Muntari strike opens Qatar’s campaign with a victory

‘They (Almoez and Muntari) did well in all the facets... the team as a group were very compact and worked well together’

LOS ANGELES: Despite missing the start of their opening match and having been a substitute for the entire second half, Tunisian forward Youssef Msakni scored the winning goal in Qatar’s 2-1 victory against Luxembourg in a Group C World Cup qualifier at the Olympic Stadium in Istanbul, Turkey yesterday.

Msakni, who arrived in Turkey only on Thursday with a delayed flight from Doha after the World Cup qualifier between Qatar and Luxembourg was postponed due to travelling restrictions amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, replaced forward Almoez Ali after just five minutes of the match.

Qatar’s victory, which came at the expense of a 98th-ranked nation, put them at the top of Group C, with four points from two matches, after they defeated the Netherlands 4-2 last week and were held to a goalless draw by Luxembourg in Doha.

Yet it was Msakni’s goal that put Qatar ahead in the 79th minute and secured the three points for the Asian champions.

Turkish newspaper Milliyet reported that Msakni, who missed the opening match due to a red card he received against Luxembourg, ‘surprised everyone’ with his goal.

The 29-year-old scored with a stunning shot from outside the penalty area to give Qatar the lead and snatch the initiative from Luxembourg, who were on the verge of pulling off an upset.

Msakni, who made his international debut against Argentina in 2016, had scored 37 goals in 77 appearances for Qatar and was expected to play a key role in the team’s quest for a World Cup berth.

The victory was Qatar’s second in two matches and put them in a strong position to qualify for the World Cup finals in Qatar next year. The team faces Azerbaijan on Sunday and again on April 4.

Turkish Football Federation (TFF) vice president Aykut Kocaman said Msakni’s goal was ‘one of the best in Turkish football history’.

‘It is difficult to find someone who can compare with him,’ Kocaman said.

Msakni’s goal, which was the result of a well-organised attack by the team, was the third of the match, with Luxembourg equalising in the 37th minute through a goal from goalkeeper Anthony Moris.

The win, which came after a 0-0 draw against Luxembourg in Doha last week, put Qatar in control of Group C with four points from two matches.

The team faces Azerbaijan on Sunday and again on April 4 in the third leg of the Group C qualifiers.

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Qatar Insurance Group accelerates its corporate social responsibility efforts

Qatar Insurance Group, the leading insurer in Qatar and the region with the official insurance sponsor of Katara’s World Beach Volleyball Championship and Commercial Bank Qatar Masters Golf Championship, has been awarded the status of a 4-Star event by the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) in 2007 and since then have been long-standing and a strong supporter of the event. The tournament is characterized by being one of the stations of the International Volleyball Development Circuit for the current season. The tournament was held at Al Gharafa beach grounds from March 8 to 12, with over 100 participating teams from 68 countries. Qatar Insurance Group was also the official insurance sponsor of three sporting events that take place in exceptional circumstances as the world still faces an unprecedented global pandemic, and these tournaments were held strictly in accordance with the precautionary measures in place. These events were concluded, as per the 4-Star category event, retaining its status as a 4-Star event, with the commitment to support and sponsorship for these important sporting championships.

Ahmed al Jarboey, Senior Vice President – QIC, MIGA retail & Motor Claims, expressed his accomplishment in company’s business to support and sponsorship for these important sporting championships. Al Jarboey said: “The contribution and participation in Katara’s World Beach Volleyball Championship and the Commercial Bank Qatar Masters Golf Championship, which was held at the Education City Golf Club from March 15 to 16. Both of these sporting events took place in exceptional circumstances as the world still faces an unprecedented global pandemic, and these tournaments were held strictly in accordance with the precautionary measures in place. These events were concluded, as per the 4-Star category event, retaining its status as a 4-Star event, with the commitment to support and sponsorship for these important sporting championships.

