

# Iran Women Handball Team Qualifies for World Championship



TEHRAN – Iran women's national handball team has managed to qualify for the 2023 World Women's Handball Championship.

The Iranian team ranked fourth after losing its last competition 39-24 to the Chinese rivals in the Asian Women's Handball Cham-

pionship, held in South Korea from 24 November to 4 December.

The tournament was held under the aegis of the Asian Handball Federation and acted as the Asian qualifying tournament for the 2023 World Women's Handball Championship, with the top five teams qualifying.

Sang Ahan Bafgh handball club has taken part in Asian contests on behalf of the Iran women's national handball team.

The Iranian handball players lost the first half of the last match 20-11.

Gholam-Ali Akbarabadi, the coach of the Iranian athletes in the competitions, assisted the

team on their way to the World Women's Handball Championship, which will be held from 30 November to 17 December 2023. It will be jointly hosted by Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.

The 19-member team overcame India, Uzbekistan, and Australia in the group stage 43-35, 35-32, and 43-15 respectively, and lost to South Korea 41-11 in the last match of the group competitions; but, they qualified for the second time to take part in the world championships.

In the semifinal, the Iranians contested powerful rivals from Japan, when they lost the match 43-19 and could not reach the final contest.

## Ramtin Kakavand Claims Silver Medal in Asian Chess Championships



TEHRAN – Iranian student has snatched a silver medal at the 16th Asian Schools Chess Championships 2022.

In the category of under 9 open, Ramtin Kakavand ranked second.

As many as 410 contenders from 13 countries are competing at the event.

The 16th Asian Schools Chess Championships 2022 is being held in Sri Lanka from 3rd to 11th December.

## Mbappe to Be World's Best, Says Poland Coach

DOHA - Poland coach Czeslaw Michniewicz admitted his team had no answer to Kylian Mbappe after the Paris Saint-Germain forward guided France to a 3-1 victory in the FIFA World Cup round of 16.

Mbappe scored two second-half goals and provided the pass for Olivier Giroud's opener as France advanced to the quarter-finals.

"There is no recipe to stop Mbappe in the form that he's in now," Michniewicz told a news conference.



Poland's head coach Czeslaw Michniewicz looks across at France's Kylian Mbappe during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between France and Poland, at the Al Thumama Stadium in Doha, Qatar, Dec 4, 2022.

"He's a fantastic player and he harmed us. But I'm cheering for him. He's a real star. Now we have (Lionel) Messi, (Cristiano) Ronaldo and (Robert) Lewandowski but somebody is going to take over from them and I think that Mbappe will be that player in the coming years."

Michniewicz was disappointed at bowing out of the tournament but said Poland should be proud of reaching knockout stage for the first time since 1986.

## England Surge Past Senegal 3-0 to Set Up France Quarterfinal

AL KHOR, Qatar (Reuters) — Clinical England overcame a pedestrian start to surge to a comfortable 3-0 victory over Senegal as high-quality goals by Jordan Henderson, Harry Kane and Bukayo Saka swept them into a mouth-watering World Cup quarter-final clash with France.

England took a long time to impose themselves on the African champions, a team they had never faced before, and survived a couple of scares before two goals late in the first half changed the feel of the night and it was no contest after the break.

The impressive victory extended their all-time unbeaten run against African teams to 21 games, including eight in World Cups. Morocco, who face Spain on Tuesday, are now the only African team left in

the tournament.

"The ruthlessness of the performance was excellent," said manager Gareth Southgate. "Every match you play is a different sort of challenge and different tactical problem to resolve. We've stepped up and are answering those questions."

"The quality of the moves was outstanding and the finishing was ruthless."

It was always going to be a stiff challenge for Senegal in the absence of the suspended Idrissa Gueye and injured fellow midfielder Cheikhou Kouyate.

With Sadio Mane missing the tournament through injury the Africans also lacked a cutting edge to trouble an England defense that kept a third successive World Cup clean sheet for the first time in 20



England's Bukayo Saka celebrates scoring their third goal with Harry Kane and Phil

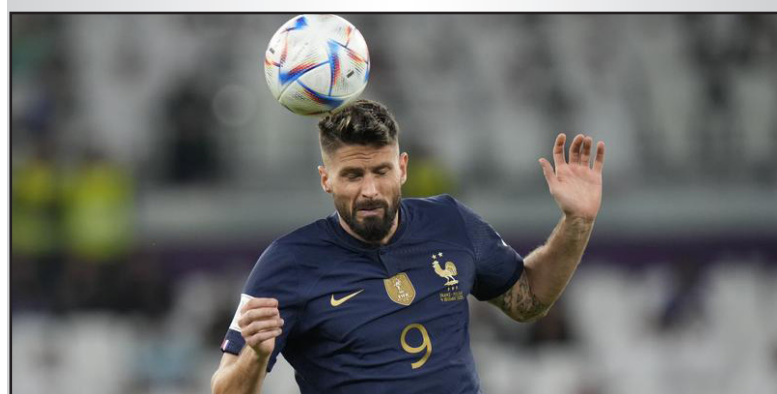
years.

