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FIFA Qatar 2022 group stage best ever, says Infantino

FIFA President Gianni Infantino described the World Cup Qatar 2022 as the ‘best ever,’ following dramatic matches across all eight groups, record-breaking attendances and television figures across the world, and the FIFA Fan Festival in Doha proving hugely popular with fans supporting nations from every corner of the world.

In an interview published yesterday by FIFA’s official website, Infantino praised the quality of the football involving the 32 teams that competed in the group stage – and highlighted the passion shown in the stadiums, FIFA Fan Festival and fan parks around Qatar.

“I have seen all the matches, indeed, and put very simply and very clearly, this has been the best group stage of a FIFA World Cup ever. So, it’s very promising for the remainder of the FIFA World Cup,” the FIFA president said. “The matches have been of great, great quality in beautiful stadiums – we knew that already. However, as well, the public who was there was incredible. Over 51,000 on average.”

Infantino continued: “Record-breaking figures on TV – we already had over two billion viewers, which is really incredible. Two-and-a-half million people in the streets of Doha and a few hundred thousand every day in the stadiums, all together, cheering together, supporting their teams, fantastic atmosphere, great goals, incredible excitement and surprises.”

The FIFA president said there are



FIFA President Gianni Infantino

no more small teams and no more big teams. “The level is very, very equal. For the first time as well, national teams from all continents going to the knock-out phase, for the first time in history. This shows that football is really becoming truly global.

“We hope that the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 continues and concludes as it has started – a fantastic success. I am sure that we will reach five billion viewers around the world.”

Infantino continued. “When it comes to stadium attendances, the stadiums are sold-out, full practically at every match. The fan festivals, the different fan zones, are also very crowded with people celebrating and enjoying.”

In conclusion, Infantino said: “And at the end of the day, we simply want to give some joy and some smiles to people all over the world. That’s what football is about, that’s what the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 is about, and that’s what should also happen from now until the end.”

Kahramaa, SC launch ‘Sustainability Zone’

Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation (Kahramaa), in cooperation with the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy (SC), launched the “Sustainability Zone” initiative in the Kahramaa Awareness Park, to introduce the FIFA World Cup fans to the environmental sustainability efforts associated with hosting the tournament. The “Zone Sustainability” initiative will help fans be briefed on the various projects, initiatives and operations led by Kahramaa and the SC in the field of sustainability and combating climate change over the past ten years. The opening saw the display of a mural telling the history of electricity and water in Qatar and the launch of Carbon Zone and climate change in the park’s inner building. **Page 12**

Karwa ferries more than 4.4mn passengers

Mowasalat (Karwa) transported more than 4.4mn passengers during the Group and Round of 16 stages of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. The Round of 16 stage concluded on Tuesday, the 17th day of the World Cup that kicked off on November 20. The company said it transported a total of 4,427,887 people since the start of the tournament until Tuesday. **Page 6**

Xi on ‘epoch-making’ visit to Saudi Arabia

Chinese President Xi Jinping began a visit to Saudi Arabia yesterday that Beijing said marked its biggest diplomatic initiative in the Arab world, as Riyadh expands global alliances beyond a longstanding partnership with the West. The White House said Xi’s visit was an example of Chinese attempts to exert influence, and that this would not change US policy towards the Middle East. China, the world’s biggest energy consumer, is a major trade partner of Gulf oil and gas producers. Bilateral ties have expanded under the region’s economic diversification push, raising US concerns about growing Chinese involvement in sensitive infrastructure in the Gulf. **Page 11**

New Guinness World Record for Qatar



Qatar added yet another Guinness World Record to its credit yesterday when the Ministry of Culture revealed the world’s largest painting on canvas – equalling to the dimension of a football ground – by artist, Imad Salehi. The event at Qatar University football stadium was attended by HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani, HE Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani, HE the Minister of State and Qatar National Library president Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari and other dignitaries. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam **Page 5**

Qatar hosting ‘zero-crime’ World Cup 2022: security committee

The FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 has turned out to be the safest event of its kind with zero major crime, a senior official said yesterday, while pointing out that the reports received by the National Command Centre (NCC) were few and minor compared to the number of fans.

“The event, with half of the days over, proved the success of all parties and their co-operation in organising,” explained Brigadier Abdullah Khalifa al-Muftah, head of the Media Unit of the FIFA World Cup 2022 Safety and Security Operations Committee and Commander of the Security Media Sector and Community Partnership.

“Qatar is leading in international safety and security indicators, such as the Global Peace Index, the Numbeo Database, and other indicators,” he pointed out at a press conference yesterday.

“The minor incidents were handled by the security authorities with



Officials at the press conference yesterday. **PICTURE:** Shemeer Rasheed

high efficiency. The fans experienced smooth entry and exit at stadiums and they were provided guidance and assistance at all events.

“The efforts of the tournament security force and the Ministry of Interior (MoI) have delivered the safest ever FIFA World Cup, in accordance with the best standards at competitive and non-competitive facilities.

“The appropriate security environment was provided for the participating teams and referees in the stadiums, training sites and residences. The security authorities were also keen to follow up and address any feedback from the fans through various media,” he added.

Col Dr Jabr Hammoud al-Nuaimi, the official spokesman for the MoI

and the security force of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, said that all stakeholders made great efforts using the latest communication systems that linked all units through the operations rooms in the tournament facilities and the fan areas, linked to both the tournament command centre and the Central Operations Room of the NCC.

The total number of calls received by the NCC reached 585,606, including 16,000 in the official languages of the World Cup. The communications included inquiries, suggestions, and complaints in different languages, based on the diversity of the fans’ languages.

Various security patrols took out 4,256 trips to secure the movement of the competing teams. As many as 21,579 vehicles underwent security screening to ensure the safety of tournament participants at 37 hotels, 36 stadiums and 8 main stadiums, the official added.

Qatar a model for sustainable development: UN

The United Nations (UN) has chosen Qatar as a model for Arab countries in the implementation of MARS for the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SDG team at the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) said Qatar has been selected as a model for the use of MARS application (Monitoring Application for Reporting on SDGs), which is an application for monitoring and reporting on sustainable development goals in the Arab region.

The UN commends the completion of a national network in Qatar for the focal points of the 2030 SDGs. Qatar is the only country that completed the establishment of the network in a record time of four months, from March to July 2020. The network consists of 123 data providers (focal point of the 2030 SDGs).