SPOTLIGHT

Southgate spoiled for choice as ‘home’ Euro 2020 awaits

Pressure is on the England boss to build on a surprise run to the World Cup semis and three World Cup qualifiers against Greece by more, has little knowledge of football’s world governing body, FIFA’s Ethics Committee said it had also noted two fines for racism in 2018. The tournament was held at Al Gharafa beach grounds from March 8 to 12, with over 100 participating teams from 68 countries. Qatar Insurance Group was also the official insurance sponsor of three sporting events that take place in exceptional circumstances as the world still faces an unprecedented global pandemic, and these tournaments were held strictly in accordance with the precautionary measures in place. These events were concluded, as per the 4-Star category event, retaining its status as a 4-Star event, with the commitment to support and sponsorship for these important sporting championships.

FIFA extends ban on former president Blatter until 2026

FIFA ended its former president Joseph Blatter’s ban until 2022 after holding him for a new suspension of six years and eight months over his handling of a 2022 World Cup bid. The former FIFA president was banned for six years in 2015. Former FIFA president Sepp Blatter (left) and secretary general Valcke, the 60-year-old Frenchman who was Blatter’s right-hand man during his 17-year rule, have both been accused of corruption. They both resigned in 2015, citing the need to end their involvement in football. The new bans will only come into effect when Blatter and Valcke stop appealing their decisions. Blatter was forced to stand down as FIFA chief in 2015 and was pronounced dead of a heart attack in 2019. Former FIFA president Blatter was 85. The investigation was prompted by a 2015 complaint from former UEFA president Michel Platini. Blatter and Platini are both the centres of a Swiss prosecution case and face accusations of chiefly receiving huge bonuses over the same period, which Switzerland’s financial crime authorities have found to be illegal. The investigations into Messrs Blatter and Platini were the first to be opened. Blatter and Platini are both part of the ethics commission. They both resigned in 2015, citing the need to end their involvement in football. The new bans will only come into effect when Blatter and Valcke stop appealing their decisions. Blatter was forced to stand down as FIFA chief in 2015 and was pronounced dead of a heart attack in 2019. Former FIFA president Blatter was 85. The investigation was prompted by a 2015 complaint from former UEFA president Michel Platini. Blatter and Platini are both the centres of a Swiss prosecution case and face accusations of chiefly receiving huge bonuses over the same period, which Switzerland’s financial crime authorities have found to be illegal. The investigations into Messrs Blatter and Platini were the first to be opened. Blatter and Platini are both part of the ethics commission. They both resigned in 2015, citing the need to end their involvement in football. The new bans will only come into effect when Blatter and Valcke stop appealing their decisions. Blatter was forced to stand down as FIFA chief in 2015 and was pronounced dead of a heart attack in 2019. Former FIFA president Blatter was 85. The investigation was prompted by a 2015 complaint from former UEFA president Michel Platini. Blatter and Platini are both the centres of a Swiss prosecution case and face accusations of chiefly receiving huge bonuses over the same period, which Switzerland’s financial crime authorities have found to be illegal. The investigations into Messrs Blatter and Platini were the first to be opened. Blatter and Platini are both part of the ethics commission. They both resigned in 2015, citing the need to end their involvement in football. The new bans will only come into effect when Blatter and Valcke stop appealing their decisions. Blatter was forced to stand down as FIFA chief in 2015 and was pronounced dead of a heart attack in 2019. Former FIFA president Blatter was 85. The investigation was prompted by a 2015 complaint from former UEFA president Michel Platini.
Mancini has successfully rejuvenated the Azzurri team and Donnarumma, Barella, and Chiesa are new regular starters.
CRICKET

Fernando leads Sri Lanka fightback

Sri Lanka seemed to be in control of the Test match against the West Indies on Monday after managing to subtract two wickets from the West Indies in a day 2 of the 1st Test. 2nd innings of the match was stopped due to rain and no play could be made today. Sri Lanka is ahead in the Test by 13 runs. Opening bowler Dimuth Karunaratne and Kusal Mendis scored 116 and 70 respectively. The West Indies' future is in doubt as a result of their disappointing showing in the inaugural match. Jermaine Blackwood and Keshaul Charles are the only performers that have been consistently good this year, running higher in the batting order for their country in every Test match they have been a part of in the last 12 months. Sri Lanka captain Dimuth Karunaratne has scored two centuries in his last three Tests against the West Indies, while the West Indies have struggled to score above 150 in all three of their previous Tests against Sri Lanka. The two teams have met 13 times in Test cricket, with Sri Lanka having won 11 and drawn two.

