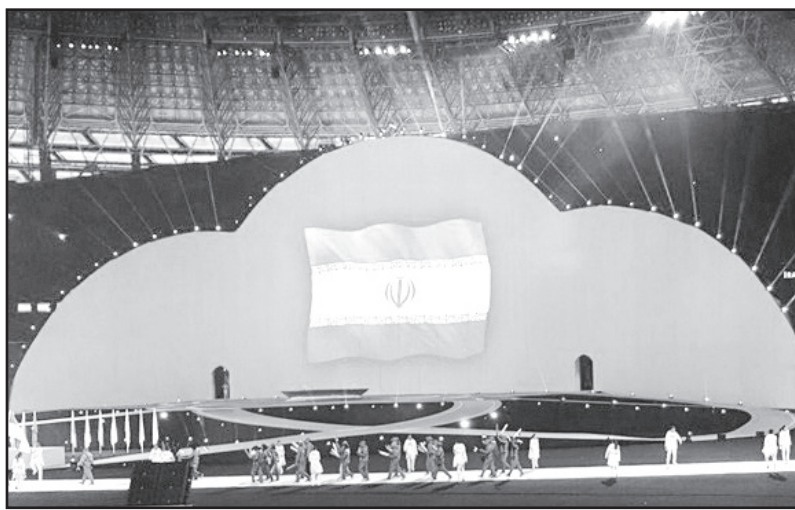


Iran Secure 3rd Place at Islamic Solidarity Games

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – Iranian sportsmen and women collected 18 more medals, raising the country's total medal count to 55 and securing 3rd place at ongoing 4th edition of Islamic Solidarity Games in Azerbaijan.

Iranian sportsmen and women had collected 37 medals, including 10 gold, 12 silver and 15 bronze. With this number of medals, the Iranian athletes not only managed to reach third place for the very first time during this tournament, but also succeeded in decreasing their distance from the two rival countries, Uzbekistan and Indonesia, on the medal count table in terms of the number of gold medals.



Currently, the Iranian team is ranked third place with the total medal count of 55, including

14 gold, 17 silver and 24 bronze. Turkey is on the top of the medal count table with 136 medals (53 gold, 45 silvers and 38 bronzes), while Azerbaijan has claimed the second spot with 98 medals (49 gold, 29 silvers, 20 bronzes).

Uzbekistan has dropped to fourth place with a total of 41 medals (8 gold, 11 silvers and 22 bronzes), and Indonesia holds the fifth place with 49 medals (6 gold, 23 silver, and 20 bronze).

The 4th Islamic Solidarity Games started in Baku, Azerbaijan, on May 12 under the motto "Solidarity is Our Strength."

The tournament will wrap up on May 22, 2017.

Persepolis to Play Lekhwiya Behind Closed

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Fans misconduct forces Iran's Persepolis to play Lekhwiya of Qatar behind closed doors.

Persepolis will meet Lekhwiya in the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Champions League (ACL) Round of 16 on Tuesday May 23 at the Azadi Stadium in Tehran.

The AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee on Wednesday ordered Persepolis FC to play the game without spectators.

This is a result of spectator misconduct at the club's ACL Group Stage match on May 8 against Al Wahda (UAE), the-AFC wrote.

Persepolis supporters lit a flare in the 88th minute of the match, putting safety in the stadium at risk.

After three spectator-related incidents in the 2015 season, Persepolis FC was ordered to play one match without spectators and suspended for a probationary period of two years.

As the current breach occurred within the probationary period, the order to play one match with a full stadium closure automatically comes into effect.

Persepolis FC was also fined USD10,000.

Juventus Secure Italian Cup Title



Juventus' players pose with the trophy after winning the Italian Tim Cup final on May 17, 2017 at the Olympic stadium in Rome. PHOTO: AFP

ROME (Dispatches) - Juventus have secured a record third successive Italian Cup as Dani Alves and Leonardo Bonucci struck one apiece to seal a 2-0 victory over Lazio at the Stadio Olimpico.

