

## Saudi superfan awaits WC at 'home'

AFP, Jeddah

For the past two decades, Bader Turkistani has criss-crossed the globe to cheer on the Saudi national football team, leading crowds in poetic chants that have made him a social media star.

This year's World Cup in neighbouring Qatar, by contrast, has the feel of a home game: Doha is a mere two-hour flight from his base in Jeddah, on the Red Sea coast.

The close proximity has Turkistani dreaming of a ferocious turnout by football-mad Saudis, the kind of support he says could help the Green Falcons break out of the group stage for the first time in nearly three decades.

"The Saudi national team is considered to be playing on its land, playing among its fans. Having the World Cup in Qatar is like having it in Saudi Arabia," the 37-year-old engineer told AFP.

"A simple border separates us... We



will be present in very large numbers and fill the stadiums with 50,000 to 60,000 fans."

On a recent afternoon, wearing a white and-green scarf over his traditional white robe, Turkistani gave a preview of some of the chants he hopes will propel the Green Falcons to glory.

"This is the green of Saudi," he sang into an electronic megaphone, as a friend pounded a drum made of animal hide. "Oh Saudi, we have come."

The stands of the Jeddah stadium behind him were empty, but he is certain the scene will be completely different once play gets underway.

"50,000 fans will repeat this chant behind me in Qatar, instead of only 5,000 fans in Russia," he said.

"This enthusiasm is transmitted to the players... We hope that we, as fans, will bring out the players' best energy."

In total, Turkistani estimates he has watched more than 100 international matches played by the Green Falcons over the years, most of them documented in a bulging photo album he eagerly shows off to visitors.

He also leads the fan association for the prestigious Jeddah-based Saudi club Al-Ahly.

Beyond its high cost, the hobby can be trying in other ways: while on the road, Turkistani has struggled with language barriers, fiercely cold weather and unfamiliar foreign food.

"In Qatar, all these things will be very convenient for us," he said.

Once Saudi fans are on Qatari soil, Turkistani will be ready for them, having stocked up on green-and-white t-shirts, plastic blowhorns, drums and balloons to distribute.



Brazil team are currently undergoing a five-day training camp at Juventus' training facilities in Turin from where they will be flying to Doha on Saturday for the upcoming World Cup in Qatar. Brazil open their World Cup Group G campaign against Serbia on November 24 before facing Switzerland and Cameroon.

Youssoufa Moukoko made his senior debut for the Germany national team on Wednesday evening, as he started for them in their pre-World Cup warm-up match against Oman. Aged 17 years and 361 days, the Borussia Dortmund striker made history as he became the youngest player to represent Germany since Uwe Seeler in 1954. Moukoko also became the fourth youngest player to play for Germany overall.



## 'Don't think Ronaldo wants to be back at Man Utd'

AFP, Manchester

Cristiano Ronaldo's contract at Manchester United should be terminated by the club, said former United captain Gary Neville.

In an explosive interview with TalkTV, Ronaldo has said he does not respect United manager Erik ten Hag and claimed he is being forced out of Old Trafford.

His latest act has made things very complicated as he also criticised the club's owners, the Glazer family, claiming they "don't care" about the sporting success of the club.

"I don't think he wants a way back," Neville told Sky Sports. "He wouldn't have done this interview if he wanted a way back."

"He knew it would bring the headlines it has and be the end of his Manchester United career."

Ronaldo has just over six months left on his contract after rejoining United from Juventus in August 2021.



Acme Chattogram clinched the title of the inaugural Hockey Champions Trophy Bangladesh with a 4-3 win over Monarch Padma in tiebreakers after regulation time ended in a 2-2 draw in a dramatic final of the franchise-based event at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## 2014 finalists land in Qatar

AGENCIES

Four-time winners Germany arrived at the World Cup in Qatar on Thursday after Argentina superstar Lionel Messi touched down to launch his final bid to win football's biggest prize.

After a 1-0 win in a low-key warmup game against Oman the night before, the Germans, led by captain and goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, flew into Doha.

Germany are aiming to erase the nightmare of the 2018 tournament in Russia when they crashed out of the World Cup in the group stage after winning it four years earlier.

