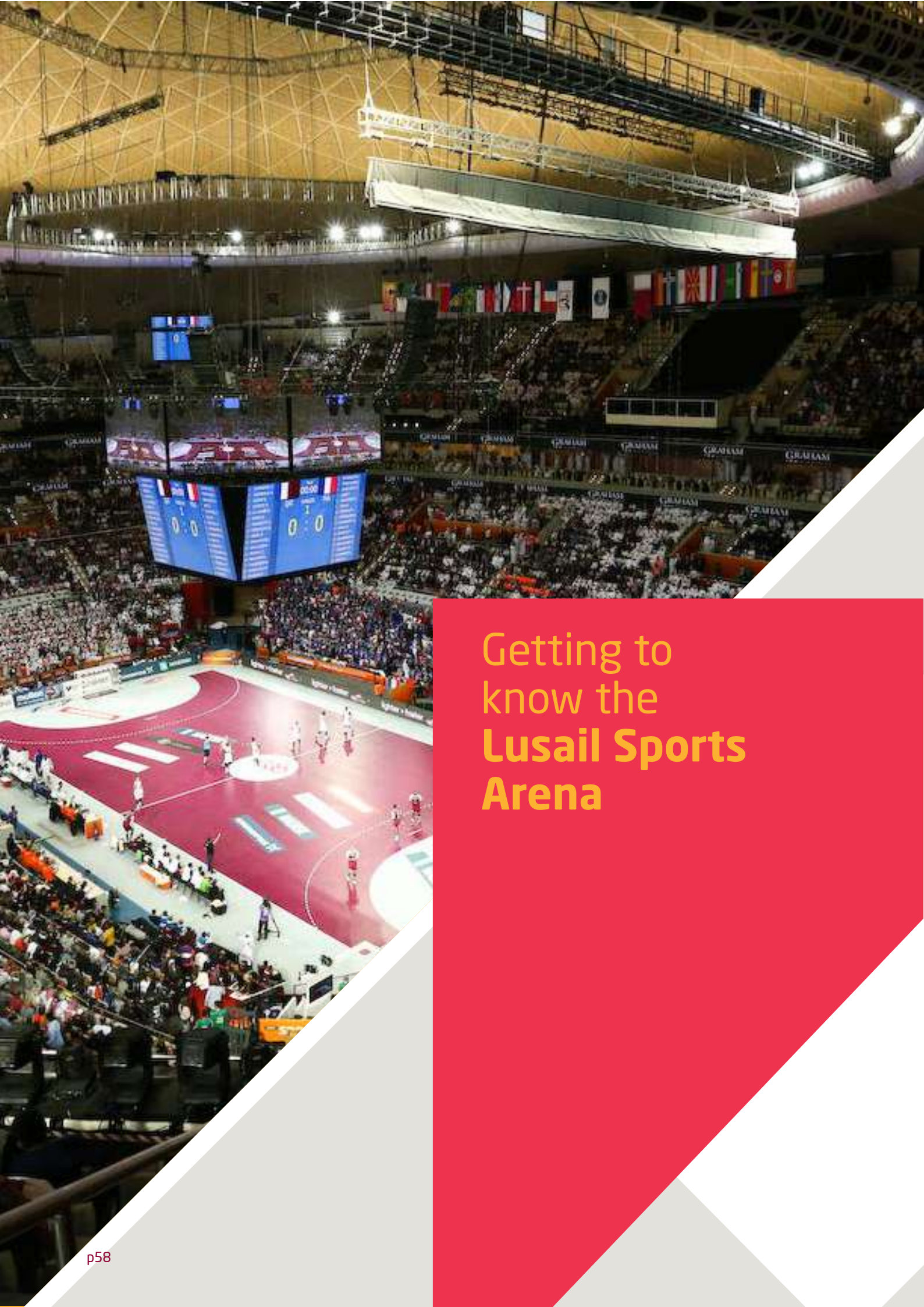
In the women's singles, the Qatari golfer Nada Radwan won the second place and the silver medal with a total of 255 during the three rounds of the tournament, just two shots behind UAE's Rima Al Helou, who came in first place with a total of 253, while UAE's Alia Al Emadi emerged third with 271.