The MARS application enables national statistical systems in the Arab region to manage data flow and facilitate the process of reporting data and information that are extracted from the administrative records of national agencies through the SDG focal points (data providers).

All of this is performed in line with the UN statistical calendar for reporting, i.e. the start and end date of the national communications. Later on, this exemplary experience will be generalised to other Arab countries.



In line with the SDG team’s task to monitor the agenda for sustainable development in Arab countries, it presented a document at the 15th session of the Statistical Commission, held in Beirut on 16-17 November 2022 on “Improving monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Insti-

tutional Environment, and Production and Dissemination of Data”, which overviews the progress made in improving monitoring of the 2030 agenda in the Arab region. Qatar was represented in this session by the Planning and Statistics Authority (PSA).

The document commended the experience of

Qatar in establishing a national network for sustainable development goals consisting of national entities or the so-called data and information providers to facilitate the process of reporting data and information coming from the UN.

The UN commends the completion of a national network in Qatar for the focal points of the 2030 SDGs. Qatar is the only country that completed the establishment of the network in a record time of four months

The document also indicated that Qatar is one of the advanced countries in the region in publishing national data on the UN databases through a special platform to monitor the sustainable development goals by uploading 169 indicators and 6,960 variables.

The PSA has issued five statistical reports on sustainable development goals since the announcement of the SDGs at the UN in 2015. These reports monitor the progress of sustainable development indicators in Qatar, which serves researchers, planners and policy makers in this field. It has also issued an explanatory infographic of the SDGs, which present the indicators in a simple and easy-to-understand manner.

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HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani kicks a football to launch the conference.

The opening ceremony featured a panel discussion titled 'Chasing the Dream.'

Empower runs as part of EAA's Scoring 4 the Goals Campaign, which aims to raise awareness and call for action to achieve the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, the global agenda to bring a more prosperous and equitable future for all.



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Green touch for World Cup festivities at MIA Park

Immersed in all the excitement and celebration during the ongoing FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, one can find in the heart of Doha a view like no other at the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) Park, a Qatar Museums statement said.

MIA Park, open 24 hours, seven days a week, offers ample green space to unwind before or after the matches, watch the fireworks and other spectacular displays on the Corniche or simply enjoy an oasis of serenity.

MIA and MIA Park are accessible through the museum's main entrance and Qatar Museums Gallery - Al Riwaq entrance at the back of The Skyline or giant screen display.

While at MIA, a visit to the gift shop inside the Museum or the Pop-Up shop at MIA Park, is an opportunity to purchase a range of souvenirs including FIFA-licensed merchandise and product lines inspired by the "Baghdad: Eye's Delight" exhibition.

At the Al Riwaq gift shop, visitors have access to gifts inspired by the "Lusail Mu-



MIA and MIA Park are accessible through the museum's main entrance and Qatar Museums Gallery - Al Riwaq entrance at the back of The Skyline or giant screen display.

seum: Tales of A Connected World" and "Art Mill" exhibitions. Bring home a piece of the World Cup and Qatar through the

carefully curated premium gift items that elevate one's gifting experience. MIA Café located inside the museum



MIA Park offers ample green space to unwind before or after the matches.

offers chicken and lamb machboos to chicken biryani, crispy bread with turkey and compote cheese to refreshing drinks,

with views of the Corniche and the scenic Doha skyline. A stroll at MIA Park engages guests with

an artful experience through public art installations by Yayoi Kusama. "My Soul Blooms Forever" is the largest outdoor exhibition of its kind to take place in the Gulf region.

The exhibition consists of monumental sculptures and installations throughout MIA Park and Al Riwaq, including recent work such as the giant Dancing Pumpkin (2020) and renowned works such as Narcissus Garden (1966/2022).

MIA Park also has a variety of food trucks and kiosks, including MIA Park Café, Voute Café, Hilal Food Truck, Al Riwaq Café, Go Fresh, Desi Dhaba, Home Burger Food Truck and Green & Go.

Abdulla al-Dosari, deputy director for Operations at MIA, said: "A visit at MIA and MIA Park creates moments that are actually a union of arts, culture and culinary discoveries. MIA Park offers a safe space to unwind, catch up with friends, enjoy family bonding over good food in a relaxed and serene environment. At MIA, we are all about creating moments that will last even beyond the tournament".



Karwa ferries more than 4.4mn passengers

Mowasalat (Karwa) transported more than 4.4mn passengers during the Group and Round of 16 stages of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

The Round of 16 stage concluded on Tuesday, the 17th day of the World Cup that kicked off on November 20.

In a video message on social media yesterday, the company said it transported a total of 4,427,887 people since the start of the tournament until Tuesday.

Mowasalat (Karwa) buses, along the Metro and tram networks, have been playing a key role in transporting fans to and from stadiums and other places in the country.

Meanwhile, the company said a total of 2,304 buses were used to transport 233,260 fans on Tuesday.

In a related matter, the Ministry of Transport (MoT) informed through a tweet that a total of 593,689 passengers were ferried by the Doha Metro (568,945) and Lusail Tram (24,744) on Tuesday, while the Education City and Msheireb trams carried 10,976 people on the same day.

Meanwhile, 768 air movements were recorded at Hamad International Airport and Doha International Airport on Tuesday.

Qatar recorded a total of 15,100 air traffic movements as of Tuesday, since the start of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.



Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2022

Metro Ridership: 568,945
Tram Ridership: 24,744
Total number transferred: 593,689 K

Qatar Museums installs new public artworks across Doha

As part of its plans to transform the nation's landscape into a vast outdoor art museum experience, Qatar Museums, in collaboration with the Supervisory Committee of Beautification of Roads and Public Places in Qatar (Ashghal), has recently installed several public artworks across Doha.

