

# Iran set to reject Azerbaijan's bid for Ma'soumi: *Report*

## Sports Desk

The Wrestling Federation of Iran is expected to reject a request to issue a letter of consent allowing superheavyweight prodigy Amirreza Ma'soumi to represent Azerbaijan at September's World Championships, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

Ma'soumi, 20, shared a photo of himself alongside his father and personal coach, Fardin Ma'soumi, in a training session with Azerbaijan's national team in Baku earlier in July – hinting at plans to continue his international career overseas.

The controversial photo was released just days after Alireza Dabir, the sport's governing body in Iran, had warned the freestyle 125kg wrestler against further absence in the Iranian training camp.

the Azerbaijan Wrestling Federation made an official approach for Ma'soumi on Tuesday, reportedly offering 300,000 Swiss francs for his services. However, ISNA wrote that Dabir has no intention of letting go of the Iranian wres-

ting's hottest assets and will inform the European country of his decision in an official letter next week.

Ma'soumi has been the dominant force of the superheavyweight class across different age groups in recent years, grabbing six world gold medals – including last year's junior and under-23 titles.

He was also part of the Iranian seniors' team in February's Ranking Series event in Zagreb and then represented the country at the Asian Championships in March, cruising to the 125kg gold on both occasions.

However, Ma'soumi, who fell short against compatriot Amirhossein Zare' in the Iranian Olympic trials last year, saw his hopes of a securing place in the world showpiece dashed after a second setback against the reigning world champion in May's International Takhti Cup final in Isfahan.

Dejected by some referring decisions in the 8-2 defeat, Ma'soumi visited Yerevan in June for talks with the Armenian wrestling officials, including national team head coach Abetnak Kurginyan,

about the prospect of representing the European country at international competitions.

Under the United World Wrestling rules, Ma'soumi would require a letter of consent from the Iranian federation before switching citizenship – a request that has been firmly rejected by Dabir.

"We've always granted approval for lower-ranked wrestlers [to represent other countries], but Ma'soumi is a top-notch asset for us, and already a favorite for world and Olympic golds. He has just been unlucky to have Zare' as a domestic opponent, though I believe the rivalry will push both wrestlers to new heights. I'm sure they are by far the world's top two in their weight class," Dabir said in interview in mid-July.

"Every wrestler must know his place. If Ma'soumi skips the next national camp, he will be axed from the under-23 squad as well. The national team interests come first. I like him like my own son, and I just hope he is given the right advice," added the former world and Olympic champion.



● UWW

## Asian Roller Skating Championships:

# Iran's Ahmadi wins speed slalom silver

## Sports Desk

Taraneh Ahmadi got Iran off the mark at the Asian Roller Skating Championships in Jencheon, South Korea, by grabbing a silver medal in the women's inline freestyle speed slalom event.

Ahmadi suffered a setback against Chinese Taipei's Liu Chiao-hsi after three races and settled for a runner-up finish behind her familiar foe, who had also beaten the Iranian to the gold medal at the Asian Games 2023.

Romina Salek, who grabbed a precious gold medal at the Hero Battle Cup in Milan earlier in the month, was the other Iranian contestant in Wednesday's event but finished her campaign empty-handed after a defeat in the bronze-medal showdown.

Parinza Zakaria and Rei-



● IRNA

haneh Mostafaei competed in the women's junior competitions but failed to finish on the podium.

Meanwhile, Reza Lesani – also a gold medalist in Milan – bounced back from a semi-final setback to win a consolation bronze in the in the

men's speed slalom contests, thanks to a three-race victory over a Taipei opponent. Amir-Mohammad Savari, Roham Gharib, and Amirhossein Aslani also represented Iran in the men's event but failed to reach the closing stages of the competition.

## FIBA U16 Asia Cup WABA qualifiers:

# Iranian boys beat Jordan to advance to finals

## Sports Desk

Iran secured a place at the 2025 FIBA U16 Asia Cup in Ulaanbaatar, thanks to a 96-88 victory over host Jordan at the West Asian qualifiers on Tuesday.

Bardia Khosravi had a double-double with 19 points and 11 rebounds and was named the most valuable player of the contest.

Alireza Rashidi and Yassin Morovvat chipped in 18 points apiece as Iran claimed a second victory in Group A of the qualifiers, following the 86-81 win against Syria on the preceding night.

Mohammad-Sadeq Pakgozar also finished in double figures for Iran, dropping 16 points.



● DANIAL AHMADI/IRIBF

Kareem Al-Khawaldeh led the scoring chart for the host nation with a game-high 21 points, followed by Michael

Sahlieh (16 points) and Faris Abusalem (11). Iranian boys, who had suffered a 84-70 loss to Lebanon in their open-

ing game in Amman, will conclude the West Asian qualifiers with a rematch against the Lebanese today.



● IRIHF

## Asian Women's Youth Handball Championship:

# Iran defeats Hong Kong, to play Chinese Taipei for fifth spot

## Sports Desk

Iranian girls claimed a comfortable 32-15 win against Hong Kong on Wednesday to remain on course for a consolation fifth-place finish at the Asian Women's Youth Handball in Jinggangshan, China.

Diana Rezaei delivered a player-of-the-match performance as Iran secured a second victory at the competition, having beaten India 42-30 in the final game in Group B.

The win had seen Iran finish third in the group table behind reigning champion Japan and South Korea.

Iran began its campaign with a 40-27 loss to Japan on the opening day of the event, before falling short by the same scoreline against South Korea, which was beaten by Japan in the final showpiece of the previous edition in 2023.

Standing between Iran and the fifth spot – and a place at the 2026 IHF Youth World

Championship – in today's showdown at the Gymnasium of Jiangxi University of Software Professional Technology is Chinese Taipei, which came out victorious (29-24) against India earlier on Wednesday. This is the 11th edition of the flagship age-group continental event. South Korea is the most-decorated team of the competition with a remarkable eight titles, with Iran and Japan winning the previous two editions.