Juventus, who won a league and Cup double the past two seasons, can clinch a record sixth consecutive Serie A title —and a record

third double — with victory at home to Crotone on Sunday.

Massimiliano Allegri's men also face Real Madrid in the Champions League final in Cardiff on June — and on this showing the Spanish giants will have cause for concern.

Days after seeing their title celebrations put on hold at the Stadio Olimpico following a 3-1 defeat to

Lazio's city rivals Roma, Juventus were back their formidable best.

Lazio, whose last trophy came from their 2013 Cup triumph, had hoped to emulate Roma by sending Juventus back to Turin with their tails between their legs.

But despite a battling display by Simone Inzaghi's men, Lazio spurned their few chances, and were outplayed by the slick, passing play inspired by Argentinian playmaker Paulo Dybala.

The sizeable Lazio support were given hope in the opening minutes when Keita Balde latched on to Sergej Milinkovic-Savic's smart ball up the left flank to slip past Andrea Barzagli.

But the Senegal striker saw his shot from a tight angle, which evaded 'keeper Norberto Neto, given a start ahead of Gianluigi Buffon, come off the post.

Argentina striker Gonzalo Higuain, who went on to spurn several chances to add to Juve's tally, controlled well outside the

area and unleashed a volley that Thomas Strakosha did well to block.

Strakosha pulled off an acrobatic save out the bag to stop Paulo Dybala's long-range effort, the first of many in a performance that underlined the 22-year-old Albanian's talents.

On the quarter-hour, Lazio piled on the pressure, but when Balde's cross into the area went awry it sent Juventus on a quick counter that left the capital side exposed.

Strakosha palmed Dybala's ferocious strike to safety, and when it fell to Higuain three yards out he kept the Argentina striker's effort out with his legs.

When Lazio were caught deep in Juve territory soon after, it exacted a heavier toll.

Dybala struck the corner, Alex Sandro flicked on towards the near post and Bonucci had an easy job tapping past Strakosha from close range.

Wenger's Future at Arsenal Will Be Decided After FA Cup Final

LONDON (Reuters) – Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger said a decision on his future at the club will be made at a board meeting following their FA Cup final clash against Chelsea later this month.

The Frenchman is out of contract at the Emirates at the end of the campaign as he prepares for the final Premier League game of the season against Everton with a hope to finish in the top-four for the 21st consecutive season.

"I don't know (what will happen in the meeting)," Wenger

told a news conference on Friday. "There are many aspects of a football club which has to be discussed at a board meeting. One of those is what happens with the manager, the players coming in, contract renewals. "The most important thing is to win the football game. What happens to me after that is less important." When asked whether a decision will be announced shortly after the FA Cup final on May 27, he replied, "Of course."

The North London club are rely-

ing on an upset to secure Champions League qualification. They are sitting fifth in the standings, one point behind fourth-placed Liverpool and three behind third-placed Manchester City.

Liverpool host already-relegated Middlesbrough and Manchester City travel to Watford who languish 16th in the standings. Arsenal have won their last four league games and Wenger expected his side to focus on their own performance ahead of the final weekend of the season. "We just want ev-

erybody to play 100 percent in last game as is the tradition in England." Wenger added. "We have to do our job, we are professionals. We are on a good run and that's all we can do." Midfielder Aaron Ramsey has recovered in time for the weekend's clash while Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain remained on the sidelines with an hamstring injury. Wenger said he was yet to make a decision on the availability of defender Laurent Koscielny, who missed the last game with an Achilles injury.

National Futsal Team Advances to AFC U-20 Championship Quarters



Iran men's national under-20 futsal team

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iran's national futsal team has posted its third resounding win in a row at the 2017 Asian Football Confederation (AFC) U-20 Futsal Championship in Thailand, thrashing the Chinese squad in the group stage of the continental tournament.

On Friday, the Iranians, who had defeated the United Arab Emirates 5-1 in their second Group D fixture at Indoor Stadium Huamark in the Thai capital city of Bangkok the previous day, routed the Chinese side 6-1 in their third match of the games.