The newly installed public artworks include:

- Doha Mountains (2022) by Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone, on view along Doha's Ras Abou Aboud beachfront near 974 Stadium, echoes the Olympic Ring colours that encircle the 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum.
- The Doha Modern Playground (2022), a site-responsive playground inspired by a group of six key modernist buildings in Doha, by Shezad Dawood at Al Masrah Park.
- Monira al-Qadiri's Zephyr (2022) is a large-scale recreation of a microscopic organism seen in fossilised marine algae found in the Arabian Peninsula. The Kuwaiti artist's work is located along the West Bay's North Beach.
- Here We Hear (2022) is a series of sculptures by Korean artist Suki Seokyeong Kang at Corniche Park. Each individual sculpture provides shelter and an open square where individuals, families, and communities can share their own history. Delvendahl Martin Architects are the executive architects of the project.
- Brazilian artist Ernesto Neto's immersive installation Slug Turtle, TempEarth (2022), which pays homage to the natural environment and creates a space for meditation, reflection and communion between visitors and the spirit of the desert. Slug Turtle, TempEarth is a structure in Al Zubarah comprising eight football goal frames in an octagonal ring, centred on a ceramic earth globe sculpture and surrounded by a vast surface made of white crocheted netting.
- Al Jassasiya (2022) by Qatari artist Salman al-Malek is



Al Jassasiya by Salman al-Malek.

an installation inspired by the Al Jassasiya site. The Jassasiya area was a seaport, located on the northeast coast of Qatar and the sculpture sits at Al Dastour Plaza.

- Toub Toub Ya Bahar (2022) situated at the Corniche waterfront by Qatari artist Salman al-Malek is inspired by an old song from Qatar and the Gulf. It translates to "Oh sea, have mercy on the sailors!". The song is about 'waiting' and it was sung by women in the community, for their sailors and divers.
- Standing over 21m tall and stretching over 31m long, Jeff Koons's inflatable Dugong (2022) is a mammoth form gliding effortlessly through a marine habitat; a new icon at the Corniche for Doha celebrating Qatar's natural heritage.
- Qatar-based Iraqi artist Ahmed al-Bahrani celebrates



Milestones by Shua'a Ali.

a Dugong Family in Al Ruwais, highlighting the dugong's significance as part of Qatar's history and commitment to protecting the species.

- Acacia-Tree Seeds (2022) by Qatari Artist Mohamed al-Atiq, symbolises the good and bad nature of human beings and highlights the duality of humanity and art, by depicting the seeds from the Acacia tree.
- Milestones (2022) by Qatari artist Shua'a Ali on Grand Hamad Street is inspired by construction debris and location marks (Neshan) found in both urban and desert environments. The installation is a conceptual representation of an important period in the economic history of Qatar.
- Abdulrahman Ahmed al-Ishaq, Qatar Museums' director of Public Art, said: "It has been an honour to partner with

Ashghal to install these incredible artworks by celebrated local, regional and international artists and we thank them for their generous support. Qatar Museums invites residents and visitors to Qatar to experience these pieces, which have transformed Qatar into an outdoor canvas."

Mohamed Arqoub al-Khalidi, chairman of the Supervisory Committee of Beautification of Roads and Public Places in Qatar, added: "Displaying artworks in public places such as parks and beaches is a part of the committee's commitment to increasing the presence of art all around

us. We look forward to further expanding the co-operation between the committee and Qatar Museums in this regard as this plays a big role in highlighting Qatar's cultural identity to visitors but also benefits the citizens and residents of Qatar."

Throughout 2022, Qatar Museums has installed more than 40 new and commissioned public artworks across Doha in a variety of public spaces including parks and shopping areas, educational and athletic facilities, Hamad International Airport and Qatar Rail stations, as well as select stadiums that are hosting the FIFA World Cup matches.



Toub Toub Ya Bahar by Salman al-Malek.

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Kia model recalled

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Al Attiya Motors and Trading Company, has announced the recall of Kia Carens, 2022-2023 models, due to a possible defect in the airbag control unit that might result in the airbags not deploying in the event of an accident.

The recall campaign comes within the framework of the MoCI's continuous efforts to protect consumers and ensure that dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry said it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has urged all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquires and suggestions through the following channels: call centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, Twitter: @MOCIQATAR, Instagram: MOCIQATAR, MoCI mobile app for android and iOS: MOCIQATAR

■ M7 Director Maha Ghanem al-Sulaiti dilates on the finer points ‘Qatar Fashion United’ – the world’s biggest fashion show – on December 16



#Qatar2022ForAll initiative spreads World Cup cheer in refugee camps

The #Qatar2022ForAll initiative is still making headlines in the host countries.

Co-launched by Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) and Qatar Charity (QC) in 16 countries just prior to the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, the humanitarian initiative is supported by Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC), and beIN Sports.

In co-operation with their local partners, QRCS and QC installed dozens of sites with large public screens and amenities to watch the World Cup games; prepared pitches for youth teams to play friendly football matches; and held other entertainment, educational, and sports activities that have the same goals as the

global tournament.

The famous singers and music producers Humood al-Khudher and Maher Zain visited the fan zones at the Zaatar camp in Jordan, where adults and children gather to watch the World Cup matches.

The two men spent six hours at the tents of QRCS and QC.

They had a special evening with the fans watching a couple of World Cup games, in the presence of sportscaster Suwar al-Dahab.

Also, the two singers performed some songs including their masterpiece "Tahayya".

During the half-time, al-Khudher and Zain played a football match with the boys, and the attendance particularly enjoyed Suwar al-Dahab's enthusiastic voice.

They listened to some children telling their own stories



and dreams, predominantly their wish to continue schooling.

Hajar, the daughter of an assistant nurse at the QRCS-run Qatari Clinics of Zaatar, hoped to study dentistry, after getting

90% grade.

Al-Khudher and Zain expressed their appreciation for the warm welcome, and the chance to bring happiness to the refugees and their children.



They thanked QRCS and QC for the creative and touching initiative, which contributed a meaningful humanitarian message to Qatar's success in organising the FIFA World Cup 2022.

QC installed a 700-person tent throughout the tournament and organised Telematch-like competitions and games for school students.

QRCS has another tent, with a

capacity of 500-700 visitors.

Together with Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and Blue Mountain Foundation, QRCS is organising a 10-team football league, which lasts throughout the World Cup.

The two organisations believe that this initiative is part of the humanitarian efforts by Qatar and humanitarian organisations in areas of refugees and displaced people.

Realising the important global sports' goals of alleviating the suffering of vulnerable groups and supporting them physically and mentally, they are organising many sports and entertainment activities, and are creating suitable settings for the beneficiaries to watch football games and share the joy with Qatar and the world. (QNA)

Qatar Charity provides aid to quake-hit in Indonesia

Qatar Charity (QC) has provided urgent relief aid to those affected by the earthquake that hit Indonesia's West Java province. The assistance has benefited more than 4,000 people.

