

2010 FIFA World Cup: the end of a memorable event

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The 2010 FIFA World Cup, which ended on Sunday night, 11 July 2010 - and was watched by a total of 3.18 million stadium spectators, viewed on FIFA.com by a record 150 million unique users generating 6.4 billion page views, and followed by thousands on Twitter - will go down in history as one of the most memorable global sporting events ever, according to FIFA, local authorities and international media.



"Big compliment to Africa, to South Africans for the wonderful hospitality, to Local Organising Committee (LOC) and also to the SA government for meeting all the guarantees given for the organisation of this world cup," FIFA president Sepp Blatter told a packed press briefing on Monday 12 July in Johannesburg.

"Again, I say big compliment to Africa for because it has proved it can organise big events. It is a question and trust - we trusted Africa and now SA can be proud as well because FIFA is satisfied," he said, adding that SA deserves nine out of 10 for a job well done.

History has been written

History has also been written in SA, as the 2010 event becomes the third-highest world cup average attendance for the number of spectators (3.18 million - average 49 670 spectators per game) who watched the games at stadiums - behind the US in 1994 and Germany in 2006.

In Spain, the average TV audience for Sunday final accounted for 78% of the market share (13.4 million), while some 8.5 million people in the Netherlands watched the final, representing 90.6% of the market share.

In the US, a new TV audience record was set during for the game between US and Ghana (last 16 round), watched by 19 million viewers. FIFA said this record supersedes the previous record set during the Brazil-US game at the 1994 FIFA World Cup.

On average, each match has been watched by almost 70 million people in-home in SA, Germany, UK, Italy, Spain, US,

Mexico, Brazil, Australia, China and Japan).

Fan Fest visitors

In SA, the SA-Uruguay game attracted an average of 10.5 million viewers, while the Fan Fest outlets attracted 6.2 million visitors across the globe - 2.7 million in SA and 3.5 million internationally.

The highest number of visitors at international FIFA Fan Fests was 350 000 visitors at the semi-final Germany-Spain. Durban came out tops in SA, with 65 714 people on 16 June at the SA-Uruguay game.

Stadium-filled capacity was 92.9% and 3.1 million tickets were sold, the organisers said.

Speaking in French, CAF president Issa Hayatou commended what he called the overwhelming spirit of mobilisation South Africans demonstrated throughout the tournament even after their national team was knocked out at the group stages.

"Memorable point"

"We were all scared not because the organisation will fail, but because we thought local people will be disappointed and stay away from the games as Bafana Bafana were eliminated," Hayatou said emotionally. "But they came in big numbers, and that for me is a memorable point that needs to be mentioned."

LOC chairman Irvin Khoza said the tournament has made a statement and reduced the risk of world sporting bodies saying that hosting a sporting event in SA would be a mistake.

Furthermore, FIFA said that the 2010 world cup has generated approximately 3000 hours of broadcast feed by FIFA's host broadcaster HBS.

The 2010 tournament also becomes the first global sporting event to be broadcast in 3D, following a partnership between FIFA and Sony.

ABOUT ISSA SIKITI DA SILVA

Issa Sikiti da Silva is a winner of the 2010 SADC Media Awards (print category). He freelances for various media outlets, local and foreign, and has travelled extensively across Africa. His work has been published both in French and English. He used to contribute to Bizcommunity.com as a senior news writer.

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