In the youth team competition, Al-Adm Al-Shabab managed to win the gold medal with 498 shots during the three championship rounds, and the UAE team came in second with a total of 506 shots, while the third place went to the Bahraini team with 509 shots.

Qatar's Squad: Ali Al Shahrain, Saleh Al Kaabi, Jeham Al Kuwari, Abdulrahman Al Shahrain, Fahad Radwan, Abdulrahman Al Duhaimi, Arnav Jain, Turkey Al Sada, Rasheed Wali, Essa Ghanim Al Kuwari, Yasmin Al Sharshani, Nada Radwan and Maryam Al Sada.







Getting to know the Lusail Sports Arena

The Lusail Sports Arena was opened in 2014 as one of the venues of the 24th World Men's Handball Championship held from January 15 to February 1, 2015 in Qatar.

The arena, also known as Lusail Multipurpose Hall, is an indoor sports arena located in Lusail, Qatar. It occupies an area of 140,000 square meters in Al Ahli Sports Village. With a seating capacity of over 15,300, it is built to host sports, such as handball, volleyball and basketball as well as music concerts and other events. One of the largest events hosted at the stadium was the 2015 World Men's Handball Championship.

The construction of the spectator stadium, designed by Dar Al-Handasah who was commissioned by the Qatar Olympic Committee, began in 2012.

The arena was designed to reflect the local Qatari culture, featuring the colors of the sea, pearls and the desert sands blended with a central dome inspired by the classic Islamic architecture.

The building is designed to stay as cool as possible by using fritting, shading and bright finishing. It also optimises the ratio of opaque and glazed walls.



QOA hosts Education and Olympic Movement Development Seminar

Qatar Olympic Academy (QOA) hosted a seminar titled 'Education and Olympic Movement Development' at the Al Gharafa Sports Club on October 14, 2019.

Sheikh Sauod bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, Assistant to the President of Amiri Diwan; James McCloud, International Olympic Committee (IOC) Director of the Department of Relations with National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and Olympic Solidarity; and Husain Al Musallam, the Director-General of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), were among the speakers at the event which was attended by a large number of sports dignitaries.

They highlighted the importance of education and Olympic Movement development and also spoke about Qatar's contribution to the promotion of sports in the region.

Jassim Rashid Al Buainain, Secretary-General of the Qatar Olympic Committee and President of QOA, gave the opening speech.









Sheikh Joaan attends IOC Public Affairs and Social Development Commission meeting

HE President of the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani attended the second meeting of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Commission for Public Affairs and Social Development Through Sport held in January 2020 in Lausanne, Switzerland under the leadership of Mr. Luis Moreno and in the presence of IOC President Dr. Thomas Bach.

During the meeting, the members discussed the strategies of developing sport, the Olympic Movement in international communities and the recent achievements made by the IOC. President Bach gave a keynote speech in which he focused on the latest updates of Olympic Movement.

He expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the members and the significant role of the Commission for Public Affairs and Social Development through Sport in boosting the IOC's role as a pioneering organisation in the field of thought, as well as a strong representative in the global sport arena and a key player in boosting international development and peace.

Sheikh Joaan joins thousands in annual diabetes walkathon

The President of the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, joined thousands of community members who gathered to show their support in the fight against diabetes during the 10th annual walkathon organised by the Qatar Diabetes Association, on November 15, 2019.

Over 8,000 people took part in the annual walkathon and allied activities. The walkathon was held in conjunction with the International Diabetes Federation's (IDF) campaign to raise awareness about the risks of type 2 diabetes and its increasing prevalence in the world among all age groups, especially among youth.

