

Riyadh 2025 Islamic Solidarity Games: Iran strikes futsal gold on prolific Day 4



Iranian players celebrate after beating Morocco in the futsal final at the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Nov. 11, 2025.
● FFIRI

Sports Desk

Iranian athletes enjoyed a medal-laden fourth day at the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh, collecting four golds, two silvers, and five bronzes on Tuesday.

The pinnacle of Tuesday's action for Iran came in futsal, as Vahid Shamsaei's men secured the gold medal with a decisive 5-0 victory over Morocco.

In a rematch of the group-stage encounter, which ended 2-2, Amirhossein Gholami and Mahdi Karimi were on target in the space of two minutes, before skipper Hossein Tayyebi's sub-

lime volley from a well-worked set-piece gave Iran a three-goal cushion at halftime.

Morocco desperately pushed forward to reduce the deficit, employing a power play for much of the second half. However, Iran remained solid in defense, with goalkeeper Baqer Mohammadi producing a string of heroic saves, before Tayyebi and Gholami added late goals to seal the victory.

As if Iranians needed more reason to celebrate at fulltime, the triumph saw the Asian powerhouse avenge last year's World Cup last-16 defeat to the African champion.

Glittering girls

Elsewhere in Riyadh, Iranian girls spearheaded the country's gold rush in karate and weightlifting on Tuesday.

Fatemeh Sadeqi improved on her Konya 2021 silver by defeating Türkiye's Dilara Bozan 42.4-40.3 for the ultimate prize in the women's individual kata.

Meanwhile, former world bronze medalist Sara Bahmanyar defeated Uzbekistan's Gulshan Alimardanova 6-4 in a thrilling women's kumite -50kg final to claim the second ISG medal of her career, following her bronze in the 2021 edition. Iranian weightlifter Mahsa Be-



Iran's Fatemeh Sadeqi is seen in action during her gold-winning campaign in the women's individual kata event at the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Nov. 11, 2025.
● IRNA

heshti also finished on a high note in the Saudi capital by grabbing three medals, including a clean and jerk gold, in the women's 86kg class.

Beheshti lifted 104kg to win the bronze, before a successful 134kg effort secured the top spot in C&J for the 15-year-old sensation.

A total tally of 238kg then saw Beheshti win her second bronze of the afternoon, finishing behind Egypt's Rahma Ahmed Elsayed and Rigina Adashbaeva of Uzbekistan.

There was further success for the country in weightlifting as Alma Hosseini Alma Hossei-

ni won a bronze medal in the women's 77kg category thanks to a 97kg lift in the snatch contest.

The men's 94kg event, however, proved a modest outing for Iranian Alireza Moeini, who had claimed a snatch gold – setting a world record in the process – and total silver at last month's World Championships.

Moeini lifted 171kg in the snatch, 11 kilograms short of his world record, to settle for silver, before taking the clean and jerk bronze and total silver with 203kg and 374kg, respectively. Mohammad Gholami won his second bronze in the swimming

event, standing third in the men's 200m freestyle.

The 17-year-old Iranian clocked 1:50.63 minutes to finish behind Turkish gold medalist Ahmet Mete Boylu (1:48.65) and Ilya Sibirtsev (1:50.04) of Uzbekistan.

Gholami was also part of the Iranian quartet – alongside Mohammad Qassemi, Ali Rashidpour, and Matin Sohran – that finished with the bronze in the men's 4×200m freestyle relay.

Tuesday's outcome took Iran's medal haul to six golds, four silvers, and 14 bronzes, leaving the country in the sixth place of the overall table by the end of the fourth day.

Iran's Zohreh Jafari named AFC Youth Coach of the Year

Sports Desk

Iran's Zohreh Jafari won the Youth Coach of the Year (Female) prize at the AFC Special Grassroots Awards 2025 in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday.

This was the second major award for Iranian female coaches in less than a month, after Iran and Bam Khatoun manager Marziyeh Jafari was named the Asian Women's Coach of the Year at the AFC Awards in October.

The award was a fitting recognition of Jafari's hard work,

having dedicated 15 years of her career to cultivating female footballers in Iran.

The head coach of Sepahan U17 side for the past four years, Jafari is also the founder of a football academy, which has produced numerous players for national teams and top-tier clubs in the country.

Coming from a family deeply rooted in football, Jafari led Sepahan to the national youth title last season, cementing her status as one of Iran's most prominent grassroots coaches.

The 4th AFC Grassroots Football Conference commenced in the Malaysian capital on Tuesday, uniting leaders from across Asia to discuss the next phase of football development in the continent.

Taking place under the theme "Grassroots Football in Asia: The Next Chapter," the conference opened with the AFC Special Awards, which honored the unsung heroes who have made exceptional contributions to the development of grassroots as well as elite youth football in Asia.



● AFC

Young squad aims to restore Iranian women's taekwondo reputation at ISG

Sports Desk

Head coach Mahrouz Saei and her young squad will look to make up for a poor run at the World Championships when the women's taekwondo event of the Islamic Solidarity Games gets underway in Riyadh on Saturday. All of seven Iranian girls – including Olympic medalists Nahid Kiani and Mobina Nematzadeh – left the world showpiece in Wuxi empty-handed earlier in the month, raising questions over Saei being the right person for the national team job.

While Kiani (-57kg), and Nematzadeh (-53kg), as well as Saeideh Nasiri (-46kg), and Melika Mirhosseini (-73kg) failed to go beyond last 16 in their respective classes, Kowsar Asaseh (-62kg) and former world silver medalist Mahla Momenzadeh (-49kg) had their campaigns ended after two bouts, with Nastaran Valizadeh suffering a first-round exit in the -67kg division.

Four of the six Iranians are set to make their international senior debut in Riyadh, though they face a daunting task, with the event featuring top-tier competitors from Türkiye, Tunisia, and Egypt, all of which have named full-strength rosters for the Games.

Saina Karimi, 19, will represent the country in the -46kg contests, while Asian junior bronze



Melika Mirhosseini (red) will captain the Iranian women's taekwondo squad at the Islamic Solidarity Games.
● TAEKWONDO.IR

medalist Rozhan Goodarzi, 17, will be part of the -51kg draw. Hasti Mohammadi, 19, will vie for glory in the -57kg event, having won the WT Presidents Cup gold in Tehran last year, with 17-year-old Fatemeh Eskandarnia – an Asian junior silver winner in July – competing in the -63kg class.

Two-time Asian youth champion Yalda Valinejad (-70kg) and Mirhosseini (+70kg) are the two experienced members of Iran's squad in Riyadh, with the latter

eager to find redemption after her last-16 setback in Wuxi.

When Saei was appointed head coach of the Iranian women's team earlier this year, many believed the decision was driven by nepotism on the part of her older brother and the chairman of the federation, Hadi Saei, rather than her own coaching credentials.

The woeful run in Wuxi only fueled that debate, and Saei will now look to silence her doubters in Riyadh.