

# Iran Ease Into West Asia Baseball Cup Semi-Finals



*The Iran's men National Baseball team*

TEHRAN (Press TV) - The Iran men's national baseball team have earned an easy spot in the semi-finals of the 13th edition of the West Asia Baseball Cup, after the Indian squad could not participate in the regional event because they had not

been issued Pakistani visas.

The Iranian sportsmen were scheduled to face their Indian counterparts at the multi-purpose Jinnah Stadium in the Pakistani capital city of Islamabad for a Group A fixture on Saturday.

They automatically clinched the victory as the opposite team did not show up to the contest, and lost as the forfeiting team.

The Iran men's national baseball team is slated to take on Sri Lanka on Sunday in a match that will

determine the Group B topper.

While Iraq, Nepal and the host nation Pakistan are pitted against each other in Group A, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Sri Lanka form Group B.

The top two teams in each group (five teams in total) will qualify for the knockout stage.

The 13th edition of West Asia Baseball Cup opened in Islamabad, Pakistan, on February 25 and will conclude on March 1, 2017.

The names on the roster of the Iranian men's team include Majid Pashoei, Davoud Jabbari, Kayvan Runna, Mohammad Reza Shabani, Yassin Sharifi, Mohammad Safdari, Amir Arefinia, Hessam Arefzadeh, Asghar Veghari, Rajabali Barzegar, Mostafa Kamali, Mohammad Goudarzi, Mohammad Sadeq Gohari, Mojtaba Kordan, Sepehr Mosharraffjavadi, Mehdi Ma'soumi, Iman Mo'azzeni, Seyyed Jalal Farahibozorg and Mojtaba Vaezzadeh.

The Iranian outfit is under the tutelage of Spanish head coach Rafael Lemes.

## Iran Lifter Salimi Misses International Fajr Cup



*Iranian super heavyweight lifter Behdad Salimi Kordasiabi (file photo)*

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iranian super heavyweight lifter Behdad Salimi Kordasiabi has decided to withdraw from the second edition of the International Fajr Cup, which is scheduled to be held next month in southern Iran.

The 27-year-old man-mountain told reporters in the southwestern Iranian city of Ahvaz, late on Friday that he had seriously aggravated his knee injury during a recent snatch competition of the Iranian Weightlifting Clubs Super League, and had to undergo treatment in order to return to full fitness soon.

Salimi suffered a serious knee injury on October 26, 2015 as he was trying to lift 262 kilograms overhead in the clean and jerk during his training session.

He was immediately rushed to hospital, where he underwent a surgery following results of an MRI scan.

The second edition of the International Fajr Cup will begin in Ahvaz, Iran, on March 9, and will finish on March 14, 2017.

Contestants from Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, England, Hungary, Iraq, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait,

Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Romania, Serbia, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda and Yemen have already confirmed their participation in the event.

The participants will be in action in men's 85-kilogram, 94-kilogram, 105-kilogram and over 105-kilogram weight categories. The top three athletes will be awarded cash prizes.

### Zob Ahan Crowned Iran Weightlifting League Champion

Meanwhile, Zob Ahan of Isfahan won the title of the Iran Weightlifting League for the third time in a row.

Zob Ahan claimed the title with 2878 points. Rad Padafand finished in second place, scoring 2834 points and Manategh Naftkhiz Khuzestan came third with 2819 points.

In the competition held in Ahvaz, southern of Iran, Iranian Olympics gold medal winners Sohrab Moradi and Kianoush Rostami represented Zob Ahan.

A total of six teams Zob Ahan, Rad Padafand, Manategh Naftkhiz Khuzestan, Niroo Zamini, Melli Haffari and Oghab Niroo Havaei took part in the competition.

## Khodadad Azizi Quits as Iran's Siahjamegan Coach



*Khodadad Azizi stepped down from his role as head coach of Iranian Siahjamegan football team*

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Khodadad Azizi stepped down from his role as head coach of Iranian Siahjamegan football team.

The former Iran national team striker parted company with Mashhad based team following a run of poor results.

Azizi replaced Farhad Kazemi in late December but failed to escape the danger zone.

The Iranian outfit is currently second bottom in the table, four points clear of the drop zone.

Siahjamegan has suffered 11 losses and just won three matches. The team has registered eight ties in the past 22 weeks in Iran Professional League (IPL).

"I am very tired and I cannot continue to work in the club. Siahjamegan has so many financial problems," Azizi said.

Akbar Misaghian is a candidate to replace Azizi in Siahjamegan.

## Vonn Crashes in Crans Montana Super-G

BERN (Reuters) - American former Olympic downhill champion Lindsey Vonn suffered a crash in Saturday's super-G World Cup race in the Swiss resort of Crans Montana but escaped serious injury. The 32-year-old, who broke her

right arm at the start of the season and still does not have full use of her hand, lost control early in her run and crashed into the safety netting. After a worrying moment when Vonn sat still in the netting, she got to her feet in no obvious discomfort.

Slovenia's Ilka Stuhec won the race ahead of Elena Curtoni while several other leading contenders failed to reach the finish as the soft snow conditions again proved tricky. It was Stuhec's sixth win of the season and helped her to close the gap on

overall World Cup leader Mikaela Shiffrin who finished 11th, having pulled out of Friday's combined event along with team mate Vonn because of safety concerns about the course conditions. Stuhec finished second in Friday's combined.

## Valencia Crash Back Down in Late Defeat at Alaves

MADRID (Dispatches) - Just days after unexpectedly beating Real Madrid at Mestalla, Valencia lost 2-1 to Alaves, reverting back to how they've played for much of this campaign.

Two steps forward, one back.

The loss also represented Los Che's first defeat at the Estadio Mendizorroza since 1955.

A lackluster first half was more noticeable for the amount of yellow cards produced (four) than shots on target, and the theme continued to the end of the game.

Voro's side did take the lead on 70 minutes through Carlos Soler, their only shot on target in the entire match, but two goals in eight minutes from Ibai Gomez and Aleksandar Katai saw the hosts deservedly take the spoils.

There was still time for Fabian Orellana to ridiculously earn himself a late red card for two bookable offences.



*Three days after shocking Real Madrid with a 2-1 victory at the Mestalla, Los Che surrendered two goals in the final 12 minutes of normal time to depart CD Alaves' Estadio de Mendizorroza empty handed on Saturday.*

## Saeid Ezatolahi Extends Contract With Rostov



*Iranian international midfielder Saeid Ezatolahi has extended his contract with Rostov for two-and-a-half year on Friday.*

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Iranian international midfielder Saeid Ezatolahi has extended his contract with Rostov for two-and-a-half year.

The 20-year-old player has joined Anzhi Makhachkala on loan in early February.

Football Club Anzhi Makhachkala is a Russian football club based in Makhachkala, capital of the Republic of Dagestan. Founded in 1991, the club competes in the Russian Football Premier League, playing its home games at the Anzhi-Arena.

Ezatolahi came up through Malavan's youth academy and

impressed from an early age, making his first team debut in 2012 as the Iran Pro League's youngest ever player at the age of 16.

He has earned a number of accolades since then, including the Iranian federation's young player of the year award. In 2014 he was named as one of the most talented football players according to Wonderkids.

Ezatolahi became the youngest goalscorer in the history of the Iran national football team at the age of 19 years and 42 days after scoring in a 3-1 victory against Turkmenistan in November 2015.