Once in a lifetime: Torchbearers look forward to relay start

Several torchbearers, including some of the most notable figures in their fields, have expressed their excitement and anticipation for the Olympic torch relay. For many, this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be part of such a historic event. The torch relay is an integral part of the Olympic Games, symbolizing the spirit of unity and the sharing of the Olympic values. As the torch is carried from place to place, it brings with it the hope and inspiration of the Olympic movement, reaching out to millions of people around the world. The athletes, teachers, scientists, and other ordinary citizens chosen to carry the flame are not just running but are also carrying the Olympic message and the values of the Games to their communities. The torch relay is a celebration of the Olympic spirit, bringing together people of all ages, backgrounds, and nations. For those selected to carry the flame, it is a moment of pride and honor, a chance to inspire others and to contribute to the Olympic movement in their own unique way. The Olympic torch relay is a powerful symbol of unity and global unity, bringing people together in celebration and shared purpose.
Lightning rampant as depleted Lakers lose third straight

**NFL**

Quarterback Flacco agrees to deal with Philadelphia Eagles

quarterback Joe Flacco has agreed to a deal with the Philadelphia Eagles. The deal reportedly will be worth $15.5 million, with $10 million guaranteed in the first year, and could be worth up to $21 million over two years. The deal reportedly is worth $15.5 million, with $10 million guaranteed in the first year, and could be worth up to $21 million over two years. An Atlanta native, Flacco was selected by the Denver Broncos in the fourth round of the 2008 NFL Draft. He spent his entire career with the Baltimore Ravens, winning one Super Bowl title and landing four straight Pro Bowl selections (2011-14). He was 30-21-1 with 13,470 passing yards and 103 touchdowns in seven seasons.

**NHL**

Lightning stay hot with 2-1 victory over Stars

Tampa Bay Lightning center Steven Stamkos scores against the Dallas Stars during the third quarter of their NHL game at the Amalie Arena Center in Dallas. (USA Today Sports)

Stamkos and the Lightning didn’t look back from there, outscoring the Stars 7-1 in the final two periods to win in a lopsided fashion. Stamkos scored the game’s first goal and added an insurance tally late in the third period to break the game open.

**WOODS**

**NBA**

Ingram rampant as depleted Lakers lose third straight

Brandon Ingram of the New Orleans Pelicans shoots over Wesley Matthews of the Los Angeles Lakers during the opening quarter of an NBA game at Smoothie King Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. (Getty Images/AFP)

Brandon Ingram has been a revelation for the Los Angeles Lakers this season, averaging 23.6 points, 7.3 rebounds, and 3.1 assists per game. He has been a key contributor to the Lakers’ success and has played a crucial role in their playoff chances.
Golf

Rahm prepared to leave Masters for son's birth

J amson Rahm has a word of warning for anyone planning to place a futures bet on his performance at next week's Masters.

“Anybody planning for the birth of his first child. He’s the +1200 betting favourite to win the Masters. "I’m looking forward to the opportunity to play the whole season," he said. "I’m trying to focus on that. I’m trying to compete in those events, trying to do the right things."

Tennis

Depth in women’s game no surprise for top players

“Tennis is a competitive sport, and when you have other big events before the Masters, you have to look at those things as well. I’m trying to focus on that, trying to compete in those events, trying to do the right things." he said.

Europe's No.1 player

"I feel like the level of women’s tennis has really risen"
Russell returns for Scotland's finale against France

‘The only thing we must know is that we have to prove our ability to win.