The relief aid, which came with the support of benefactors from Qatar, was delivered to the affected in the villages of West Java to alleviate their suffering.

The aid included food items,

drinking water, hygiene kits, and other items.

Khaled al-Yafei, director of the Emergency and Relief Department at Qatar Charity, said the aid is part of Qatar Charity's humanitarian and moral

duty towards the needy and those affected by disasters and calamities, indicating that such aid is provided through Qatar Charity's field offices worldwide and in co-operation with its local partners.

He added that Qatar Charity distributed aid to 1,000 families in four villages completely affected by the earthquake, which damaged buildings and displaced people from their homes.

Didi Farhan, the head of a beneficiary village, thanked the people of Qatar and Qatar Charity for providing relief aid and mattresses to the affected, indicating that the timely aid fulfilled the essential needs of the beneficiaries, who are unable to meet their basic needs. (QNA)



Giving blind fans exceptional World Cup experience

● Doha resident Bryan Kelly discusses his role as audio descriptive commentator during Qatar 2022

The FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 features numerous innovations introduced to enhance fan experience. One of these is the audio descriptive commentary in both Arabic and English for blind and partially-sighted fans - and Doha resident Bryan Kelly is playing a key role in providing the service. The 42-year-old from Glasgow, Scotland, has lived in Qatar since 2020 with his wife and two children. A former youth coach with Scottish side Celtic, Kelly learned how to become an audio descriptive commentator after attending training organised by Hamad Bin Khalifa University, the Center for Access to Football in Europe and Alan March Sport.

Fans are able to access audio descriptive commentary in Arabic and English via the FIFA Interpreting app (Apple/Google Play) and by using their own headphones. The service is available both in-stadium and around the world. "The goal is to give visually impaired and blind people the same experience as most of us would have at a football stadium," said Kelly, who trained Arsenal star Kieran Tierney and Stoke City defender Harry Souttar, who played for Australia at Qatar 2022, during his time at Celtic. "The main difference between normal TV commentary and audio descriptive is the detail you give.



Bryan Kelly

You need to describe the distances on the pitch, the players' facial expressions, the number of people in a wall, what type of corner is taken. It's about trying to paint a picture in people's minds by following the ball and providing as much detail as possible."

An enrichment and personal development teacher at Oryx International School in Barwa City, Kelly had no prior experience of football commentary. But after encouragement from his wife, he signed up for training and was chosen to be part of the Qatar 2022 audio descriptive commentary team. Kelly's tournament highlight so far was his commentary debut - at Lusail Stadium on November 22.

"Saudi Arabia versus Argentina was an incredible game," said Kelly. "To start my commenting experience with that match was amazing. I also commented on the Brazil versus Serbia game, which was another great experience, just in terms of the atmosphere the fans created." Kelly is hoping to continue working as an audio descriptive commentator in future. "I have loved every second of it and it's something I'd love to continue in the future. It's been lovely for my family too, as they can tune in to the FIFA Interpreting app and hear it back home in Scotland. This service is going from strength to strength, so I'm interested to see how it all develops."

beIN Sports provides World Cup coverage to displaced people

beIN Sports, as the official broadcaster of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and an advocate for creating an inclusive and accessible football tournament for all, has expressed delight that its broadcast coverage is being made available at more than 20 special fan zones catering to thousands of refugees and displaced people across western Asia and North Africa.

Two separate initiatives running in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) - namely the #Qatar2022ForAll initiative and a separate programme of events by the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza - are helping ensure that the historic World Cup is available to as

many people in the region as possible.

#Qatar2022ForAll is a humanitarian initiative led by the Qatar Red Crescent Society and Qatar Charity, in partnership with the Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and supported by the Qatar Fund for Development, beIN Sports, and the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy. It involves the creation of dedicated fan zones across a range of countries, including Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan and Yemen. All fan zones feature huge TV screens carrying beIN Sports' extensive coverage.

The aim of the #Qatar2022ForAll initiative is multi-fold with the ultimate objec-

tives being to promote a culture of peace and social integration, enhance the role of sports in alleviating the suffering of affected nations, provide mental support for displaced people and refugees, and share the joy of the first FIFA World Cup held in the region.

Meanwhile, the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza organised screenings in the centre of Gaza City and in Ramallah. The fan zone in Gaza can accommodate up to 3,000 fans, while the set-up in Ramallah is able to host a further 1,000 spectators. The result is football fans gathering each night to watch FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 action, with traditional 'dabke'



Two separate initiatives running in the Middle East and North Africa - namely the #Qatar2022ForAll initiative and a separate programme of events by the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza - are helping ensure that the historic World Cup is available to as many people in the region as possible.

shows and fireworks also occasionally occurring.

Fans are able to watch the games for free, courtesy of beIN, which collaborated with Qatar to ensure those who live in difficult economic situations in the MENA region can watch the tournament and feel part of this historic hosting of football's grandest showcase taking place in the Arab world for the first time, a press statement notes.

Jassim Abdulrahman al-Muftah, director of Corporate Communications at beIN MENA, said: "This is a historic World Cup not only for Qatar and the Middle East, but for the entire Arab world, and we are proud to support this generous state initia-

tive. Football's ability to change perceptions, implement societal change, and boost sustainable development is well documented and we are pleased to be able to help provide a little escapism to the millions of refugees and displaced people

by sharing the joy of the World Cup through our daily coverage.

"As part of its corporate commitment, beIN has always endeavoured to motivate people of all ages, ethnicity, gender and backgrounds with positive, inspiring events and stories by showcasing world class sports and entertainment content that transcends borders and unites people."



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GULF TIMES

What the COP15 biodiversity conference must do

In Montreal this fortnight, governments lock heads at the Convention on Biological Diversity's COP15 summit in the hope for a global deal to put the world's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030. We cannot afford for this conference to be treated as a sideshow or afterthought to COP27. The biodiversity crisis is no less important than the climate crisis, and it is escalating quickly. It must be a top political priority for all countries.

Given the current rates of biodiversity loss, some scientists estimate that we are on track to lose three-quarters of the world's species within only a few centuries. This mass extinction and the ongoing threat to ecosystems and habitats is inextricably linked to climate change. That is why world leaders must come to COP15 with high ambitions and set a mandate for successful negotiations.