They were very much in the game though for much of the first half as England were slow and static and a series of misplaced passes gifted

Senegal chances.

The best of them fell to Boulaye Dia and only the strong left arm of keeper Jordan Pickford prevented the Africans taking the lead.

## Giroud Becomes France's All-Time Top Scorer With 52 Goals



France's Olivier Giroud heads the ball during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between France and Poland, at the Al Thumama Stadium in Doha, Qatar, Dec 4, 2022.

DOHA (Reuters) - Olivier Giroud scored against Poland in the World Cup last-16 clash on Sunday to become France's all-time top scorer with 52 goals.

Giroud, 36, had shared the record with Thierry Henry after netting a double in the defending champions' 4-1 win against Australia in their opening Group D game.

## Saudi Arabia Bids for Soccer's 2027 Asian Cup

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) - Saudi Arabia is now the only candidate to host the 2027 Asian Cup after India's soccer federation withdrew its bid on Monday.

Preparing for the month-long tournament can let Saudi Arabia show its soccer hosting ambitions to FIFA, which is seeking bidders for the 2030 World Cup and future editions of a revamped Club World Cup.

The Asian Football Confederation said the Saudi Arabian bid will be the only one presented to congress members for approval. That will be at a Feb. 1 meeting in Manama, Bahrain.

No reason was given for India's withdrawal, though the federation has been in turmoil and was briefly suspended by FIFA this year before staging the Under-17 Women's World Cup in October.

Saudi Arabia has never hosted the

Asian Cup, which it has won three times since the inaugural event in 1956. The most recent title was in 1996.

Hosting the 2027 edition shaped to be a blockbuster contest when the Saudis, Qatar, Iran, India and Uzbekistan initially submitted bids more than two years ago.

World Cup host Qatar was awarded the 2023 edition in October after China handed back its hosting rights, citing the COVID-19 pandemic. That tournament is expected to be pushed back to January 2024.

The 2027 Asian Cup will become the fourth in five editions to be hosted in the Arabian Gulf region.

Qatar also hosted in 2011 and the United Arab Emirates staged the 2019 tournament.

Qatar, which is hosting the ongoing World Cup, has already staged the Asian Cup twice.

## Lakers Top Wizards 130-119



Los Angeles Lakers forward Anthony Davis, left, dunks against Washington Wizards centers Daniel Gafford (21) and Kristaps Porzingis (6) during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Dec. 4, 2022, in Washington. The Lakers won 130-119.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Anthony Davis scored 55 points on sizzling 22 of 30 shooting and added 17 rebounds, leading the Los Angeles Lakers over the Washington Wizards 130-119 on Sunday night.

After scoring 44 points against Milwaukee in his previous game, Davis came close to his career-high of 59 against Detroit in 2016.

LeBron James had 29 points as the Lakers won their fourth straight

road game. They are 8-2 in their last 10 games while trying to extricate themselves from a 2-10 start.

Washington lost leading scorer and three-time All-Star Bradley Beal to an undisclosed injury with 8:31 to play in the first quarter.

Wizards center Kristaps Porzingis shot 11 of 25 for 27 points. Former Laker Kyle Kuzma added 26 points for Washington before he fouled out.

## Sterling Flies Home After His Family Robbed



England's James Anderson, center, celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of Muhammad Rizwan, left, during the fifth day of the first test cricket match between Pakistan and England, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, Monday, Dec. 5, 2022.

DOHA (Reuters) - England forward Raheem Sterling missed England's 3-0 win over Senegal on Sunday night after traveling back to England.

The forward left the England camp after being informed that armed robbers had broken into his home while his family were there.

When asked about whether Sterling would be back for the quarterfinal against France or a possible semifinal, England coach Gareth Southgate said he

wasn't sure.

"We've got to wait and see. At the moment, clearly the priority is for him to be with his family. We're going to support that, and leave him to have as much time as he needs."

"He's going home. It's a situation that he needs time with his family to deal with, and I don't want to put him under any pressure with that. Sometimes football isn't the most important thing, and family should come first," said Southgate.