

Iran Scoop Another Gold at Asian Athletics Championships



Iran's Hossein Keyhani (R) competes on his way to win the men's 3000m steeplechase event, during the third day of the 22nd Asian Athletics Championships at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, India, on July 8, 2017. (Photo by AFP)

TEHRAN (Press TV) - Iranian sportsmen have maintained their commendable performance at the 22nd edition of the Asian Athletics Championships in India, and

picked up another gold medal to raise the Islamic Republic's total medal count to five at the continental sports event.

Hossein Keyhani set the time of

8 minutes and 43.82 seconds in the men's 3,000-meter steeplechase, and gained the admiration of thousands of people at the Kalinga Stadium in the eastern

Indian city of Bhubaneswar after claiming the top spot.

Qatar's Yaser Salem finished runner-up, having clocked 8:46.16 minutes. Ali Ahmad from Saudi Arabia ran the race in 8 minutes and 52.64 seconds, and got the bronze medal.

Earlier in the tournament, the Iranian athletes had collected four medals, including three gold ones. Ehsan Haddadi, Ali Samari and Hassan Taftian clinched three gold medals in discus throw, shot put as well as the 100-meter dash respectively.

Moslem Niadoost stood on the second podium in the 1,500-meter run as well.

The 2017 Asian Athletics Championships, which are the 22nd edition of the Asian Athletics Championships, opened in Bhubaneswar, India, on July 6 and will wrap up on July 9. Around 800 athletes from 45 countries have attended the event.

Russia to Play Football Friendly Against Iran

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Russia's national football team is scheduled to play a friendly match against Iran as part of preparations for the 2018 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Vitaly Mutko said.

"There will be two games and the coach wants (to face) teams from Asia and America. We need to explore different styles. We plan to play with Iran this fall, but the contract is yet to be signed," Mutko, who is also the president of the Russian Football Union, told reporters, according to the Tass news agency.

"This game (against Iran) will not be held at (Moscow's) Luzh-

niki stadium, we will find a place to play," he added.

On June 13, Iran head coach Carlos Queiroz said that the match had been scheduled for October 10 in Russia.

Iran secured a berth in the 2018 World Cup after defeating Uzbekistan 2-0 in Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

Iran cemented its position at the top of Group A with 20 points. South Korea is second with 13 points. Uzbekistan sits third with 12 points.

The top two teams in each of Asia's two qualifying groups advance automatically to the finals while the teams in third place go through a series of playoffs.

Strong Punishment If Vettel Reoffends

VIENNA (Dispatches) - Sebastian Vettel has been told he faces "very strong" punishment if he commits an offence similar to his collision with Lewis Hamilton in Azerbaijan.

Vettel was given a 10-second stop-and-go penalty in the race in Baku for deliberately driving into Hamilton.

Governing body the FIA decided at a hearing on Monday not to take more action against the Ferrari driver.

"I would have been uncomfortable to go further than what has been done," said FIA president Jean Todt.

"I would be very comfortable to be very strong if it happens again. He knows that."

Todt did not specify what he meant by a "very strong" punishment, but it can only mean a disqualification from at least one race.

Todt said: "Clearly I wish that he would have been able to control himself better."

Vettel was also put on a warning after last year's Mexican Grand Prix, when he swore over the radio at FIA F1 director Charlie Whiting because was unhappy about a lack of action over the driving of Red Bull's Max Verstappen.

Vettel has apologized publicly for the incident and also for falsely accusing Hamilton of brake-testing him.

It was Vettel's belief that had caused him to run into the back of Hamilton, provoking his anger and leading to him then banging wheels with the Mercedes.

Hamilton has said Vettel did not apologize in their first conversation about the incident on the day after the Baku race, but that the following day he did so when they exchanged text messages.

Calmejane Wins Stage Eight of Tour de France

LONDON (Dispatches) - Britain's Chris Froome retained the race leader's yellow jersey as Frenchman Lilian Calmejane won stage eight of the Tour de France.

Direct Energie rider Calmejane claimed the biggest win of his career despite cramping late on after launching a late break at the end of the 187.5km stage.

The 24-year-old, competing in his first Tour de France, finished 37 seconds ahead of Dutchman Robert Gesink.

Ireland's Nicolas Roche was fourth, 50 seconds adrift of Calmejane.

He not only becomes the first French debutant to win a Tour stage since Thibaut Pinot in 2012, but moves to the top of



Calmejane battled cramp in the final 5km to win his second Grand Tour stage

the King of the Mountains competition, taking the polka dot jersey from Italian rider Fabio Aru.

"It's huge. It was everything I was dreaming of," said Calmejane, who also won a stage on his Vuelta a Espana debut in

2016.