To succeed, COP15 must not only deliver an agreement on the overall mission. It also must set clearly defined goals and establish concrete plans to protect 30% of all land and ocean areas by 2030. Hopefully, leaders have come to Montreal with both the national plans and the financing needed to advance these objectives.

We understand both the value of nature and what we stand to lose when it is eroded. We also have come to appreciate what we can learn from those with the closest relationship to the land. Many indigenous communities had been warning of an ecological crisis for decades, only to have their voices and rights dismissed.

Nature loss hurts people everywhere. It is already harming human health, reducing air quality, undermining our ability to grow food or obtain water, exacerbating extreme weather events, and weakening our ability to mitigate or adapt to climate change. These problems make biodiversity loss a security issue. Continued damage to our ecosystems is one of the biggest long-term risks to our societies.

As an economic matter, the collapse of certain essential ecosystems is all it would take to push countries like mine into bankruptcy. Consider, for example, that around 75% of food crops rely on animal pollinators such as bees, birds, and butterflies. The loss of all animal pollinators seems unthinkable, yet it is a real threat. And if food becomes scarcer, the poorest will suffer first.

Moreover, the destruction of habitats is a serious public-health threat, not least because it is bringing humans and animals into closer and more frequent contact. The World Health Organisation warns that this is both causing existing infectious diseases to spread more quickly and accelerating the emergence of novel zoonotic pathogens.

Finally, not only is climate change one of the main drivers of biodiversity loss; the destruction of ecosystems is undermining the planet's ability to neutralise the effects of greenhouse-gas emissions. South America's Andean forests, for example, act as critical carbon sinks, absorbing atmospheric carbon dioxide that would otherwise be hastening the pace of global warming.

Forests, wetlands, underwater kelp forests, mangroves, and other natural systems also provide protection from extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, heatwaves, and storms, by acting as natural buffers or reservoirs. Biodiversity loss not only makes climate change worse, but also eliminates our best line of defence against it.

COP15 offers a major opportunity for governments to achieve a breakthrough – equivalent to the 2015 Paris climate agreement – that unites the world behind one mission: to halt, and ideally reverse, biodiversity loss by the end of this decade.

To be sure, the current effort suffers from a lack of high-level political engagement, leading many to question why we have two separate convention processes for issues that go hand in hand. They are right to wonder. Looking ahead, both conventions should come together, in recognition of the fact that climate change and biodiversity loss must be addressed in tandem.

In the meantime, though, we cannot afford further delay on setting ambitious targets to protect and restore biodiversity this decade. The recent "loss and damage" agreement at COP27 demonstrated that, with sufficient resolve, countries can work together on seemingly intractable issues. With time running out, world leaders must nurture this spirit of co-operation in Montreal. – Project Syndicate

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The silent progressive majority

By Joseph E Stiglitz
New York

The world heaved a sigh of relief when the feared "red wave" of Republican victories in the US midterms failed to materialise. While the Republicans took the House of Representatives by a narrow margin, the Democrats held on to the Senate. American voters seemed to reject Republican extremism and hypocrisy, denying victories to the many Donald Trump-backed candidates who had lied about the outcome of the 2020 election and called into question fundamental democratic principles.

To be sure, there is always a danger of misreading an election outcome, given the complexity of factors motivating individuals' votes. But from my perspective, the average rational voter will have recognised the Democrats' historic successes from the past two years. Thanks to US President Joe Biden's recovery bill (the American Rescue Plan), the United States had the strongest recovery of any of the world's advanced economies, reducing childhood poverty by almost half in the space of a year.

Biden also oversaw the passage of the first major infrastructure bill in decades; America's first major legislative response to climate change, the Inflation Reduction Act; and a major industrial-policy bill, the CHIPS and Science Act, which explicitly recognises the government's key role in shaping the economy. And these landmark bills all passed despite a historically unwieldy Congress.

Nor were Biden's accomplishments limited to legislation. He appointed the

first black woman to the US Supreme Court, and he issued executive orders to alleviate student-loan debt, to improve antitrust enforcement, and to update financial regulations for the era of climate change. He brought America back into the Paris climate agreement and made notable gains in restoring American leadership on the world stage. Though he has gotten very little credit for it, history will likely show that his management of the Russia-Ukraine issue has been masterful.

Now that the American electorate appears to have rejected Republican extremism, some will argue that Biden should tack right to capture the elusive middle. But that is the wrong way to read the 2022 midterm result.

Centrism is the wrong approach to most other big issues facing voters. It is not left-wing extremism to note that the American economy has not been serving most Americans. And the sense of injustice is compounded by the fact that we should be doing much better than we are. The US is an extraordinarily wealthy country, and far wealthier than many other countries that are providing better living conditions for their citizens. America's failures are a matter of choice. Or, more accurately, they are the result of decisions made by a political system that does not reflect the interests of the majority of its citizens, because it has been captured to serve special interests.

Hence, while an overwhelming majority of Americans believe that the federal minimum wage should be increased sharply – at least doubled – it has not been raised since 2009. Likewise, most Americans believe that everyone should have access to

healthcare as a basic human right, even if they differ over the best way to deliver it. It is also generally agreed that everyone who is able to benefit from a college education should be able to pursue one, regardless of their parents' income, and without being burdened with tens of thousands of dollars of debt. And all Americans want a secure retirement and access to decent affordable housing.

It is not left-wing extremism to demand policy solutions to these problems, or to protect our environment, enhance our economic security, strengthen competition, and ensure that everyone's voice is heard in our political system. While those on the right try to paint this progressive agenda as radical overreach, most voters aren't buying it. If anything, the progressive agenda has become a centrist agenda.

One basic principle underpinning the progressive agenda is that most big problems – especially in the twenty-first century – are best tackled collectively, rather than individually. Another principle is that successful collective action must be arrived at democratically and inclusively.

The isolated farmers of the past may have been rugged individualists, but even they needed collective action to protect themselves from theft and violence, and government regulations to ensure the proper functioning of the markets in which they traded. Today, we face natural disasters, pandemics, and climate change – all threats that transcend individuals and borders.

Today's techno-libertarians ignore all this, because they fail to see – or refuse to accept – that one person's freedom is likely to be another person's

unfreedom. One person's right not to wear a mask or not to be vaccinated impinges on another's right to safety from a contagious virus. An individual's right to carry an AR-15 has all too often impinged on many other individuals' right to live. When asked to weigh these rights, most reasonable people will come down clearly on one side.