The annual World Diabetes Day is observed on November 14 and the theme for this year is 'Protect Your Family'. The Secretary-General of the QOC, Jassim bin Rashid Al Buainain; Executive Director of QDA, Dr Abdulla Al Hamaq; Director of the Qatar Metabolic Institute (QMI), Professor Abdul-Badi Abou-Samra and several other students, representatives of private and public organisations, healthcare facilities, community organisations and many others participated in the walkathon.

Health education booths, free screening for diabetes and many activities like Zumba and yoga demonstrations were featured on the sidelines of the walkathon.





Several institutions including the Qatar Football Association, Committee for Women's Sport, Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI), Primary Health Care Corporation, National Diabetes Strategy, Ministry of Public Health, Qatar Metabolic Institute, Tobacco Control Center at Hamad Medical Corporation and Cardiac Rehabilitation Department at Heart Hospital hosted booths to educate the public on preventing and managing diabetes.

Recent figures from the IDF's Diabetes Atlas indicate that the number of people living with diabetes around the world is expected to rise from 415 million to 642 million by 2040. A sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy eating habits and low levels of awareness are noted as key contributors to the rapid incidence of type 2 diabetes in the Middle East and





Team Qatar win four medals in GCC Golf Championship

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Bida and Popescu claim gold at FIE Doha Grand Prix 2020



Sergey Bida of Russia and Anna Maria Popescu from Romania confirmed their respective positions as the world's top-ranked fencers after they won the men's and women's events of the International Fencing Federation (FIE) Épée Grand Prix Doha 2020, which concluded at the Aspire Dome in Doha on 26 January.

Bida defeated France's Alexandre Bardenet 15-6 in the final, whilst Popescu got the better of Italy's Mara Navarria 15-9 to emerge as the champions of the competition, which served as one of the qualifying events for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Italy's Andrea Santarelli and Japan's Masaru Yamada claimed the bronze medals in the men's while Tatyana Andryushina of Russia and Estonia's Erika Kirpu secured the third place positions in the women's. The event was the first leg of the three Grand Prix series, with Budapest (Hungary) and Cali (Colombia) set to follow the Doha event, which featured over 494 male and female fencers from 45.

The final day of the tournament was attended by HE Mr Jassim bin Rashid Al Buenain, QOC Secretary General, Director of the QOC Sports Affairs Department Khaleel Al Jabir and President of the Qatar Weightlifting and Fencing Federation Mohammad Yousef Al Mana, as well as other top officials.

En route the final, Bida edged Vitalii Medvediev of Ukraine in a closely fought round-of-16 clash before defeating Daniel Jerent of France 15-11 in the quarter-finals. He subsequently defeated Masaru Yamada of Japan 15-10 to reach the gold medal match.

Meanwhile, veteran fencer Popescu, who won her tenth World Cup gold at the 50th edition of the Glaive De Tallin in the Estonian capital last November, proved that experience does matter as she displayed commendable poise and calm in her defeat of Navarria, a gold medalist at the 2018 World Championship in Wuxi, China, in the highly exciting encounter.



The 35-year-old, who took up the sport in 1996 in Bucharest, first defeated Jung Hyo-Jung of South Korea 15-6 in the round-of-16 before going on to narrowly edge Katharine Holmes of the United States 10-9 in the quarters.

In the semi-final, the Beijing 2008 Olympic silver

medallist came up against Tatyana Andryushina of Russia, overwhelming her 15-5 before setting up the clash with the Italian Navarria.

One of the major highlights of the women's event was the 15-11 surprise defeat of top seed Lin Sheng of China by Erika Kirpu of Estonia in the last 64.





Qatar's Thawab Al-Subai'i finishes 5th at Winter Youth Olympic Games

Qatari Thawab al Subai'i finished in fifth place in the 3x3 ice hockey competition of the 2020 Winter Youth Olympic Games held from 9 - 23 January in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Around 1,800 athletes representing 76 National Olympic Committees (NOCs) competed in 16 different sports at the event.

