Qatar’s beach volleyball duo Younousse and Tijan begin their campaign today

By Yash Mudgal

Qatar Olympic Committee President HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani visited the Qatar Olympic Village in Tokyo yesterday. The meeting reviewed aspects of sports cooperation and ways to support and develop them. The meeting was attended by Secretary General of Qatar Olympic Committee HE Janani Rashid al-Emadi and athletes and delegation at the Olympic Village in Tokyo.

Qatar’s Cherif Younousse is confident of a podium finish at Tokyo Games. Younousse and Tijan, the third seeds in Tokyo, have medalled at the last 10 World Tour events.

Younousse and Tijan are grouped in Group G with Brazilian pair Brouwer/Meeuwsen and Austrian team Schumann yesterday. Younousse and Tijan had just back-to-back finals to the Norwegian pair at TVP World Tour 4-star event at the Cancun Hub. Beach volleyball at Tokyo 2020 is due to run through to August 7.

Younousse eyes glory in Tokyo after Rio disappointment

Qatar’s beach volleyball duo Younousse and Tijan begin their campaign today

Younousse and Tijan have two wins and two losses. In Tokyo, they saw off the strong challenge of the World No 18 Adrian Heidrich and Mirco Gerson at the last 16. The Qatari pair could face the number one ranked pair Anders Mol and Christian Sorum of Norway, who were one of Qatar’s medal hopes five years ago. But, perhaps, bogged down by pressure, they failed to reach the beach volleyball podium.

The Rio Games ended on a disappointing note for 26-year-old Younousse, as he and his partner Blushid died after two wins and two losses at the Olympics, “For me, it’s much better. I think we can do well in Tokyo. But, perhaps, I was not doing well in Rio. I don’t know,” Younousse said.

Since that disappointment of five to win medal in Olympic volleyball five years ago, Younousse has a new partner – Ahmed Tijan – and the pair has firmly established as one of the medal contenders at the Tokyo Olympics. “This time, I’m very important to go better than I did at the previous Olympic Games,” Younousse added.

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I wasn't asked to win, I was asked

11-year-old Romanian Beatrice

Tokyo, lost to

who shot to fame overnight in her

home soil.

problems. And he revealed: “I was at the

around title following persistent shoulder

chose not to go for a third successive all-

at the Ariake Centre. The 32-year-old

events witnessed by 12,000 empty seats

back tonight, “ he said after the sad turn of

I've been able to match the level of per-

match at the Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium.

Liu Jia during their women's singles preliminary round table tennis

horribly wrong though when he lost his

week he said: “I love it, especially because

elling in competing at the pandemic-

Japanese team, Uchimura had been rev-

at the Ariake Gymnastics Centre in

first male gymnast in 44 years to retain his

Olympic debutants all. But while hailing

Uchimura’s exit

 fingertip of the chance to clash in style on

After his premature return to earth

Regarded as one of the greatest gym-

Japanese gymnastics star Kohei

Uchimura's exit

Syria’s civil war has killed around

Syria’s civil war has killed around

izat during their women's singles preliminary round table tennis

Breaststroke at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre yesterday.

Katinka Hosszu struggled in

Hungarian world record holder

Hagino opting out of the event

Smith who qualified fastest in

hauled in by Australian Brendon

world record time and

for some reason I was ripped

for some reason I was ripped

a lot of variables when it comes

Aimee Willmott of Britain.

seconds clear of second-placed

26-year-old Australian swimmer

4:33.55.

The triple gold medallist, nick-

The other three — including

three groups competed

an unseasonable heat.

three points, this is an achieve-

Three out of three — says there are more chapters to

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She’s bidding for a third successive

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**HORSE RACING**

**Wahraan eases to a second successive victory for Al Shaqab Racing**

By Sport/Reporter

Wahraan eases to a second successive victory for Al Shaqab Racing the way to an excellent fourth

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India’s Olympic weightlifter Chanu Saikhom Mirabai says Tokyo silver meant ‘dream come true’

India’s Olympic weightlifting hero Chanu Saikhom Mirabai on Thursday said the bronze she won in Tokyo was the “dream come true” for herself and her country.

“Winning the bronze for India in such a difficult and special Olympics is the proudest moment of my life and I assure you we will work hard and bring more medals for India,” said Mirabai, who added that the challenge for her now is to retain her place in the top 10 in the world and the next Olympic Games.

The 25-year-old Manipuri, who won the bronze in the women’s 49kg category, said she had worked hard to overcome injuries and setbacks and was determined to continue fighting for more medals.

“I want to stay focused on my training and ensure that I continue performing at my best level to qualify for the next Olympics,” she said.

Mirabai, who has won three national and four international medals, said the Tokyo Games was a special event for her as it was her first Olympic appearance.

“Winning a bronze medal in the Olympics was a dream come true for my country,” she said.

India’s Weightlifting Federation welcomed the hero’s victory and said the country could be proud of its achievements.

“We are extremely proud of Mirabai’s performance in Tokyo and we are confident that she will continue to bring glory to our nation in the years to come,” said the Federation’s President, Rajiv Verma.

India’s other Olympic medallist, shopping for a rare chance for a medal in the men’s 400m medley in the pool, said his shoulder injury to be fit for the Games. “In my case, it’s just a matter of time before I’m back in the pool,” he said.

The Olympic Games in Tokyo, which are the first to be held in Japan, have been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

In cycling’s gruelling road race, 2019 Giro d’Italia champion Tadej Pogacar of Slovenia won the 2021 edition, finishing off a three-man breakaway in the final kilometre.

The 22-year-old Pogacar, who had won the Tour de France in 2020, crossed the line in second place, with Belgium’s Wout van Aert second and France’s Julian Alaphilippe third.

“Today was a special day for me. I’ve been working hard for this race for a long time and I’m happy to have won,” said Pogacar.

Meanwhile, China’s Chen Xiang, who had won the women’s 49kg weightlifting gold at the 2018 Asian Games, secured a silver medal in the same category at the Tokyo Games.

“I was really happy to win the silver medal,” she said. “It’s a big step forward for me and I hope to continue improving.”

China’s other Olympic medallist, shopping for a rare chance for a medal in the men’s 60kg final at the iconic Nippon Budokan, was Taekwondo champion Tadej Pogacar. It was only Ecuador’s Daniel Diaz who took the gold.

“I’m very happy to have won gold,” said Diaz. “It was a tough fight, but I was able to pull ahead in the final seconds.”

In shooting, Indian shooting star Mirabai, who won silver at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014 in the 10m air rifle event, won gold in the same category at the Tokyo Games.

“I am very happy to have won the gold medal,” she said. “I have been working very hard for this and I’m glad it paid off.”

The Tokyo Olympics, which were postponed from 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, are being held without spectators.

India has won three medals so far in Tokyo, including a gold in athletics and silver in weightlifting.