

Iran Trounce Bangladesh at AFC Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers



TEHRAN — Iran National Women's Football team thrashed Bangladesh 5-0 on Wednesday in Group G match of the 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup qualification.

The 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup qualification is hosted by Uzbekistan, Tashkent.

The first half of the match between the Iranian National Women's Football team and Bangladesh ended 3-0 for the Iranian side, while the Bangladeshi team received 2 more goals in the second half.

This was Iran's first match in the Asian qualifiers.

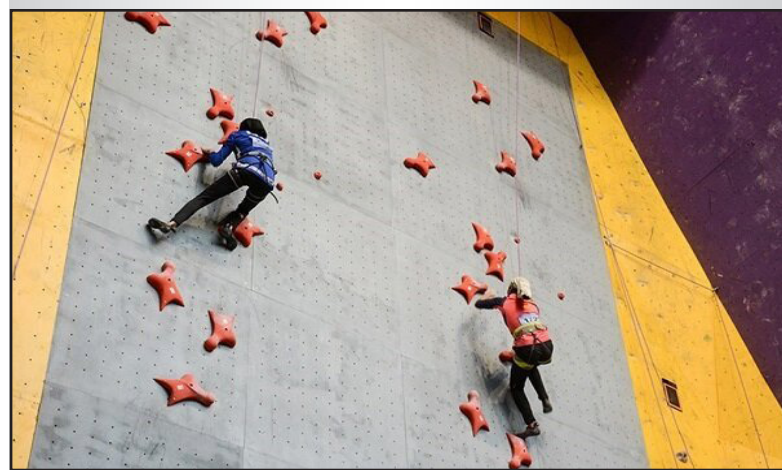
The 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup qualification will be the qualification tournament for the 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup.

A total of twelve teams will

qualify to play in the final tournament in India. The host country India and the top three teams of the previous tournament in 2018 will qualify automatically, while the other eight teams will be decided by qualification.

This tournament will also serve as the first stage of Asian qualification for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, where five teams from the Women's Asian Cup qualify directly for the World Cup (plus co-hosts Australia), and two teams qualify for a 10-team playoff tournament.

Elnaz Rekabi Wins Bronze in Climbing World Championships



Elnaz Rekabi has become the first Iranian woman to win a medal at the International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC) World Championships.

MOSCOW — Iran's representative in IFSC Women's Climbing World Championships 2021 in Moscow received bronze medal in the combined discipline.

The competition ended Tuesday night in Moscow. Rekabi could stand the third in the combined discipline.

Jessica Pilz from Austria and Mia Krampfl from Slovenia won gold and silver medals.

Rekabi's bronze was the first medal in the history of Iran's women climbing in world competitions.

Mahya Darabian was the other Iranian athlete in this event that stood the ninth.

Under-Fire Koeman Refuses to Answer Questions in Barca Press Conference

BARCELONA (AFP) — Barcelona's under-pressure coach Ronald Koeman delivered a bizarre press conference on Wednesday as he read a pre-prepared statement before leaving without answering questions.

Koeman's position is fragile, after Barca followed up a 3-0 defeat by Bayern Munich in the Champions League last week with a 1-1 draw at home to Granada in La Liga, with the team's tactics and style coming under scrutiny.

In his press conference, Koeman sat down and was introduced by the club's press officer, who said the Dutchman wanted to read a short statement.

Reading from a piece of paper, Koeman said: "Hello everyone. The club with me as coach is in a situation of rebuilding.

"The financial situation of the club is connected to the



Ronald Koeman played for Barcelona between 1989-1995

sporting activities and vice-versa. This means we as a team have to rebuild the team without being able to make any big financial investments. This needs time.

"The young talent today could be the next big world stars in just a few years. To rebuild this team, young players will be given opportunities like Xavi

and Iniesta had in their day. But we must ask for patience.

"Achieving a high ranking in La Liga is a great success. In the Champions League we can't hope for miracles. The defeat by Bayern Munich last week has to be analyzed with that perspective.

"The process we're in now with the staff and the team de-

serves unconditional support, in words and actions. I know the press recognizes this process.

"It's not the first time in Barcelona's history this has happened. We count on your support in these difficult times.

Several names, including Xavi Hernandez, Roberto Martinez and Antonio Conte, have been mentioned as possible successors to 58-year-old Koeman, whose relationship with club president Joan Laporta has been strained in recent weeks.

After the defeat at home to Bayern, Laporta posted a video addressed to Barcelona supporters in which he said: "I am as disappointed and upset as all of you are... Do not doubt we will resolve this situation."