Subai'i was Qatar's first-ever participant at the Winter Youth Olympic Games. The Qatari came close to qualifying for the next round of his event, but only the first four spots qualified. Al Subai'i joined a team

of different nationalities and participated in several matches.

The novel competition format was used for both the men's and women's 3-on-3 events at the Games. Every team had 13 players, all from a different National Olympic Committee (NOC). Each team was identified by its uniform colour.



QOC hosts entertainment day for people with special needs

The Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC), in collaboration with the Qatar Paralympic Committee, organised the 13th Entertainment Day for people with special needs at the Qatar Sports Club on November 21, 2019.

The event, which was attended by the QOC Secretary-General Jassim al-Buenain and several officials from the QOC and the Qatar Paralympic Committee, featured some sports and entertainment activities dedicated to people with mental, vision and motor disabilities, including barrier races, athletics and leisure events. Representatives from many centres for people with special needs, including Qatar Society for Rehabilitation of Special Needs' female education and rehabilitation centre, Noor Institute for the Blind, Doha International Centre for Special Needs, and Al Tamakon School for Comprehensive Education attended the event. Entertainment Day aims to raise the level of awareness for people with disabilities by giving them an opportunity to express their skills by participating in several sporting events.



QOC participates in WADA's World Conference on doping in sport

HE Second Vice President of Qatar Olympic Committee Dr Thani bin Abdulrahman Al Kuwari took part in the 5th Conference of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) on Doping in Sport held from November 5 to 7, 2019, in Katowice, Poland

QOC's participation at the conference reflects the Committee's commitment to supporting international and regional efforts to combat doping as well as protect sports and the athletes from doping that negatively affects their safety and the integrity of sports competitions.



Team Qatar participates in World Paralympic Athletics Championships

The Qatar athletics team for people with special needs participated in last year's World Para Athletics Championships "Dubai 2019", held from November 7 to 16.

The Qatari team was represented at the Championships by five men and women, Abdulrahman Abdulqader, Sarah Masoud, Mohammed Al Kubaisi, Khalid Al Hajri and Mohammad Halas who participated in Shot Put, Javelin Throw, Discus Throw and Wheelchair races.

The delegation was headed by Mr Mohammed Dahim Al-Dossary, a member of the Federation's Board of Directors.







Team Qatar
wins two medals
at **West Asian**
Junior Table Tennis
Championship



The Qatar junior table tennis team claimed two medals at the West Asian Table Tennis Championship held from 25-30 January at the Leaders' Training Institute in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The tournament was organised by the West Asian Table Tennis Federation in cooperation with the International Table Tennis Federation, with the participation of 60 players.

Qatar's rising star Sultan Al Kuwari claimed the gold medal in the boy's under-12 event, whilst the Saudi Arabian duo of Al Al Taher and Amer Aladonesian won silver and bronze respectively.

Khalid Al Yafei also showcased Qatar's brilliance in the sport by winning the silver medal in the under-15 category. Ebaid Zaza of Syria took the gold medal while Salem Al Suwimen of Saudi Arabia clinched the bronze.

Al-Kuwari was in dominant form from the beginning of the competition as he breezed through the group matches without losing a game. He defeated UAE's Abdullah Al-Amhiri

3-1 in the first match before beating Saudi Arabia's Abdul Aziz Al-Zahrani 3-0. He then defeated Lebanon's Ramez Al-Daqdouki with the same result to qualify as the group's leader.

The Qatari star overcame Jordanian Ahmed Samreen in the quarter-final and subsequently dispatched UAE's Hamad Al Hashemi in the semis. In the final match, Al Kuwari showed his superiority over Saudi Arabia's Ali Al-Taher whom he defeated 3-1 to clinch the trophy.

Khaled Al-Yafi won second place and the silver medal in the under-15 category, after losing to Syria's Ebaid Zaza in the final. With the achievement, the Qatari duo has qualified for the Asian Hope Camp, which will be held in Thailand in May.

