



# Bahrain set for knockout test

Kingdom's national handball team to face 2012 Olympic champions France in quarter-finals today of men's handball tournament at Tokyo Games

TDT | Manama

Bahrain face off with 2012 Olympic champions France today in the first of four quarter-final matches in the men's handball tournament at the Tokyo Games.

The fixture is scheduled for a 3.30am throw-off, Bahrain time, and it will put the Bahrainis against the top team of Group A from the preliminary round. The nationals qualified from Group B as the fourth-ranked side.

"The French national team is one of the most prominent teams in the world," Bahrain national team's young star Mohamed Mohamed was quoted as saying.

"They had previously won Olympic gold, been crowned world champions several times and won the European championship, but this does not mean giving up in facing them, but rather playing with full force in order to bring a high level commensurate with the reputation of Bahrain handball."

Mohamed added that the Bahrainis proved at this Olympics that they should not be underestimated when facing top global opposition. He added that it will be most important for the team to put on a good performance and fight until the end.

The nationals will today be wearing their white kits, which



Bahrain's Mohamed Mohamed in action during the preliminary round

is one of the three official colours adopted for the national

## Today's QF games

(all times Bahrain)

3.30am: France vs Bahrain

7.15am: Sweden vs Spain

11am: Denmark vs Norway

2.45pm: Germany vs Egypt

team, in addition to red and gold. The French will be in blue.

The winner of Bahrain's game with France will be pitted in the last four against the victor of the other quarter-final between Germany and Egypt.

The two other games in the round of eight are between Sweden and Spain, and Denmark



Bahrain players prior to the start of a game in Tokyo

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MOHAMED MOHAMED

and Norway.

From the quarters onwards, there can be no draws. Should the game be tied after regular time, overtime will be played consisting of two halves of five minutes each.

If the game is again tied after a first overtime period, a second period is played. This overtime period also consists of two halves of five minutes apiece.

Should the match still not be decided after the second overtime period, the winner is determined through a seven-metre shoot-out.



**The winner of Bahrain's game with France will be pitted in the semi-finals against the victor of the other quarter-final between Germany and Egypt**

## Bahrain delegation chief meets WADA regional director



HH Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, right, presents Kazuhiro Hayashi with a token of appreciation

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Bahrain Olympic Committee vice-president and the Kingdom's delegation head at the Tokyo Olympics His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa met yesterday with World Anti-Doping Agency Asia/Oceania Regional Office director Kazuhiro Hayashi.

They discussed issues of mutual interest and ways of

joint cooperation in combatting doping.

HH Shaikh Isa affirmed BOC's keenness to work with WADA to eliminate the scourge of doping and raise awareness of its dangers.

On his part, Hayashi wished the BOC continued success and prosperity.

At the end of their meeting, HH Shaikh Isa presented Hayashi with a token of appreciation from BOC.

## Bahraini quartet begin their medal hunt in Tokyo

● **Al Siddique Mikho set to compete on track in Men's 1,500m Heats**

● **Abdelrahman Mahmoud set for the field in Men's Shot Put Qualification**

● **Birhanu Balew, Dawit Fikadu to run in separate Men's 5,000m Heats**

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Bahrain's bid for an athletics medal at the Tokyo Olympic Games goes up a notch today with four athletes in action at Tokyo's Olympic Stadium.

They include Al Siddique Mikho in the Men's 1,500m Heats, Abdelrahman Mahmoud in the Men's Shot Put Qualification, and the pair of Birhanu Balew and Dawit Fikadu in the Men's 5,000m Heats.

Mikho will be the first to take to the track today at 3.16am, Bahrain time, when he competes in the first of three heats

in his distance. He will be one of 16 runners in the race and will need to finish in the top six or be one of the six fastest losers to advance to the semi-finals.

Mikho heads into the event with a season's best of three minutes 33.81 seconds, not far from his personal best of 3:33.31.

There are a total of 48 athletes in the Men's 1,500m first round. The semi-finals are scheduled for Thursday.

For Mahmoud, he will be in Group A of the Men's Shot Put Qualification, starting at 1.15pm, Bahrain. He is one of 16 athletes in the group, and must have a throw of 21.20 metres or be at least amongst the 12 best performers to advance to the final. Group B also has 16 athletes, who all hope to make it to the medal round, slated for Thursday.

Mahmoud has a season's and personal best of 21.15m.

In the Men's 5,000m Heats, Balew will be in the first of two races at 2pm, Bahrain time, amongst a field of 20. He will need to be amongst the top five finishers or five fastest losers to make it through to the final, which will be held on Friday.



Bahrain Shot Putter Abdelrahman Mahmoud all set for Qualification

Fikadu is racing amongst another group of 20 in the second heat, set to start at 2.20pm, Bahrain.

Balew has a fastest time of 12:57.71 for this year and a personal best of 12:56.26, while Fikadu's top career mark is 13:10.40.

The quartet are part of Bah-

rain's 13-athlete team in Tokyo. John Koech and Winfred Yavi have already appeared for the national team in their respective Steeplechase races, with Koech pulling out of the men's event due to injury and Winfred advancing as the fastest qualifier from the women's heats to their final.