Innovative, well-designed public policy can enhance everyone's scope of action, radically expanding the realm of freedom. There is a subtle irony here: by forcing people to pay taxes, we can expand the opportunities available to them. Everyone can – and mostly does – benefit. Of course, everyone naturally would prefer that others' bear the burden of taxes – what economists call the free-rider problem – but even in our divided society, I think there is widespread agreement that those who are more able to pay taxes, by dint of having more, should bear a greater proportion of the burden.

The 2022 election shows, at a minimum, that a large share of the electorate wants to move on from Trumpian politics. They sense the challenges ahead, and that we can do a better job of addressing them together through civil, informed debate. Americans are tired of the name-calling and the scare tactics. Whether they realise it or not, most Americans support a progressive agenda and its promise to deliver higher living standards for all. – Project Syndicate

● Joseph E Stiglitz, a Nobel laureate in economics, is University Professor at Columbia University and a member of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.



IN HINDSIGHT: Though he has gotten very little credit for it, history will likely show that President Joe Biden's management of the Russia-Ukraine issue has been masterful, according to the author.

India saw a big jump in extreme weather events such as heatwaves and lightning strikes this year and related deaths rose to their highest in three years, government data showed yesterday, with scientists blaming climate change for the heavy toll. There were nearly eight times as many heatwaves, 27 in all, and lightning strikes rose more than 111 times, killing 907 people, the Ministry of Earth Sciences said in a report to parliament. Thunderstorms increased more than five times to 240. This year's 2,183 deaths due to such events until last month were the highest since 2019's 3,017. Lightning and floods and heavy rains accounted for 78% of the deaths this year, the data showed. Temperatures during India's monsoon season have risen this century and the country could see more frequent heatwaves in future, the government said in August. India is the world's third-largest carbon polluter, though its per-capita emissions are much lower than many developed countries. The country of nearly 1.4bn suffered its hottest March in more than a century and temperatures were unusually high in April and May, blamed mainly on climate change.

A prince, an ex-MP and former soldiers were arrested yesterday in raids led by the German police against members of a far-right "terror group" that allegedly planned to attack parliament and overthrow the government.

The group had organised a "council" to take charge after the putsch, as well as a "military arm that would build a new German army", chief federal prosecutor Peter Frank said at a press conference.

"Some members of the terrorist organisation also considered using force to enter the German Bundestag (parliament)," Frank said.

President Frank-Walter Steinmeier told public radio MDR he was "deeply concerned" by the alleged plot, describing it as a "new level".

Around 3,000 officers including elite anti-terror units took part in the early morning raids and searched more than 130 properties, in what German media described as one of the country's largest ever police actions against extremists.

The raids targeted alleged members of the "Citizens of the Reich" (Reichsbuerger) movement, federal prosecutors said in a statement.

The prosecutors in Karlsruhe, southern Germany, said they had arrested 25 people, including one in Austria and another in Italy, and identified a further 27 people as suspected members or supporters of the network.

Those arrested are accused of having formed a group that "had set itself the goal of overcoming the existing state order in Germany and replacing it with their own kind of state," they said.

"The accused are united by a deep rejection of state institutions and the free, democratic basic order of the Federal Republic of Germany," they said.

The suspects were aware that their plan "could only be realised by using military means and violence against state representatives," prosecutors said.

They allegedly planned to appoint one of the arrested suspects, identified by local media as aristocrat and businessman Prince Heinrich XIII Reuss, as Germany's new leader after the coup.

Heinrich XIII had already sought to make contact with Russian officials to discuss Germany's "new state order" after the coup, prosecutors said.

There was however "no indication that the contact persons responded positively to his request," they said.

A Russian woman named only as Vitalia B., who was among those arrested yesterday, is suspected of having facilitated those contacts, prosecutors added.

Police escorts a person after 25 suspects were detained during raids across Germany, in Karlsruhe yesterday. **(Reuters)**

Birgit Malsack-Winkemann, a former member of parliament for the far-right AfD party and Berlin judge, was also among those arrested.

The ex-MP had been tapped by the group to take over as justice minister after the planned coup, chief prosecutor Frank said.

Other suspected members include current and former members of the German army in the "low single digits",

spokesman for the defence ministry said at a regular press conference.

One of those arrested was an active soldier in the KSK special forces, who worked in a "support" role, the spokesman said.

"A former officer of the special units of the German army" was likewise held near Perugia, Italy, the local police said in a statement.

The Reichsbuerger movement in-

cludes far-right extremists, conspiracy theorists and gun enthusiasts who reject the legitimacy of the modern German republic.

Its followers generally believe in the continued existence of the pre-World War I German Reich, or empire, under monarchy and several groups have declared their own states.

Long dismissed as malcontents and oddballs, the Reichsbuerger have become increasingly radicalised in recent years and are seen as a growing security threat.

The investigation gave “a look into the abyss” of far-right terror from the movement, Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said in a statement.

According to prosecutors, the terror cell suspects believe in Reichsbuerger and QAnon conspiracy theories and are “strongly convinced” that Germany is run by a “deep state” that needs to be toppled.

As part of the preparations for the coup, members of the alleged terror cell acquired weapons, organised shooting practice and tried to recruit new followers, particularly among the military and police, according to prosecutors.

Germany considers far-right terrorism the biggest threat to its security following a spate of attacks in recent years. In April, police foiled a plot by a far-right group to kidnap the health minister.

Chinese President Xi Jinping arrived in Saudi Arabia yesterday on a visit Beijing hailed as its biggest diplomatic initiative in the Arab world, as Riyadh expands global alliances beyond a longstanding partnership with the West.

The meeting between the global economic powerhouse and Gulf energy giant comes as Saudi ties with Washington are strained by US criticism of Riyadh and Saudi support for oil output curbs before the November midterm elections.

The White House said yesterday that Xi's visit was an example of Chinese attempts to exert influence and that this would not change US policy towards the Middle East.

"We are mindful of the influence that China is trying to grow around the world," White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby told reporters.

China, the world's biggest energy consumer, is a major trade partner of Gulf oil and gas producers. Bilateral ties have expanded under the region's economic diversification push, raising US concerns about growing Chinese involvement in sensitive infrastruc-

Chinese President Xi Jinping (right) being received by the Governor of Riyadh province Prince Faisal bin Bandar al-Saud at King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh yesterday. (AFP)

ture in the Gulf. Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said yesterday that Riyadh would remain a "trusted and reliable" energy partner for Beijing and that the two countries would boost co-operation in energy supply chains by establishing a regional centre in the kingdom for Chinese factories.

