



By: TA | AP Brief

Will Iran's players who served in the Revolutionary Guard get visas for the World Cup?



Iran's soccer federation said on Saturday the country “definitely” will participate in the **2026 FIFA World Cup** and insisted that tournament hosts – the United States, Canada and Mexico – consider Tehran's concerns around the team's travel and how it will be treated.

“All players and technical staff, especially those who served their military service in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, should be granted visas without problems,” Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran president Mehdi Taj said, according to Iranian media.

The team represents a country in a **fragile ceasefire** with the United States after the U.S. and Israel sparked a war with attacks on Iran on Feb. 28, and whose citizens are subject to a **travel ban** imposed by the Trump administration.

In the statement carried by the state-run IRNA news agency, Taj said Friday that Iran had presented conditions tied to participation – including guarantees over visas, security and treatment of Iranian players and officials – and added that the Islamic Republic would take part “without retreating from our beliefs, culture and convictions.”

The remarks came after **Canadian authorities** last month denied entry to Taj ahead of a FIFA Congress, reportedly because of his past ties to Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guard, which both the U.S. and Canada have designated as a terrorist organization.

The matter could affect one of Iran's key players

Taj has repeatedly said that Iran would seek assurances from FIFA that Iranian officials, players, national flag and anthem would be treated with respect during the World Cup.

Concerns over issuing visas to people who completed their mandatory military service in the Guard had been raised previously by others.

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In Iran, conscripts also can be assigned to the police or the army, often at random.

Iran's team has drawn with Belgium, New Zealand and Egypt in Group G and opens the World Cup against New Zealand in Inglewood, next to Los Angeles.

Iran has qualified for four consecutive World Cups and seven overall but has never advanced out of the group stage.

Currently ranked No. 21 in the world, Iran lost just one match in the Asian qualifying.