The Qatar Table Tennis Association (QTTA) headed by Khalil bin Ahmed Al Muhannadi attaches great importance to its rising stars, also known as the Dream Team, and camps are regularly organised for the players to develop their skills and to give them more experiences needed as the future of Qatar's table tennis.



Hassouna emerges as best athlete at 6th Qatar International Cup Weightlifting Championships

Qatar's Fares Ibrahim Hassouna bagged two gold medals, on his way to securing his spot at the Tokyo Olympics next year, at the 6th Qatar International Cup Weightlifting Championships held from December 19 to 24, 2019 at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Doha.

The event, organised by the Qatar Weightlifting and Fencing Federation, featured about 150 athletes representing 44 countries and it was the year's last Qualification Event for Tokyo 2020 at the Silver level.

Hassouna, who is a junior world champion and a world silver medallist at the senior level, won the 96kg class. He defeated his Iranian competitors for his gold medals, lifting 228kg in the clean and jerk and 404kg in total. Hassouna also finished as the best male weightlifter with 907.344 points.



Iran's Kianoush Rostami finished second while his compatriot Ali Miri was third. Rostami won the snatch title with 178kg. Miri's best in the snatch was just 162kg. Fares beat Rostami in all the three attempts in the clean and jerk to ensure his first gold medal. While the Qatari recorded 213, 223 and 228kg, the Iranian hoisted 210, 220 and 225kg and had 899.904 total points, which allowed Fares to win the second gold with a difference of just one kilo.

Turkish Daniyar Ismailov came third with (344 kg and 836) .448 points).

In the women's competitions, Indian Saikhom Mirabai Chanu topped the list with an effort of 194 kg (744.719 points).



Team Qatar wins medals at GCC Billiards and Snooker Championships



Qatar's Ali Al Obaidli clinched the gold after beating Bahrain's Habib Subah in a best of 11 frames match in the Men's Snooker 6 Red event of the GCC Billiards and Snooker Championships held from 28 November to 7 December 2019, in Muscat, Oman.

The duration of the Snooker 6 Red final match was three hours and Al Obaidli beat Subah with a score of 6 frames to 4. In the match, however, Subah made the maximum in 6 Red - 75 points.

In the Men's 8 Ball Team event, Kuwait won the gold, Qatar claimed silver and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain took the bronze medals.



The billiards 10 Ball Single title was won by Qatar's Waleed Majed, who defeated compatriot Bashar Abdul Majed in the race to 9 racks winning 9-2. Majed won the silver and bronze was claimed by Bader Al Aidh and Omar al Shaheen.

Meanwhile, Qatar's Waleed Majed won the silver medal in the billiards 8 Ball Single event after losing 7-9 to Saudi Arabia's Abdullah al Shimmari. Qatar's Ahmed Saif won bronze in the Men's Snooker Single event while his teammate Basheer Abdul Majed also won bronze in the Billiards Single 9 Ball.





Barshim receives 2019 Arab Athlete of the Year award

Qatar's world high jump champion Mutaz Essa Barshim received the 2019 Arab Athlete of the Year award at the Spanish AS Sports Awards Ceremony honouring outstanding athletes in 2019, which was held in Madrid last December.

The award was presented to Barshim by Sheikh Dr Khalid bin Thani bin Abdallah Al Thani, board member of Prisa Media Group, the owners of AS Newspaper. Barshim won the gold medal at the IAAF World Athletics Championships in Doha last October after clearing 2.37m.

The award ceremony was also attended by the Spanish Minister of Culture and Sport Jose Guerrero and Qatar ambassador to Spain Abdullah bin Ibrahim Al Hamar.



Akram Afif wins AFC Player of the Year 2019 award

Second time in a row for Qatar

Qatar's national team star player and Al Sadd Club striker Akram Afif won the Asian Football Confederation's (AFC) Player of the Year 2019 award. The award was announced at a function held in Hong Kong on 2 December 2019.

