

Dhaka, Aug 16: AFC has changed the formats of the 2012 AFC Challenge Cup and the next two editions of the AFC President's Cup.

Unlike the 2010 edition, no team will be given a direct entry into the 2012 AFC Challenge Cup Finals. Twenty-two eligible Member Associations will compete for a place in the eight-team Finals. The qualifier round of the competition will be held from March 5 to March 16 next year.

The 2011 and 2012 editions of the AFC President's Cup will see an increase in the number of matches.

Winners and best runners-up from the three groups of four teams each will qualify for the knock-out stage where they will be divided into two groups. The winners of each group will clash in the final.

The number of group stage matches has been increased from 15 to 18 while the knock-out stage will have seven matches instead of three. The eleven day qualifiers of the tournament will kick off on 5th May 2011.