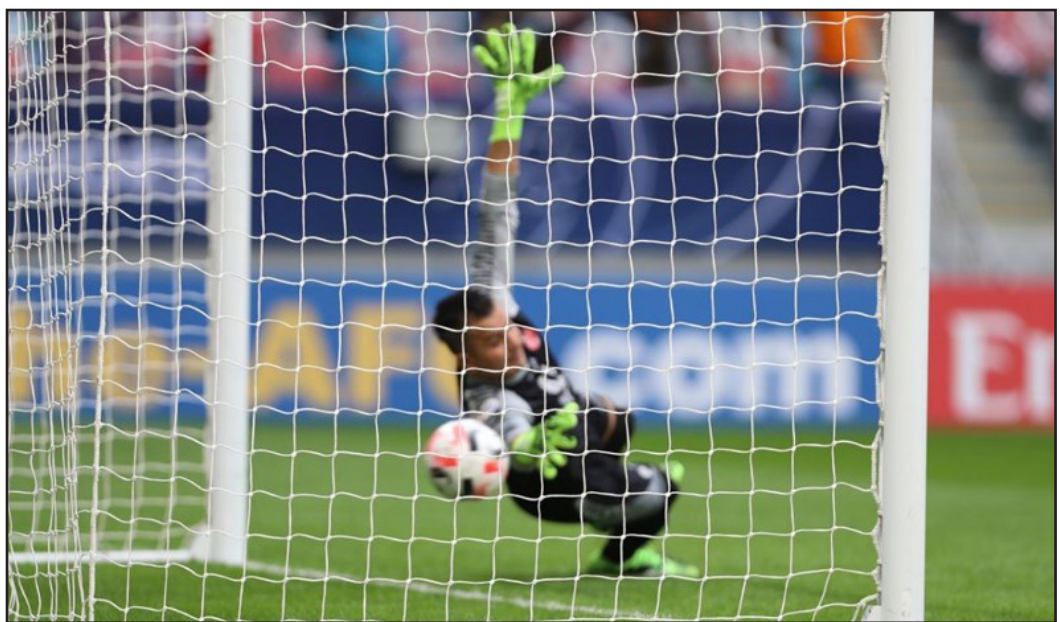


# Hamed Lak Chosen Best Goalkeeper of 2020 ACL Team



TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Persepolis goalkeeper Hamed Lak has been chosen as the best goalkeeper in the 2020 AFC Champions League Team.

Fans of Asian football have voted for their Best XI at each edition of the AFC Champions League between 2016 and 2019, so now the AFC.com turns to the most recently concluded chapter, the 2020 competition, to determine the top 11 players.

Signed as Alireza Beiranvand's replacement, Lak proved he was the right man for the job with some impressive displays as Persepolis made the final for the second time in three years.

Lak's five clean sheets were a tournament best and the fact that the four goals he conceded throughout the tournament were from the penalty spot speaks volumes of the stability he gave Persepolis.

Jo So-huk (Ulsan Hyundai FC), Apirak Worawong (Chiangrai United), Daiya Maekawa (Vissel Kobe) and Brad Jones (Al Nassr) were short-listed to win the accolade but Lak was chosen the best goalie with 86 percent of votes.

## Luka Doncic Has 38 as Mavericks Top Nuggets in OT

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Luka Doncic had 38 points, 13 assists and nine rebounds, Josh Richardson scored five of his 14 points in overtime, and the visiting Dallas Mavericks defeated the Denver Nuggets 124-117 on Thursday night.

Dorian Finney-Smith also had 14 points for Dallas, while Boban Marjanovic added 12 points and Tim Hardaway Jr. had 11 points.

Nikola Jokic had 38 points and 11 rebounds for the Nuggets, while Jamal Murray had 21 points and nine assists, Gary Harris scored 15 points, Monte Morris added 11 and JaMychal Green scored 10.

Will Barton gave the Nuggets a 112-109 lead 15 seconds overtime with a 3-pointer, but the Mavericks took over from there.

The game was tied at 114 when Richardson hit a short jumper in the lane and then



drained a 3-pointer with 1:25 remaining. Denver missed on the other end, Willy Cauley-Stein split a pair of free throws with a minute to play and Jokic hit a 3-pointer as Dallas led 120-117 with 52.2 seconds remaining.

Doncic closed it out with four straight points to give Dallas its second straight victory.

Dallas' James Johnson opened the fourth quarter with a

3-pointer to give the Mavericks their first lead since late in the first quarter at 79-78, and then put Dallas ahead 83-82 with a mid-range jumper two minutes into the period.

Two free throws by PJ Dozier, a tip-in by Green and Jokic's banked hook shot gave the Nuggets an 88-86 lead with 8:40 remaining.

Marjanovic tied it with a dunk

on Doncic's 10th assist of the night but layups by Harris and Jokic gave Denver a 96-92 lead with 5:35 to play. The Mavericks scored seven straight points, the last three on a long jumper Maxi Kleber, to take a 101-97 lead with 3:55 remaining.

After a timeout, Jokic hit a foul-line jumper and a long 3-pointer to give the Nuggets the lead again at 102-101 with just over three minutes remaining. Kleber hit another 3-pointer, Jokic and Doncic traded jumpers and Murray tied it at 106 on a 19-foot jumper with 1:59 on the clock.

The teams traded misses and Jokic split a pair of free throws, making it 107-106, and Kleber's third 3-pointer of the fourth quarter put Dallas up two with 2.4 seconds left. Jokic answered at the horn to send it to overtime.