Saudi Arabia is China's top oil supplier and Xi's visit takes place while

uncertainty hangs over energy markets after Western powers imposed a price cap on sales of oil from Russia, which has been increasing volumes to China with discounted oil.

The Chinese delegation is expected to sign deals worth \$30bn with Riyadh, Saudi state media had said.

Xi was met on arrival by the governor of Riyadh, the kingdom's foreign

minister and the governor of sovereign wealth fund PIF. The Saudi cabinet was meeting yesterday to approve the 2023 state budget of the world's top oil exporter.

Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman is expected to offer Xi a lavish welcome, in contrast with the low-key reception for US President Joe Biden whose censure formed the backdrop for a strained meeting in July.

Xi will hold bilateral talks with Saudi Arabia and Riyadh will later host a wider meeting with Gulf Arab states and a summit with Arab leaders which will be "an epoch-making milestone in the history of the development of China-Arab relations", foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said.

Beijing hopes it will make a strong statement on strengthening "unity and co-operation", Mao added.

For Riyadh, frustrated by what it sees as Washington's gradual disengagement from the Middle East and a slow erosion of its security guarantees, China offers an opportunity for economic gains without the tensions which have come to cloud the US relationship.

"Beijing does not burden its partners with demands or political expectations and refrains from interfering in their internal affairs," Saudi columnist Abdulrahman al-Rashed wrote in the Saudi-owned *Asharq al-Awsat* newspaper.

China announced yesterday a nationwide loosening of its hardline Covid restrictions that had bruised the world's second biggest economy and ignited rare protests against the ruling Communist Party. The new rules are a major relaxation of President Xi Jinping's signature zero-Covid policy, three years into the pandemic and long after the rest of the world had largely learnt to live with the virus. However, with vaccination rates remaining low among China's elderly and a health system still regarded as ill-prepared for a wave of infections, Xi has not abandoned travel curbs and heavy testing completely. Under the new guidelines announced by the National Health Commission, the frequency and scope of PCR testing – long a tedious mainstay of life in zero-Covid China – will be reduced. Lockdowns – a major source of public anger – will also be limited to as small a scope as is feasible, and authorities are required to free areas that show no positive cases after five days. People with non-severe Covid infections can isolate at home instead of centralised government facilities.

High-stakes UN biodiversity talks opened in Montreal yesterday, in what is being billed as the "last best chance" to save the planet's species and ecosystems from irreversible human destruction.

Delegates from across the world gathered for the December 7-19 meeting to try to hammer out a new deal for nature: a 10-year framework aimed at saving the planet's forests, oceans and species before it's too late.

"This meeting is our chance to move from disharmony to harmony – to stop this orgy of destruction, and to conclude a peace pact with nature," said Huang Runqiu, minister of ecology and environment of China, which is chairing the talks.

The head of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) urged negotiators to land a strong framework for nature.

"We have now been negotiating for a long, long time. Everyone speaks of compromise, but we are not moving fast enough," Inger Andersen said at the opening.

"Nature and biodiversity are dying the death of a billion cuts and humanity is paying the price for betraying our closest friend." The official opening of the COP15 meeting follows several days of pre-negotiations that saw little progress on key issues, sparking fears parties may walk away without a good deal.

Observers called for negotiators to urgently unblock sticking points on difficult items like finance and

Executive Director of the UNEP, Inger Andersen (second left), speaks during the COP15 opening plenary at the Palais des Congrès in Montreal, yesterday. (AFP)

implementation, with only five out of more than 20 targets agreed so far. The summit "is probably the last best chance for governments to turn things around for nature, and to rescue our precious life support system," Bernadette Fischler Hooper,

head of international Advocacy at WWF, told reporters Tuesday. Draft targets for the 10-year framework include a cornerstone pledge to protect 30 percent of the world's land and seas by 2030, eliminating harmful fishing and

agriculture subsidies and tackling invasive species and reducing pesticides. Finance is among the most divisive issues, as developing nations are demanding increased funding for conservation. Earlier this year, a coalition of nations

alled for wealthy countries to provide at least \$100bn annually – rising to \$700bn a year by 2030 – for biodiversity. Some countries want to set up a separate funding mechanism for biodiversity, which wealthy nations have largely resisted. The sticky issue of biopiracy is also causing roadblocks, as many mainly African countries demand that wealthy nations share the benefits of ingredients and formulas used in cosmetics and medicines derived from the Global South. Implementation has emerged as another sticking point in recent days, with disagreements over how to ensure any final deal is put into practice – unlike its predecessor agreed in 2010. “There is significant resistance to having the robust monitoring and review mechanisms that we feel is necessary,” said a European source close to negotiations. The meeting, delayed two years because of the Covid-19 pandemic, follows crucial climate change talks in Egypt last month that ended with little headway on reducing emissions and scaling down the use of planet-warming fossil fuels. China is chair, though it is being hosted in Canada because of Beijing’s long-standing zero-Covid policy. But China’s President Xi Jinping will be a no-show – along with all other world leaders apart from Canada’s Trudeau – opting to visit Saudi Arabia this week instead.



Kahramaa, SC launch ‘Sustainability Zone’ initiative for World Cup fans



The Qatar General Electricity & Water Corp (Kahramaa), in co-operation with the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC), launched the ‘Sustainability Zone’ initiative in the Kahramaa Awareness Park, to introduce the FIFA World Cup fans to the environmental sustainability efforts associated with the tournament.

The initiative will help brief fans on the various projects, initiatives and operations led by Kahramaa and the SC in sustainability and combating climate change over the past 10 years.

The opening saw the display of a mural telling the history of electricity and water in Qatar and the launch of Carbon Zone and climate change in the park's inner building, which includes a dome that displays the climate change impacts and the danger of carbon emissions to life, along

with a number of devices to educate visitors on how to calculate their carbon footprint, and explain the elements of a healthy, balanced and sustainable lifestyle, in an interactive, entertaining and educational manner.

The activities and sections of the Sustainability Zone are designed to raise the level of environmental awareness among attendees, by introducing them to the latest methods, practices and technologies used to increase energy efficiency, rationalise consumption, and reduce carbon emissions, and inform them of various initiatives aimed at protecting the environment and contributing to the achievement of sustainability goals in a bid to reach carbon neutrality.

