AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup:

Iran hammers Vietnam to march into last eight

Sports Desk

Iran thrashed Vietnam 10-2 to advance to the quarterfinals of the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup in Phang Nga, Thailand.

A second successive victory, following the 8-2 rout of Afghanistan on the opening day, saw Iran sit atop the Group B table, level on six points with Lebanon, which defeated Afghanistan 5-0 later in the day.

Davoud Baghdadabadi was the star of the show for Iran with a hat-trick on Saturday as head coach Ali Naderi's men continued their bid for a record-extending fifth title in 12 editions of the flagship continental showpiece.

Ho Quoc Hung's tentative attempt was saved by Seyedmohammad Dastan in the opening minute, but that was as close as Vietnam came to scoring before Iran showed its prowess.

Mohammad Masoumizadeh turned in an overhead kick from the right to get things going before Mohaved Mohammadpour powered home a close-range header after connecting with Seyed Nazim's lob.

Mohammadali Hassanabad's acrobatic effort then hit the sand and rolled past the right post to give Iran a three-goal lead in eight minutes.

Beleaguered keeper Nguyen Anh Quang failed to handle Mahdi Shirmohammadi's shot in the ninth minute and watched the ball bounce beyond him, while Dastan denied Tran Noc Bao's free kick at the other end to close the opening period.

Saeid Piramoun connected with Dastan's goal kick in the 16th minute before sending an overhead kick past Anh Quang. Baghdadabadi added to the scoreline in the same minute, lifting the ball over the keeper following a weak back pass by Noc Bao.

Vietnam pulled one back through Ngo Tan Tai, who slipped the ball between Dastan and the right post in the 17th minute. The keeper then turned away Pham Truong Du's stinging drive but was beaten in the 23rd minute as Pham nodded in from close range off a cross by Dao Gia Bao.

Ali Mirshekari added Iran's seventh goal on the half-hour mark with an overhead kick past a rooted Anh Quang before Naderi's side rounded off the scoring with goals from Masoumizadeh and Baghdadabadi, who struck twice in the closing minutes.

The top spot in the group will be on the line when two-time defending champion Iran and Lebanon – a semifinalist in 2015 and 2017 – square off at Memories Beach Arena today.

"We analyzed them and, as a result, scored many times. It helped that we followed our game plan, which we did not do in our opening match," Masoumizadeh said after the game.

"Our current team is better compared to 2025, and we are in high spirits. Iran has won all our previous matches against Lebanon, and we will be well prepared," added the Iranian ahead of today's decider.



Iranian players celebrate their victory over Vietnam at the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup in Phang Nga, Thailand, on November 21, 2026.
AFC

World Para Taekwondo Championships:

Abdollahpour, Haqiqatshenas lead Iran's gold rush on Day 2

Sports Desk

Maryam Abdollahpour and Amirmohammad Haqiqatshenas continued Iran's impressive run at the World Para Taekwondo Championships by winning two gold medals on the second day of the competition in Muju, South Korea, on Saturday.

Abdollahpour defeated Brazil's Silvana Mayara Cardoso Fernandes – a winner of three successive Para Grand Prix series titles this season – in straight rounds to claim the top prize in the women's K44 -57kg division, adding to her bronze medal at October's Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games.

The 19-year-old prodigy opened her campaign with back-to-back victories over Mexico's Elsa Koyama Tamayo and third-seed Kamilya Dosmalova, both in straight rounds, before beating Turkey's No. 2 seed Gamze Ozcan 2-1 to book her place in the final.

In the men's K44 -70kg event, meanwhile, Haqiqatshenas rounded off his emphatic run with a 2-1 victory over Mexico's Juan Diego Garcia Lopez, the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic champion, in the final.

The Iranian picked up where he had left off in his gold-winning campaign at the Asian Para Games, beating Askar Dinmukhammed 2-0 in the first round and repeating his triumph over the Kazakh opponent at October's multi-sport event.

Haqiqatshenas also swept aside Brazil's Valter Sedano Delfino de Oliveira in straight rounds to advance to the last four, where he overcame Ivorian Boli Bi Assamoa Michel in back-to-back rounds.

Amirhossein Alizadeh was the other Iranian in action on Day 2, finishing empty-handed in the men's K44 -63kg division following a quarterfinal defeat to Aboubacar Sidiki Samake of the Ivory Coast.