In another development, Britain's Geraint Thomas has been forced to abandon the Tour de France after crashing on stage nine.

The Team Sky rider, one of race leader Chris Froome's key helpers in the mountains, came off on a descent.

Welshman Thomas, who was second overall at the start of the stage, has a suspected broken collarbone, according to the Tour's official website.

He won stage one of this year's race and wore the leader's yellow jersey until Froome took it after stage five.

Thomas also crashed out of the Giro d'Italia in May, when he was Team Sky's race leader.

Federer, Djokovic Ease Into Last 16 at Wimbledon



Roger Federer of Switzerland celebrates after the men's singles third round match against Mischa Zverev of Germany at the Championship Wimbledon 2017 in London, Britain, on July 8, 2017.

LONDON (Xinhua) - Seven-time champion Roger Federer and three-time winner Novak Djokovic were in imperious form as they both posted convincing Centre Court victories in the third round of the Wimbledon Championships.

Second seed Djokovic was too strong for former world No. 10 Ernests Gulbis of Latvia. The Serb prevailed 6-4, 6-1, 7-6(2) to set a fourth-round meeting with unseeded Adrian Mannarino who upset fellow Frenchman and No.

15 seed Gael Monfils 7-6 (3), 4-6, 5-7, 6-2, 6-2.

"I'm delighted with what I achieved today," Djokovic said. "I raised the level of tennis. Comparing to the first couple of matches and the last couple of weeks, I think this was the most focused I was on the court and obviously at the right time because Gulbis, he is a great challenge.

Third seed Federer became the last man to book a berth in the last 16 with a 7-6(3), 6-4, 6-4 victory over German No. 27 seed Mischa Zverev.

The 18-time Grand Slam winner finished with 58 winners and just seven unforced errors. He will take on former semifinalist No. 13 seed Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria, who outclassed Dudi Sela before the Israeli retired hurt while trailing 6-1, 6-1.

Eighth seed Dominic Thiem progressed to the second week for

the first time with a 7-5, 6-4, 6-2 result over American Jared Donaldson. The Austrian next faces former finalist Tomas Berdych. The Czech No. 11 seed easily defeated David Ferrer of Spain 6-3, 6-4, 6-3.

On the women's side, former finalists Garbine Muguruza and Angelique Kerber will face off for a place in the quarterfinals on Monday after contrasting but impressive third-round performances.

Muguruza, who was beaten by Serena Williams in the 2015 final, defeated Romania's Sorana Cirstea 6-2, 6-2 while world No. 1 Kerber fought back from one set down to beat American Shelby Rogers 4-6, 7-6 (2) 6-4.

Danish fifth seed Caroline Wozniacki, Polish ninth seed Agnieszka Radwanska and Russia's seventh seed Svetlana Kuznetsova all advanced to the last 16.



Wayne Rooney

MANCHESTER (Dispatches) - Manchester United's former England captain Wayne Rooney has rejoined his boyhood favorites Everton on a two-year deal from their Premier League rivals, the striker said on Sunday.

"Excited to be back at Everton. Can't wait to meet up with Ronald Koeman and the lads! #EFC," he said on twitter where he was pictured wearing an Everton shirt.

Rooney, who has moved on a free transfer, spoke of his excitement at returning to his boyhood club.

"Winning trophies with Everton would be the pinnacle," he said. "I really feel now the club is moving in the right direction, bringing the right caliber of players in. I want to be part of it and hopefully part of a successful Everton team.

"It's a great feeling to be back. I'm excited, I cannot wait to meet the lads, get on the training pitch and then get on the pitch to play. I'm ecstatic - I just cannot wait to get back playing."

Rooney scored the winner for Everton against Arsenal in the Premier League while only 16 but moved to United two years later for a fee reported to be 25 million pounds (\$32.23 million).

Harden Signs Super-Maximum Extension Deal With Rockets

HOUSTON (Dispatches) - James Harden and the Houston Rockets have agreed on a four-year contract extension that reportedly is the richest in NBA history.

The contract is a super-maximum extension that will guarantee Harden \$228 million through the 2022-23 season, league sources told ESPN.

"Houston is home for me," Harden said in a state-

ment released by the Rockets.

"Owner Leslie Alexander has shown he is fully committed to winning and my teammates and I are going to keep putting in the work to get better and compete for the title."

Harden, runner-up for the NBA's Most Valuable Player award last season, has two years and \$59 mil-

lion left on his current contract. The four-year extension carries a value of \$170 million.

The Rockets fast-tracked the Harden extension with the arrival of All-Star guard Chris Paul from the Los Angeles Clippers, and reportedly are trying to complete a deal with the New York Knicks for eight-time All-Star forward Carmelo Anthony.