Lewis Hamilton kicks off the Formula One championship on Sunday with a win for Mercedes, making the 36-year-old Briton a record two-time world champion. The victory at the Bahrain Grand Prix marks the start of a new season for the Mercedes team, which has been embroiled in a dispute with rival Red Bull over engine design.

Mercedes have been beaten in the opening race of the season, with Red Bull's Checo Perez winning in Qatar. The French Grand Prix is the third race of the season, and it will be exciting to see how the teams fare.

The victory marks Hamilton's first win in Bahrain since 2015, when he took the lead from pole position and held it throughout the race. It was a major milestone for the four-time world champion, who now has 93 career wins.

The victory also comes after a difficult season for Mercedes, who have struggled to find form in recent races. Hamilton's win in Bahrain will be a welcome boost for the team as they look to continue their winning streak.

Mercedes have had a strong start to the season, winning the opening races in Qatar and Bahrain. They will be looking to keep that momentum going as they head into the final races of the season.

The Bahrain Grand Prix is the third race of the season, and it will be exciting to see how the teams fare. Mercedes will be looking to continue their winning streak, while Red Bull will be hoping to keep up the pressure.

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Lekhbra tops sprint feature thriller

Celebrate Trainer Mohamed Ghazali captured a treble, three wins for Qatar jockeys.

By Sports Reporter

The decisive ACT CEO raised Mohamed al-Dowais third from the right and Racing Manager Abdul Rahaal at Kuwaiti night with the winners of the three races for the night after their boys Lekhbra's triple victory sprinting at Aspire yesterday. (Pictures: Aspire Academy)

SPORT

Longines Hadathah has achieved impressive success despite pandemic: Hamad al-Attiyah

Hamad al-Attiyah, Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Qatar Olympic Committee, has praised the achievements of the Qatari riders in the fourth edition of the Longines Indoor Arena of Al Shaqab and the Global Champions Tour, despite all the challenges and difficulties that the riders faced during the pandemic.

The Qatari riders achieved a historic victory in the Longines Indoor Arena of Al Shaqab, where they won both the team and individual titles.

Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Qatar Olympic Committee, Hamad al-Attiyah, said: "The Longines Indoor Arena of Al Shaqab was a historic achievement for the Qatari riders, who faced all the challenges and difficulties during the pandemic, which put them at a disadvantage in terms of training and preparation.

"We are proud of the Qatari riders for their success, which is the result of their hard work and dedication. They are an inspiration to all the riders in the region and the world."

The Qatari riders were able to achieve such success because of the support and encouragement they received from the Qatari Olympic Committee, the Qatar Equestrian Federation, and the riders themselves.

"The Qatari riders are a true representation of the Qatari people, who are known for their spirit of determination and resilience. They have shown that they are capable of achieving great things, even in the face of challenges and difficulties."

The Qatar Olympic Committee has played a vital role in supporting the Qatari riders and helping them achieve their goals. The Committee has provided them with the necessary resources and support, which has allowed them to train and compete at the highest level.

The Qatari riders have also shown their gratitude to the Qatari Olympic Committee and the Qatar Equestrian Federation for their support and encouragement.

"We would like to thank the Qatar Olympic Committee and the Qatar Equestrian Federation for their support and encouragement. They have been a source of strength and motivation for us throughout our journey."

The Qatari riders are now looking forward to the future, where they hope to achieve even greater success and bring more glory to the Qatari people. They are already preparing for the next edition of the Longines Indoor Arena of Al Shaqab and the Global Champions Tour, where they hope to achieve even greater success.

"We are looking forward to the next edition of the Longines Indoor Arena of Al Shaqab and the Global Champions Tour, where we hope to achieve even greater success and bring more glory to the Qatari people. We are already preparing for the next edition, and we are confident that we will achieve great things."

The Qatari riders are an inspiration to all the riders in the region and the world, and they are a true representation of the Qatari people, who are known for their spirit of determination and resilience. They have shown that they are capable of achieving great things, even in the face of challenges and difficulties.