Chinese defender Zhou Xu scored an own goal only 5 minutes into the game, before midfielder Mohammad Jame' doubled Iran's lead after the quarter mark.

Mohammad Taheri found the back of the net and scored Iran's third goal in the 19th minute.

Hamidreza Karimi, Mohammad Heidari and Hamid Ghahramani tacked three more goals for Iran men's national under-20 futsal team in the second half.

Chinese midfielder Wang Jiahao scored the consolation goal for his team in the 34th minute.

Iran's national futsal team is scheduled to face Kyrgyzstan in its last preliminary round match tomorrow.

The 2017 AFC U-20 Futsal Championship kicked off in Thailand on May 16, and will wrap up on May 26.

A total of 21 teams are participating in the tournament. The 21 teams have been divided into four groups (one with six teams and three with five teams), with the group winners and runners-up advancing to the quarter-finals.

The tournament serves as qualifying for the futsal tournament at the 2018 Summer Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires, Argentina, with the winner and the runner-up qualifying for the boys' tournament, where they will be represented by their U-18 representative teams.

Iran is pitted against China, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and the United Arab Emirates in Group D.

Afghanistan, Bahrain, Brunei, Iraq, Malaysia, Thailand are drawn in Group A. Group B consists of Chinese Taipei, Indonesia, Japan, Tajikistan and Vietnam.

Canada Beat Germany 2-1 During IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship



Players of Canada celebrate victory after the quarterfinal match against Germany of the 2017 IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship in Cologne, Germany on May 18, 2017.

COLOGNE (Dispatches) - Germany's run at the Ice Hockey World Championship in Cologne have come to an end after a 2-1 defeat by favorites Canada. Russia, who beat the Czech Republic, await Canada in a mouthwatering semifinals.

Germany's entertaining run in Cologne has been ended by an impressive display by Canada.

Goals from Mark Scheifele in the first period and Jeff Skinner in the second was enough to defeat a Germany team that ultimately lacked the quality to live with their superior opponents, who boast a team full of NHL talent.

Germany, who have five NHL players in its squad, started resolutely but offered nothing as an attacking force and conceded late in the period, to deflate the atmosphere inside the Lanxess Arena.

The Germans' first shot on target came in a power play two minutes

from the end of the second period, but Canada were able to absorb that attack and hit back with the second goal of the game, a scrappy finish from Skinner.

Germany were hit with a 10 minute misconduct penalty for David Wolf in the third period, which didn't help their cause as they looked for a way back into the game.

But while Germany were unable to score with five players on the ice, they found a way back with four, with Yannic Seidenberg racing away to score a shorthanded goal while Germany were serving a two-minute penalty for having an extra man on the ice.

This emboldened Germany for the final few minutes of the contest, but ultimately their efforts were in vain as Canada sealed the win to set up what will be one of the most anticipated games of the tournament against Russia. Finland will face Sweden in the other semifinal.

Cavs Rout Celtics 117-104 in Eastern Conference Finals Game 1

WASHINGTON (Xinhua) - LeBron James had 38 points, nine rebounds and seven assists as the Cleveland Cavaliers have beaten the Boston Celtics 117-104 in Game 1 of the Eastern Conference finals.

On Cleveland's offensive start, Celtics head coach Brad Stevens said, "I felt like that zapped us on the other end a little bit.

We missed some makeable opportunities."

The Cavaliers led 30-19 after the first quarter and expanded the lead to 22 points (61-39) at the break. Early in the third quarter, the Cavaliers pushed their lead to 28 points (71-43), which is the biggest margin of the whole night, putting the game beyond reach.

Cavs forward Kevin Love had a playoff career-high 32 points and added 12 rebounds, and forward Tristan Thompson had a playoff career-high 20 points and nine rebounds. Kyrie Irving added 11 points and 6 assists. Celtics guard Avery Bradley and forward Jae Crowder led Boston with 21 points each, and Thomas added 17.