Akram is the third Qatari player to receive this award.

A driving force behind Qatar's Asian Cup title victory last year, 22-year-old Afif also helped Al Sadd reach the AFC Champions League semi-finals this season.

It was the second consecutive year that a Qatari player has been honoured with the Player of the Year award. His Al Sadd and Qatar teammate, Abdelkarim Hassan, won the award last year, becoming only the second Qatari to bag the title after Khalfan Ibrahim won the award in 2006.

The award was received on his behalf by Al Sadd coach Xavi during the AFC Awards Ceremony held in Hong Kong. The event was attended by FIFA President Gianni





Infantino, AFC President Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim and Qatar Football Association President HE Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Thani, who expressed his delight and congratulated Afif on the achievement, and Al Sadd's Sports Director Mohamed Ghulam.

Akram Afif competed for the title with two Asian football stars, Ali Raza Piranvand, the Iranian team's goalkeeper, and Japan's defender Tumwaki Makeno.

Akram Afif won the award after he inspired the national team to win the 2019 AFC Asian Cup in the UAE, where he notched up the tenth assist which is the highest by any player in the competition, and for his contributions towards Al Sadd's impressive run in the AFC Champions League. Akram was the first player to make 10 assists for goals, including a staggering four in the Al Annabi's match against North Korea, in a single edition of the Asian Cup. Akram scored a goal against Japan in the final of the tournament.



Qatar's Al Harith bags three medals at Arab Gymnastics Championship in Tunisia

Qatar's youth artistic gymnastic team member Rakan al Harith claimed three medals at the Arab Gymnastics Championship held in Tunisia from 25 October - 3 November 2019.

Al Harith stood on the Roman rings to bag gold and followed it up with a silver on the pommel horse. He then went on to win a bronze in the floor exercise event. Al Harith had won a bronze in the pommel horse at the Singapore International Gymnastics Championship earlier in May 2019.



Two gold medals for Qatar's judo team at Arab Championship in Jordan

Qatar judokas clinched two gold medals at the Arab Judo Championship 2019, which concluded on 3 November in Jordan's capital of Amman.

Waleed Aziz Hanafi and Nasser al-Ansi won gold in the Nage-no-Kata class, while Saleha al-Badi took women's -52kg top spot.

Syria's Muhammad Qasim and Sameh Ramadan won silver in the Nage-no-Kata class, while athletes from Jordan and Palestine won the third place.

President of the Qatar Taekwondo, Judo and Karate Federation (QTJKF) Khalid bin Hamad Al-Attiyah attended the competition.

A total of 14 Arab countries - Qatar, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and hosts Jordan took part in the event.

Team Qatar was represented in the championship by Walid Aziz Hanafi, Nasser Al Ansi, Murad Zemmouri, and Salha Al Badi. The delegation was headed by Eid Ali Al Muraikhi, QTJKF Secretary-General and included coaches, Hamid Shaalal and Maher Al Sarrafi.



Qatar U-19 Team secures AFC U-19 Championships Uzbekistan 2020 ticket

Qatar booked a ticket to the AFC U-19 Championships Uzbekistan 2020 after playing a 1-1 draw against Yemen at the Aspire Academy on 10 November 2019.

Both teams knew a point each would be enough for them to qualify and were evenly matched in a tight contest. The young Al Annabi go through as top of the group with seven points, ahead of Yemen due to a better goal difference.

Having won their earlier matches in Group B, Fabio Cesar's drew first blood just before half time.

Less than 10 minutes into the second half, Yemen pulled level when Ahmed Maher sent his effort across goal beating Qatar's Yousef Balideh. Both teams went in search of the winner but settled for a point each.

Both teams ended the tournament with seven points each but Qatar's superior goal difference ensured Qatar finished on top of the group and thus qualify directly for the Asian Championship. Qatar defeated Sri Lanka 5-1 in their first game before beating Turkmenistan 2-1.