Koeman was asked about the club's loss of identity after the draw against Granada on Monday.

Inter Go Top of Serie A With Win at Fiorentina



Inter Milan's Argentine forward Lautaro Martinez (right) and Fiorentina's Italian midfielder Marco Benassi (second right)

FLORENCE, Italy (Reuters) — Inter Milan moved provisionally top of Serie A as goals by Edin Dzeko and Ivan Perisic helped the Italian champions secure a 3-1 comeback victory at Fiorentina on Tuesday.

Bosnia striker Dzeko found the net 10 minutes into the second half, three minutes after Matteo Darmian had levelled for the visitors to cancel out Riccardo Sottil's first-half opener for Fiore and Perisic wrapped it up with a late strike.

The result put Inter on 13 points from five games, one ahead of

second-placed Napoli, who will be looking to maintain their perfect record when they travel to Sampdoria on Wednesday.

Fiorentina, who had Nicolas Gonzalez sent off with 12 minutes left, are sixth on nine points after their second defeat of the season.

Atalanta jumped to fourth on 10 points after goals by Robin Gosens and Davide Zappacosta earned them a 2-1 home win against mid-table Sassuolo.

Bologna are down to seventh with eight points after they were held to a 2-2 draw at home by Genoa.

MADRID (Dispatches) — Luis Suarez scored twice, including an injury-time winner, as Atletico Madrid came from behind to beat 10-man Getafe 2-1 and move top of La Liga on Tuesday.

Hosts Getafe took the lead through Stefan Mitrovic on the stroke of half-time, but the game changed when Carles Alena was sent off in the 74th minute.

Reigning champions Atletico are now a point clear of city rivals Real Madrid who host Real Mallorca on Wednesday.

"In the first half, we had a lack of movement, of dynamism, and the match was flat until the opponents' goal," said Atletico coach Diego Simeone.

"In the second period, the match had more rhythm, more intensity, we had more efficiency in attack."

A goalless draw with fellow unbeaten side Athletic Bilbao at the weekend saw them drop two points behind Real in the early table and Simeone's men were far from convincing again for long stages.

A limp first-half display from the visitors ended in poor fashion as Getafe defender Mitrovic headed home.

Antoine Griezmann and Suarez, who saw a header strike the cross-

bar, both went close to an equaliser before former Barcelona midfielder Alena gave Atletico a helping hand.

Alena, who had already been booked, was given a straight red card following a VAR review for a poor studs-up challenge on Brazilian international Matheus Cunha.

Suarez made Alena pay only four minutes later, running onto Mario Hermoso's long pass and lashing a left-footed shot into the roof of the net.

The Uruguayan completed the comeback just as the clock ticked past 90 minutes, nodding in at the back post as Getafe goalkeeper David Soria backtracked after initially attempting to collect Sime Vrsaljko's cross.

Suarez, who was making only his third league start in six games this term, has now scored three La Liga goals this season.

Griezmann, though, is still yet to find the net in four appearances since rejoining the club from Barcelona.

Elsewhere on Wednesday, Bilbao lost 2-1 at home to Rayo Vallecano, for whom Colombian veteran Falcao scored his first goal in memorable style, a winner six minutes into injury time.

Murray Beats Ugo Humbert to Reach Second Round

LONDON (Dispatches) — Andy Murray fought back from a set down to defeat world number 26 Ugo Humbert in the first round of the Moselle Open.

British wildcard Murray beat the French sixth seed 4-6 6-3 6-2 to set up a second-round meeting with Canada's Vasek Pospisil.

Humbert, 23, is the highest ranked player Murray has beaten this season.

"I thought I had a good game plan, I executed it pretty well, and it came through in the end," former world number one Murray said.

"I had some chances early in the first set and didn't take them. "[Humbert] played a little bit



Andy Murray lost in the 2007 final in Metz, his last appearance at the tournament

better when he had his opportunities. In the second and third set, it was the other way."

Murray — ranked 113th in the world — is making only his second appearance in Metz, having

reached the final in the French city in 2007.

Fourteen years and three Grand Slam titles later, the Scot squandered three break points early in the opening set, for which he was eventually made to pay as Humbert broke to serve for the set, which he took on his third opportunity.

The second set went with the serve until Murray broke in the eighth game, levelling the match on his second set point.

The 34-year-old dominated the third and deciding set, quickly going a double break up, and despite a glimmer of resurgence from his opponent, he sealed victory with his 18th ace of the match.