## After Capitol Siege 'We Live in Two Americas', LeBron James Says



WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James said the violent mob of President Donald Trump's supporters forcing their way into the U.S. Capitol showed that there were "two Americas".

Hundreds of Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday in a bid to overturn his election defeat, forcing Congress to postpone a session that would have certified President-elect Joe Biden's victory.

James watched on television as the events took place, and on Thursday wondered what would have happened if the intruders had been mostly Black.

"We live in two Americas," James said, following the Lakers' 118-109 loss to the San Antonio Spurs.

"And that was a prime example of that yesterday, and if you don't understand that or don't see that after seeing what you saw yesterday, then you really need to take a step back."

The 36-year-old added: "There's no ifs, ands or buts: we already know what would've happened to my kind if anyone would have even got close to the Capitol, let alone storm inside the offices, inside the hallways."

James has been a fierce critic of Trump, and has spoken out against racial inequality in the wake of the death of George Floyd, an unarmed Black man killed last year after being seen lying face down in the street while a white police officer

knelt on his neck for several minutes.

The incident led to protests worldwide.

"The events that took place yesterday were a direct correlation of the president that's in the seat right now - of his actions, his beliefs, his wishes," said James.

"We saw the tweets along the whole path to this destruction. Over the last four years, we all knew."

Tuesday's decision by Wisconsin prosecutors not to bring charges against Rusten Sheskey, a white police officer who shot Jacob Blake, a Black man, seven times at close range, also drew ire throughout the NBA.

James wore a shirt as he walked into Staples Center which read "DO YOU UNDERSTAND NOW?" and featured the slogan: "In memoriam of the countless Black lives lost to police brutality and racial injustice."

When asked what he meant by the messages, James said he believed Black people were not treated as equals in America.

"You will never understand the feeling of being a Black man and woman in America," James said. "Everyone jumps on the bandwagon of what we provide, what we bring ... the way we dress, our music, our culture, our food."

"Everyone steals from what we do and then they want to act like they did it. We don't get ... anything back for what we've given to this country besides a slap in the face."

## World Cup Leader Pinturault Wins Giant Slalom Race



ADELBODEN, Switzerland (AP) -- French skier Alexis Pinturault stretched his lead at the top of the overall World Cup standings by winning a giant slalom on Friday, posting the fastest

time in both runs. Pinturault finished 1.04 seconds ahead of Filip Zubcic on the icy Chuenisbargli course. Marco Odermatt was third, 1.11 back, to retain a small lead

over Pinturault in the season-long giant slalom standings.

Odermatt was aiming to end Switzerland's 13-year wait for a win in the country's classic giant slalom race.

Defending overall champion Aleksander Aamodt Kilde was more than a second further back in fourth in what is shaping up as another duel with Pinturault for the title.

Kilde completed his run and immediately went to check on injured Norwegian teammate Lucas Braathen, who was being treated on the snow after crashing across the finish line while setting a leading time.

Braathen lost his balance when his skis appeared to touch

as he shifted his feet to ensure his right ski did not hook around the last gate.

Adelboden is traditionally a tough place to defend a first-run lead. Most of the sunshine lighting the slope in the morning disappears behind the surrounding mountains by 2 p.m., when Pinturault started his second run.

The Frenchman's second career win in Adelboden was the 32nd of his World Cup career, one behind Bode Miller, who is ninth on the men's all-time list.

Pinturault speeds down the course during an alpine ski, men's World Cup giant slalom, in Adelboden, Switzerland, Friday, Jan. 8, 2021.

## Messi Shines as Impressive Barca Win in Bilbao



Barcelona's Lionel Messi, right, scores his team's third goal during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Athletic Bilbao and Barcelona at San Mames stadium in Bilbao, Spain, Jan 6, 2021.

BILBAO, Spain (Reuters) - Lionel Messi was at the top of his game as Barcelona earned a 3-2 win at Athletic Bilbao to move up to third in La Liga.

Athletic got off to a dream start in their first match under new coach Marcelino when forward Inaki Williams latched on to a low through ball and raced towards goal, beating one defender before firing low into the net in the third minute.

Barca quickly responded, however, with a sensational team goal, Messi delivering a superb pass to pick out Frenkie de Jong by the

byline and the Dutchman volleyed the ball back across the area for 18-year-old Pedri to head home.

Messi and Pedri combined beautifully to put Barca ahead, the youngster receiving a pass from the Argentine before returning it with a delightful backheel and Messi rolled the ball into the bottom corner in the 38th minute.

Messi struck again in the 62nd minute to finish off another brilliant team move and missed a couple of chances to complete his hat-trick, although Iker Muniain made for a tense finale by scoring for Athletic in the 90th.

## Mini Driver Sainz Takes Dominant Win in 6th Stage of Dakar 2021

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia (Dispatches) - X-raid Mini driver Sainz led the entirety of the shortened 348km test between Al Qaisumah and Ha'il in Saudi Arabia, extending his advantage at every waypoint to take victory by just over four minutes from the Overdrive Toyota of Yazeed Al Rajhi.

It marked Sainz's second stage win in this year's Dakar Rally following his success in the opening Jeddah-Bishi special, and ended a run of four consecutive stage wins for rival marque Toyota.

Al Rajhi was only fourth at the opening waypoint, but leapfrogged both factory Toyota driver Nasser Al-Attiyah and Peterhansel by the third timed marker to record his best finish of the rally-raid so far.

Al-Attiyah and Peterhansel were engaged in a tight scrap for third place, with the 13-time winner holding the spot until the sixth waypoint in the second of the two Mini buggies.

