

***Cairo, Egypt, July 11 (Infosplusgabon) - Senegal on Wednesday qualified for the first time since 2006 for the semi-finals of the Africa Cup of Nations, thanks to a 1-0 win over Benin.***

The third and last time the Senegalese 'Lions' reached the semi-final in an AFCON tournament dates back to 2006, 13 years back... in Egypt.

They reached this stage of the competition in 1990 in Algeria, then in 2002 in Mali when they reached the final but lost to Cameroon on penalties.

On Wednesday, at 30 June Stadium in Cairo, Senegal beat Benin in their quarter-final clash, thanks to the goal by Idrissa Gana Guèye, the midfielder of English Premiership side Everton.

Aliou Cissé therefore becomes the first Senegalese coach to reach the semi-finals after Abdoulaye Sarr who managed the Senegalese team in 2006.

“We are very happy with this qualification as Benin showed that they were hard to play with and we were expecting so,” said the Senegalese coach in the news conference at the end of the match.

But he said he was committed to go farther.

“There are again two matches to play and we came with the ambition to play seven matches,” added Aliou Cissé, who described his players as “professionals, competitors and ambitious”.

Cissé and his men already have their minds on the next match.

They are waiting to know their adversary on Sunday who will be the winner of the Madagascar-Tunisia quarter-final match.

Nigeria also earned their ticket to the semi-finals by beating South Africa 2-1 at International Stadium in Cairo. The South Africans performed a giant-killing feat when they beat host nation Egypt in their Round of 16 match but failed to repeat the performance.

The Nigerian ‘Super Eagles’ dumped the South African ‘Bafana-Bafana’ who were thinking of taking the match into extra time.

The South Africans, who were down in the 27th minute from Nigeria's Samuel Chukwaze's goal, equalised through Bongani Zungu, whose goal was invalidated, then accepted, thanks to the VAR (Video Assistant Referee) which was introduced for the first time in this AFCON.

They were certainly thinking of extra time but were totally apathetic after the corner taken by Nigeria in the 89th minute. William Troost-Ekong connected home to send Nigeria to the semi-finals. They will on Sunday play against the winner in Thursday's clash between Algeria and Côte d'Ivoire.

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