Yemen, meanwhile, defeated Turkmenistan 2-1 and Sri Lanka 3-0 to earn their qualification.





Rashed and Meshari Nawaf win Qatar Asian Junior Championship 2019

Qatari player Rashed Nawaf won the Qatar Asian Junior (U-14) Championship 2019, organised by the Qatar Tennis, Squash and Badminton Federation (QTSBF) in cooperation with Asian Tennis Federation (ATF), which was held at the Khalifa International Tennis and Squash Complex in November 2019.

The week-long event featured over 60 players from across Asia. In the final of the boy's singles, Nawaf secured a 6-1, 6-0 victory over his compatriot Meshari Nayef.

In the doubles event, Qatar's Nawaf and Nayef then teamed up to beat Chinese duo Yi Hsuan Chen and Yang Lin 6-0, 6-1.

Lebanese tennis player Maria Breidy hoisted the trophy of the girl's event and she later teamed up with Malaysia's Iman Syuhada Abdullah to win the doubles event.

QTSBF Executive Director Saad al Mohannadi and the Tournament Director Sultan Khalfan crowned the champions in the presence of a large number of tennis fans.



13th edition of Schools Olympic Programme begins

The 13th Schools Olympic Programme (SOP) began at the Aspire Zone on October 28, 2019 and will run over six months, until February 2020.

The SOP is an annual sports development programme and competition for all Qatari schools. The national programme is a collaborative effort of the Qatar School Sports Association (QSSA) and Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

The SOP's mission is to spread a culture of sports throughout Qatari schools and engage the entire youth community in an active and healthy lifestyle, while retaining local values and traditions.

Last year's edition featured 12 sports – football, basketball, volleyball, handball, tennis, table tennis, fencing, gymnastics, athletics, swimming, chess and taekwondo. This year's events will feature students competing in 12 sports in the boys section and 13 in the girl's, with the addition of a '13th sport'.

The SOP is in line with other initiatives undertaken by Qatar as part of the Qatar National Vision 2030. Last year, 333 schools took part in numerous school competitions and saw 14,700 students take part in the various Olympic sports disciplines. At the SOP Opening Ceremony, Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) Secretary-General Jassim Rashid al-Buainain emphasised that the continuity of SOP demonstrates the programme's effectiveness and the objectives it has achieved over the past 13 years.

Al-Buainain was joined by Chairman of the SOP Organising Committee Sheikh Khalifa bin Khalid al-Thani and members of the committee, Chairman of Qatar School Sports Association (QSSA) Rabia Mohamed al-Kaabi and the Chief Executive Officer of Aspire Zone Foundation Mohamed Khalifa al-Suwaidi at the opening ceremony.





SOP hosts Paralympic Day activities at Qatar Sports Club

The Organising Committee of the 13th edition of the School Olympic Programme (SOP) organised the Paralympic Day for children with special needs at Suhaim bin Hamad Stadium of Qatar Sports Club on February 4 and 5, 2020.

The event which was organised by the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) and the SOP Organising Committee, featured the participation of 1000 students representing a huge number of schools and institutions for people with special needs.

The Paralympic Day was attended by QOC Second Vice President Dr Thani bin Abdulrahman Al Kuwari, QOC Secretary General Jassim bin Rashid Al Buenain, Under Secretary of Ministry of Education and Higher Education Dr Ibrahim Al Nuaimi, President of the Qatar School Sport Federation Rabea Al Kaabi and Chairman of SOP Higher Organising Committee Sheikh Khalifa bin Khalid Al Thani.

The QOC Secretary General Jassim bin Rashid Al Buenain hailed the large participation of schools in the Paralympic Day.

“The event aims to provide the children with a chance to show their abilities and potential, with a possibility of joining the national team in the future, and increasing involvement of their families. It is also aimed at encouraging centres, independent schools and schools of special education to participate in the programme,” he said.

