

# Riyadh 2025 Islamic Solidarity Games: Iran rallies past Türkiye to maintain perfect run in volleyball

## Sports Desk

The Iranian men's volleyball team claimed its third consecutive victory at the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh, recovering from an early setback to defeat Türkiye 3-1 (21-25, 25-23, 25-20, 25-16) on Saturday. The Asian powerhouse had edged Bahrain in a five-set thriller (25-21, 22-25, 25-16, 22-25, 15-7) in their opening game, before coming out victorious in straight sets (25-22, 25-15, 25-18) against Qatar on Thursday. "It became a bit complicated for us in the first set and we just couldn't get our game going. However, this is a team on the rise. We tend to settle into the match and find our game very quickly," Iranian middle blocker Yousef Kazemi said after Sunday's victory. Held in a round-robin for-

mat, the men's volleyball event in Riyadh features six teams – Iran, Türkiye, Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Chad – with Iran sitting firmly atop the table on five points. The top two in the standings will square off in the gold-medal match on Thursday. "I don't think there's a team in this tournament that can challenge us," Kazemi added, though Iran head coach Peyman Akbari remained wary of the "constant pressure" on his players to win every game. "We lost the first set because Türkiye simply played better. They're a strong team, with several experienced players who were part of their squad at the World Championship [in September]," Akbari said. "We identified Türkiye's vulnerabilities after the first set, and in the end, our

gameplan and the team's concentration paid off, allowing us to secure a decisive victory. We came here expecting to win, and we got the job done," added the Iranian coach. "It's unfair to put constant pressure on the players to deliver a victory in every single game. When we win, people say we've only done our duty – but when we don't, the reaction is completely different. "We have yet to secure a place in the final. There are two more games ahead of us, and we have to win them both," Akbari said. Iran will take on Chad at the Boulevard SEF Arena today, before facing the host nation on Wednesday. Qatar defeated Chad 3-0 (25-16, 25-22, 25-18) on Sunday, while Saudi Arabia fell 3-1 (25-27, 25-18, 25-16, 25-21) to Bahrain.



Iranian players celebrate a point during a 3-1 victory over Türkiye in the men's volleyball event at the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on November 8, 2025.  
● volleyball.ir

## Jahanbakhsh omitted as Iran names roster for Al Ain tourney



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## Sports Desk

Iran head coach Amir Ghalenoei has named a 26-man squad for the upcoming four-nation friendly tournament in Al Ain, UAE – which also features Egypt, Cape Verde, and Uzbekistan. Iran will face Cape Verde on Thursday, with the winner taking on Egypt or Uzbekistan the following Tuesday. The tournament will be part of Iran's preparation for the 2026 FIFA World Cup – starting June 11 in the United States, Mexico, and Canada. Cape Verde capped off a fairytale run in the African qualifiers by defeating Eswatini 3-0 in October to clinch its maiden World Cup berth, becoming the second smallest country in the tournament's history. Iranian skipper Alireza Jahanbakhsh, who joined FCV Dender EH in the Belgian Pro League last week, has been left out of the squad for this international break "to make up for his absence in pre-season and

to develop his physical fitness with his club," according to the Iranian Football Federation. Sardar Azmoun, Mahdi Qayedi, Rouzbeh Cheshmi, Mohammad-Mahdi Mohebbi, and Ali Qolizadeh are the other high-profile absentees from Iran's squad, all sidelined with injuries. Hossein Kan'anizadegan is back in the roster after missing October's international break with injury, while his Persepolis teammate Mohammad Omri earned a call-up following a couple of impressive performances for the Tehran Reds in the Iranian league. Kayserispor center-back Seyyed Majid Hosseini has been named in the squad for the first time in nearly two years, having struggled with numerous injuries since the 2023 Asian Cup, while midfielder Hadi Habibinejad earns his first international call-up after guiding Chadormalou to a surprise top spot in the Iranian top-flight table. The following is Iran's 26-man squad for the friendly tournament

in Al Ain:

Goalkeepers: Alireza Beiranvand (Tractor), Seyyed Payam Niazmand (Persepolis), Seyyed Hossein Hosseini (Sepahan), Mohammadreza Akhbari (Sepahan)  
Defenders: Shoja Khalilzadeh (Tractor), Hossein Kan'anizadegan (Persepolis), Seyyed Majid Hosseini (Kayserispor), Mohammad-Amin Hatzbavi (Sepahan), Saleh Hardani (Esteghlal), Arya Yousefi (Sepahan), Danial Esmaeilifar (Tractor), Milad Mohammadi (Persepolis), Ali Ne'mati (Foolad Khuzestan)  
Midfielders: Saeid Ezzatollahi (Shabab Al Ahli), Mohammad Qorbani (Al Wahda), Saman Qoddous (Ittihad Kalba), Omid Nourafkan (Sepahan), Mohammad Mohebbi (FC Rostov), Mahdi Hashemnejad (Tractor), Alireza Koushki (Esteghlal), Mahdi Tikdari (Golgozar Sirjan), Hadi Habibinejad (Chadormalou)  
Strikers: Amirhossein Hosseinzadeh (Tractor), Mohammad Omri (Persepolis), Ali Alipour (Persepolis), Mahdi Taremi (Olympicos).

## Maqsoudlou into last 16 at Chess World Cup

## Sports Desk

Iranian grandmaster Parham Maqsoudlou secure a last-16 spot at the 2025 FIDE World Cup in Goa, India. No. 33 in the latest FIDE world ranking, Maqsoudlou defeated Croatian GM Ivan Saric 1.5-0.5 to advance to the fourth round, which starts on Tuesday. The two played to a stalemate in the first encounter before the 25-year-old Iranian triumphed in the second matchup. As a top-50 seed in the tournament, Maqsoudlou was given a bye in the first round and then beat Russian Alexander Motylev, who represents Romania in Goa, in the second round. The tournament is an eight-round knockout event. The

losers of the two semifinals will play a match for third place. The players who finish first, second, and third qualify for the Candidates Tournament 2026, a tournament to

decide the challenger for the World Chess Championship 2026. Matches consist of two classical games, followed by rapid and blitz tiebreaks if needed.



● varzesh3.com

## IBSA Judo Asian Championships: Iran claims four medals to finish runner-up

## Sports Desk

Iran's national blind and visually impaired team bagged four medals, including double golds, to finish as runner-up at the IBSA Judo Asian Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan. Ali Navaei captured the ultimate prize in the men's +95kg J1 event, thanks to a final victory over his opponent from the host country. Mousa Gholami secured a second gold medal for the country, triumphing in the -95kg weight category, while Amirhossein Nimrouzi settled for silver in the other class of +95kg division. Mahdi Borjlou, meanwhile,

defeated a Thai judoka to take a consolation bronze in the -81kg division, with Navid Farrokhzad finishing empty-handed in the -70kg event, following back-to-back defeats against opponents from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

Iran's Ali Navaei (white) won the men's +95kg J1 gold medal at the IBSA Judo Asian Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan.  
● paralympic.ir

