

## Iran U23 football team's future uncertain

Written by Tehran Times

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TEHRAN – With three months to go to the 2020 AFC U23 Championship kick-off, Iran U23 football team's future is uncertain.

On Wednesday, a meeting was held in Iran Football Federation to discuss the future of the U23 team at the competition but head coach Farhad Majidi didn't attend the session.

The members of committee called him but there was no answer.

Majidi had previously criticized football federation's policy over inviting players to U23 team, blaming it as one of the reasons for the team's failings in two friendly matches against Uzbekistan.

The ex-Esteghlal forward says he is resentful of anybody's attempts to interfere in his work.

The media reports suggest that Majidi's relation with head of youth committee of Iran Football Federation, Akbar Mohammadi, remains problematic and it's so destructive for the future of the team.

Iran have been handed a tough group in the AFC U23 Championship, where they are drawn in Group C along with defending champions Uzbekistan, China and South Korea.

Majidi was supposed to be there to talk about the team's situation but his absence indicates that the team needs urgent revision.

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I step down from my role as head coach of Iran's U23 football team due to interference in my job. I spent too much time solving the problem and I'd rather stay away from the team in the shameful situation ahead of the important tournament like the AFC U23 Championship. The non-standard ways dictated by technical committee didn't reflect my values," Majidi posted on his Instagram account.

There's absolutely no time to waste and Iran Olympic Committee and football federation should make quick decision on the U23 team since Iran have not been in the Olympics since the 1976 games in Munich.

The 2020 AFC U23 Championship will be held in Thailand from Jan. 8 to 26 and the top three teams of the tournament will qualify for the 2020 Summer Olympics men's football tournament in Japan as the AFC representatives.