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Group A  Qatar  Ecuador  Senegal  Netherlands	Group B  England  IR Iran  USA  Wales	Group C  Argentina  Saudi Arabia  Mexico  Poland	Group D  France  Australia  Denmark  Tunisia
Group E  Spain  Costa Rica  Germany  Japan	Group F  Belgium  Canada  Morocco  Croatia	Group G  Brazil  Serbia  Switzerland  Cameroon	Group H  Portugal  Ghana  Uruguay  Korea and South Korea

Qatar World Cup groups

Doha, November 18 (Prensa Latina)-- The ticking of the clocks warns of the proximity of Qatar 2022 and millions of people rub their hands together today in anticipation of the first World Cup in the Middle East, whose expectations border on the ineffable.

The joy is contagious around an event that obviously goes beyond the borders of the Arabian Peninsula: more than half of the world's population closely followed the Russia 2018 tournament, and nothing will be different four years later.

As in the past, the program will be a fertile breeding ground for stories about heroes and villains on the green grass, the same ones who fought for several months for their tickets in a sui generis environment, due to Covid-19.

A good part of the qualifying process took place far from the usual: empty stadiums, silence in the stands, masks on faces, fear of contagion, sanitary measures..., but the 32 teams aspiring to the title faced the misfortune and here are the 32 teams aspiring to the title.

Even before the pandemic there were misgivings, although one of the most significant was the date of the competition, chosen to counteract the high temperatures - reaching 50 degrees Celsius in the summer - in a country whose deserts have become tourist attractions.

The traditional months of June and July were left behind in the calendar. The main leagues took a (forced) pause and the hustle and bustle of the goals will be generated from a nation with barely 11,571 square kilometers and less than three million inhabitants.

A state whose main economic source is the powerful oil and gas sector, which is why few people are shocked to hear about the cost of the most expensive World Cup ever: there is talk of expenses in excess of 220 billion dollars, a derisory figure from any point of view.

However, the investment yielded eight almost unbelievable stadiums, and the sum increased due to the infrastructure projects as part of Qatar's 2030 expansion plan, which now included the construction of hotels, airports and a metro network.

We are on the verge of the last universal event of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, of Sergio Busquets and Angel Di Maria; of observing other technological leaps in terms of sport, and of the umpteenth remix of the rivalry between Europe and South America.

Regarding the latter, it is worth remembering that Latin American countries accumulate nine Cups, thanks to Brazil (five, top winner), Uruguay and Argentina, both with two, while the Old Continent computes a total of 12, including France's leadership in Russia 2018.

Which teams are the favorites? Which team will lift the trophy? Will Messi fulfill his great dream? Will France repeat? All that remains is to take a deep breath and wait in a few hours for the whistle to blow for the Qatar-Ecuador match. Then, the world will be at the feet of soccer, a machine that unleashes the most unlikely passions.

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