Saturday's medals took Iran's haul to four after Ailar Jami and Zahra Rahimi had claimed gold and silver, respectively, in the women's competition on the opening day.

Jami, 18, who also won gold at the Asian Para Games, defeated Morocco's Naoual Laarif 2-0 in the K44 -47kg final.

Paralympic silver medalist Rahimi, meanwhile, had to settle for silver again in the K44 -52kg division after losing the final to China's Li Yujie, who had also beaten the Iranian in the Paris 2024 Paralympic final.

Featuring 407 athletes, the 11th edition of the World Championships forms part of the qualification pathway for the LA28 Paralympics.



Maryam Abdollahpour celebrates with the Iranian flag after winning the women's K44 -57kg gold medal at the World Para Taekwondo Championships in Muju, South Korea, on November 21, 2026.
WORLD TAEKWONDO

FIBA World Cup Asian qualifiers:

Manolopoulos names Iran's roster for Australia, Philippines tests

Sports Desk

Iran's men's basketball head coach Sotiris Manolopoulos named a 15-man squad for the upcoming games against Australia and the Philippines in the FIBA World Cup Asian qualifiers.

A group of 11 domestic players, featuring Arsalan Kazemi, Peter Gregorian, Seyyed Mahdi Jafari, Mohammadmahdi Rahimi (Esteghlal), Arman Zangeneh, Mobin Sheikhi, Mohammad Ghaffari (Palayesh Naft Abadan), Mohammad Jamshidi (Naft Zagros Jonoubi), Mohammad-Mahdi Heidari (Tabiat Eslamshahr), Matin Aqajaunpour (Kaleh Mazandaran), and Sarem Jafari (Naft-o Gaz Gachsaran), departed Tehran on Sunday for Seremban, Malaysia, where they will be joined by overseas players Mohammad Amini, Behnam Yakhchali, Salar Taheri, and Mohsen Asgarnia ahead of the crunch double-header.

The Greek head coach will hope to see his men recover from a disappointing start to their Group E campaign when they take on Australia at Karisma Arena on Friday before facing the Philippines at the same venue two days later.

Having topped the first-round Group C with back-to-back victories over Jordan, either side of a win against Syria in June, Iran opened the second round with a 93-91 overtime defeat to New Zealand before suffering a 68-56 loss to the Philippines in August.

Both games were staged in Pasay, the Philippines. Although the group opener was designated as a home fixture for Iran, Manolopoulos's side was forced to play at the neutral venue of SM Mall of Asia Arena due to security concerns amid the conflict in the region.

The same circumstances had previously forced Iran to move its home game against Syria to Amman, Jordan, in the first round.

The Iranian Basketball Federation appealed to the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) in September to have its hosting rights reinstated for the remainder of the campaign, but the request was rejected.

With the top three teams in the group standings qualifying for the World Cup, third-placed Iran remains firmly in contention for a place at next year's showpiece in Qatar. However, further slip-ups in the remaining four fixtures could allow Jordan, currently fourth on 13 points and level with Iran, to overtake it.



IRIBF

Iran finishes empty-handed at Karate World Cup

Sports Desk

The 2026 Karate World Cup in Hangzhou, China, proved one to forget for Iran after the country missed out on bronze medals in both the men's kumite and women's kata events on Sunday.

Iran's men's kumite team suffered a comprehensive 3-0 defeat to Russia in the bronze-medal match, with Mahdi Ashouri, Asian Games gold medalist Morteza Nemati, and Amirabbas Beig-Mohammadlou all falling to their opponents.

The Iranian team had got its campaign off to a flying start, defeating Australia, China, Algeria, and Montenegro to top its group before beating Italy in the quarterfinals. However, it lost to Türkiye in the semifinals on Saturday.

Earlier on the final day of the second edition of the competition, Iran's women's kata team also missed out on a medal. Featuring Fatemeh Sadeqi, Sepideh Amini, Zeinab Hosseini, and Zahra Rezaei, the Iranian quartet went down 6-1 to China in the third-place match.

On Saturday, Iran's women's kumite team, coached by Pegah Zanganeh, had also bowed out in the group stage after recording two victories and two defeats to finish third behind Italy and Egypt in Pool 3.



IKF