The initiative also includes a section dedicated to recycling, in co-operation with the Seashore Company, where it presents



modern recycling mechanisms, arts and other related initiatives.

A variety of sustainability products are also available in the Sustainability Bazaar.

Kahramaa President Issa bin Hilal al-Kuwari said in his opening speech that this initiative represents an opportunity to inform the world of the great efforts made by Qatar to achieve environmental sustainability, within the framework of the objectives of the Qatar National Vision 2030 and Qatar National Strategy for Environment and Climate Change 2021-2026.

He added that the World Cup 2022 hosting represented a great opportunity to push sustainability efforts forward, and accelerate the transition to renewable energy sources and less harmful carbon emissions, as sustainability and carbon neutrality were among the main axes in the World Cup bid.

The Kahramaa president hailed the joint work and fruitful partnership with the SC, pointing out that the initiative's first and main section is devoted to reviewing the SC's efforts, in co-operation with Kahramaa, in this context.

This includes displaying 3D models of World Cup stadiums, all their sustainability aspects, and initiatives with a number of sustainability partners in Qatar, such as the Seashore Group's plastic recycling initiative, and other initiatives related to energy efficiency, renewable energy and electric vehicles.

For his part, HE Hassan al-Thawadi, Secretary-General of the SC, said Kahramaa “contributed to the success of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 by providing us with the electricity and water needs of the tournament”.

He expressed pleasure at at-

tending the inauguration ceremony of the Sustainability Zone, which he believes will contribute to informing all visitors and residents of Qatar about the achievements of the SC in the field of sustainability.

Rashid al-Rahimi, director of the Conservation and Energy Efficiency Department at Kahramaa, stressed the importance of this initiative, pointing to the great role that football can play in drawing attention to issues of sustainability and the importance of protecting the environment.

In this regard, he highlighted the presence of a giant screen showing the tournament matches so that the attendees could enjoy it in an enthusiastic atmosphere, after which he would continue his journey with sustainability in Kahramaa Awareness Park.



Bodour al-Meer, SC Sustainability executive director, said: “The Tarshheed 22 programme for renewable energy for schools, which was launched in 2017, was the beginning of the co-operation with Kahramaa. Since then, many joint projects have been presented between the committee.”

Supreme Projects & Legacy and Kahramaa, as an example of which Kahramaa contributes to reducing the use of temporary

diesel power generators in all World Cup stadiums, by expanding the network, and providing us with the necessary energy during the tournament. In addition, the Qatar General Electricity & Water Corp installed stations Charging electric cars at all stadium sites.

The Kahramaa Awareness Park is open for visitors until Dec 18, from 8am to 12noon, and from 4-8pm.



Puppet show teaches kids how to pull strings

The performances of the play “Tournament Journey” presented by the team of “Puppet Space” are ongoing within the events of the Theatre Affairs Centre at Darb Al Saai amid a festive atmosphere with a huge turnout of children.

In a statement to Qatar News Agency (QNA), director of the puppet show Mohamed Ali bin Hamouda said that the show has a major significance in developing the language and listening skills, where playing with puppets helps develop the language for children and assists them to overcome their shyness to engage in conversations with the others, in addition to upgrading the listening skills of children, because puppets in theatre narrate stories and incidents with an attractive style and promote confidence in children, as well as

trigger imagination and innovation for them.

The show was intended to present an artist's work that combines the actor and the puppet to be ingrained in the children's memory, and it is inspired by the incidents we live and the dream of hosting the World Cup, as the “Tournament Journey” play narrates a child's journey with his friends from puppets that seek to attain the opening match in the World Cup and watch the national football team, where they travel in a journey with the children spectators to another stadium of the eight stadiums dedicated to the world cup, and indirect information is offered on the aesthetics of these stadiums, designs, stadium's history and the number of fans it accommodates, he said.

He indicated that the play

presents a cultural, educational and recreational message to the children through which they get familiarised with the use of puppets, pointing out that the blend in the play show between the human actor and puppet is a catalyst to expand the imagination for children, adding that the centre also presents another play titled “Realise Your Dream” which shows how family can back the ambitions of sons and daughters, in addition to presenting a myriad of workshops that target children aged 3 to 14, and are considered a combination of various hand and finger puppets, as per age category to educate them on the mechanisms of moving the puppets through selection of appropriate things from the environment. (QNA)

Big turnout for Darb Al Saai activities

Darb Al Saai activities have emerged as a major attraction for a large number of visitors for the various cultural and heritage events held by the Organising Committee for the National Day 2022 celebrations, under the slogan “Our Unity Source of Our Strength” in Umm Salal.

A number of visitors stressed that the celebration is an incentive to achieve Qatar's vision, renew loyalty to the wise leadership, work hard, and continue the path of achievements that placed Qatar in the ranks of developed countries. Also, they said that the country is experiencing a state of joy and pride in its achievements, and that the activities held at Darb Al Saai reflect those achievements. This is in addition to the heritage activities



ties that celebrate the countries glorious history. Visitors are keen to purchase heritage holdings that have historical significance related to the Qatari house in the auction that is held in the main courtyard of Darb Al Saai, near Gate 2.

The auction supervisor, Hisham Naanous, said that the

idea of the auction in Darb Al Saai reminds of the Qatari heritage, where ancient heritage holdings related to the Qatari house are displayed, with the auction being presented in the old auction method.

On Tuesday, Darb Al Saai witnessed celebrations among the Arab masses after the Mo-

roccan national football team qualified for the quarter-finals of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 for the first time in its history.

Visitors, especially children, also learn about the different types of trees and plants, as well as about local trees and other related matters. (QNA)

Poetry evening at Darb Al Saai



The Qatar Poetry Centre “Diwan Al Arab” held on Tuesday evening a poetry evening at Darb Al Saai before large audience as part of the programme of cultural seminars with the activities and celebrations of the Qatar National Day. Poets Badr al-Otaibi, Askar al-Karbi, and Ibrahim al-Fazari participated in the evening, which was moderated by the journalist Atta Mohamed, with a variety of poems. (QNA)

Celebrations at Darb Al Saai



Various kinds of activities and events continue to draw crowds at the Darb Al Saai celebrations being held in Umm Salal.