Team official Oliver Bierhoff explained why they had opted for the seclusion of a hotel in Al-Ruwais, an hour and half from the capital.

"We want to develop a team spirit there that will carry us through the tournament – and for as long as possible."

Messi landed with the Argentina squad in the early hours of the morning from Abu Dhabi where he scored in a straightforward 5-0 win against the United Arab Emirates in front of 36,000 spectators on Wednesday.

It was his 91st international goal for the 1978 and 1986 World Cup winners who extended their unbeaten run to 36 matches.

The tournament is likely to be the final chance for 35-year-old Messi to emulate fellow Argentine great Diego Maradona in leading his country to World Cup glory.

The South Americans begin their campaign on Tuesday against Saudi Arabia in Group C, which also includes Mexico and Poland.

Argentina's 26-man squad could



change with less than a week to go before their World Cup opener as some players are not fully fit, coach Lionel Scaloni said on Wednesday after their 5-0 friendly win over the United Arab Emirates.

Defender Cristian Romero and forwards Nicolas Gonzalez, Alejandro Gomez and Paulo Dybala were left out for Argentina's last warm-up match in Abu Dhabi, with all four recovering after feeling "some discomfort", the coach said.

"We have a few problems, we have days to decide on the list ... We can change, hopefully not, but there is a possibility," Scaloni told reporters.

"I'm not saying they are going to be dropped from the list. There are players who are not well, who have been left out of the squad today because they were not fit to play or there was a risk."

"We have to be cautious because there



is a reason why they were left out."

FIFA rules say that the World Cup teams can replace players in their squads who are injured or ill up to 24 hours before their opening match.

France arrived in Doha on Wednesday, seeking to become the first team to retain the World Cup since Brazil in 1962.

Ten members of the 2018 title-winning squad are in the squad, including captain Hugo Lloris, Kylian Mbappe and Antoine Griezmann.

But the defending champions, grouped with Australia, Denmark and Tunisia, are without first-choice midfield pair Paul Pogba and N'Golo Kante.

Ballon d'Or winner Karim Benzema, who has missed a series of games for Real Madrid this season because of injury, is set for his first World Cup appearance since 2014.

**NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY**  
Center of Excellence in Higher Education

**#1 University in Bangladesh**

**WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS ASIA 2022**

**UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS SPRING 2023**

**Application Deadline**  
November 30, 2022

**Admission Test Date**  
December 03, 2022  
10:00 AM at NSU Campus

**Undergraduate Programs**

BBA, Economics, CSE, EEE, ETE, Architecture, Civil & Env. Engineering, BPharm Professional, Biochemistry & Biotechnology, Microbiology, Environmental Science & Environmental Management, LLB, English, BSS in MAJ.

**WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS**  
**#1001-1200**  
In QS World University Rankings 2022

**We are Accredited Locally and Globally**

**CABS** ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS SCHOOLS  
**ACBSP** ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF BUSINESS  
**AMBA** ASSOCIATION OF MANAGEMENT BUSINESS SCHOOLS  
**EFMD** ASSOCIATION OF MANAGEMENT BUSINESS SCHOOLS  
**IGE** INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE EDUCATION

**Scholarship/Financial Aid**  
NSU provides Financial aid to a large number of students including 100% Merit scholarships to the TOP TEN scorers in the admission test and over 100 more scholarships upto 75%

Block: B, Bashundhara R/A  
Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh  
880 2 55668200, Ext. 5002, 4001  
01732903003  
admissions@northsouth.edu  
www.northsouth.edu  
nsuadmissions

**RANKED #601-800**  
**THE** WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2023  
BY SUBJECT  
Electrical & Electronic Engineering #301-400  
Civil Engineering #301-400  
Computer Science #501-600

**LEAP** Ascending 135 spots in just 2 years and solidifying its position as a Leader in Higher Education.

**Scholarship/Financial Aid**  
NSU provides Financial aid to a large number of students including 100% Merit scholarships to the TOP TEN scorers in the admission test and over 100 more scholarships upto 75%

Block: B, Bashundhara R/A  
Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh  
880 2 55668200, Ext. 5002, 4001  
01732903003  
admissions@northsouth.edu  
www.northsouth.edu  
nsuadmissions