His Excellency Al Buainain pointed out that QOC gives great attention to the Paralympic Games.

“There are world champions and Paralympic heroes who have succeeded in raising our dear country’s flag very high, whether in World Championships or the Olympic Games and we are proud of them and we cherish them all. We look forward to great results as they participate in the upcoming Tokyo Olympics this summer,” he added.







QOC, Education Ministry launch third stage of 'Be an Athlete' programme

The Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education on November 15, 2019, launched the third stage of the Kun Riyadi (Be an Athlete) programme for the 2019-2020 academic calendar.

The 'Be an Athlete' programme is Qatar's unique Athlete Development Pathway initiative that is aimed at producing Qatari sporting champions.

The third stage of the programme is focused on developing a comprehensive sports culture and orientation among school and kindergarten children.

While the programme is targeted at all sports in general, the third edition is primarily aimed at promoting swimming, athletics and gymnastics among the children.

The swimming event of the programme is being held at the Al Sadd Club while Khalifa Model School is hosting the gymnastics and athletics activities.

This year's programme is targeted at over 9,600 students from 62 schools for boys and girls and it involves the participation of some Qatari athletes including Ahmed Nabil, Abdullah Misfer and Rakan Mesfer, who are providing support through mentorship and guidance.

Launched in November 2016 by the QOC and Aspire Academy, the "Be an Athlete" programme is a result of a three-year project involving the input of multiple stakeholders, sporting entities and world-class sport development experts from the Aspire Academy to create a framework unique for Qatar.

The programme is aimed at establishing a generation of Qatar champions of the future by focusing on their sport development in all the stages of their life - from early childhood to post-retirement.

The first phase of the programme witnessed the participation of 1353 children aged 7 years old and below from 12 schools and nurseries across Qatar. A total of 5390 students from 28 schools participated in the second stage.







Qatar Olympic Committee marks World Walking Day

The Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) marked the World Walking Day, which is organised annually under the Association for International Sport for All (TAFISA), at the Cultural Village Foundation (Katara) on October 31, 2019.

Around 400 students from 15 primary and preparatory schools took part in the event, which was attended by Secretary-General of QOC Jassim Rashid al-Buainain, in addition to many veteran athletes and celebrities, including Majid al-Khulaifi, Talal Mansour, Hussain al-Rumaihi, Abdul Aziz Hassan and Yassin Ismail.

Marking the World Walking Day is part of the QOC's Community Programme Plan, which aims to spread the concept of sport for all in addition to highlighting the importance of sports in general and walking in particular.

The event started with educational and awareness lectures, at Katara's drama stage, on healthy nutrition, physical activities and rationalisation of electricity and water consumption. Later, participants walked for 1km to Katara beach.



The QOC Secretary-General said that marking the World Walking Day reflects the Committee's goals of spreading the concept of sport for all and making sport and being active a daily habit. He thanked all the participants and sponsors of the events.

Director of Sports Affairs in the QOC Khalil al-Jaber voiced the QOC's keenness on consolidating the concept of practising sports in all times and types. A former member of Qatari athletics team Talal Mansour underlined the importance of sports for all age groups.

Former Qatar football player Abdulaziz Hassan expressed happiness at taking part in the event and urged the participants to dedicate time for walking every day.



Impressive turnout at QOC's Annual Fitness and Health Programme

The Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) organised its annual programme for "Physical Fitness and Health" at Aspire Park last December 2019.

The programme has received an overwhelming response from both genders from different age groups.

The programme included a series of fitness and medical checks, by using vital tools to measure blood pressure, sugar, physical fitness, weight, length, fat and flexibility of the muscles.

Some vital authorities like Qatar Diabetes Association, Aspire and Al-Meera cooperated with the QOC to organise this programme.

The key objective of the QOC's drive is to promote health and sport awareness among individuals and enhance the QOC's relationship with local society by making sport an integral part of their daily lives.



