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## Eid fest opens at Souq Waqif

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Members of Circus: Mother Africa performing in the outdoor theatre erected near Al Souq Street yesterday. Abdul Basit

BY RAYNALD C RIVERA

DOHA: A large number of visitors from other GCC countries turned up at the opening of the Eid Al Adha Festival in Souq Waqif yesterday.

Many from Saudi Arabia were seen at the venue last night, mostly from remote areas of the kingdom.

With the huge influx of people coming to the most visited attraction in the city, security was beefed up and more police monitored the venues inside the souq compared to the previous year.

The festival opened with an eclectic string of performances and entertainment. The outdoor theatre erected near Al Souq street saw hundreds watching juggler extraordinaire Ian Merchant and a huge team of performers from Circus: Mother Africa. Using props such as hats, hoops and ball, Merchant put up exceptional routines combined with comedy.

Circus: Mother Africa provided the audience high value entertainment with a medley of music, acrobatics, juggling and dance moves.

A spectacular parade of percussionists, jugglers and stilt walkers in their neon-coloured costumes also provided entertainment along the major alleys of the souq, while many visitors took photos with live statues.

Having entertained millions of people live and on television, Titan the Robot has never failed to mesmerise audiences at the souq. This is not the first time the world famous robot, who enthralled a lot of people including celebrities, came to Doha.

The robot who talks, sings, dances and sneezes was here during the Doha Tribeca Film Festival.

The Snow White show at Al Rayyan Theatre also attracted a huge audience, mostly children, who relished the classic tale and its memorable characters.

Dave the Chameleon, Magician on Stick, Bjorn the Polar Bear, Manyard Flip Flap, Ballonatic and Gorilla were among the other acts that make the souq more vibrant until Saturday from 4.30pm until 10.30pm. There is also a game area in front of Gold Souq where children can play at bouncy castles for free and games for QR10. Adjacent to the game area is a huge theatre where Sout Al Rayyan's music festival runs until Saturday.

Close to Al Koot Fort, children can enjoy a pony ride for QR10. Camels are also stationed nearby where people enjoyed taking photos with them for free.

Several visual artists are stationed in front of Souq Waqif Art Centre where people can have their portraits drawn in pastel or charcoal with price ranging from QR75 to QR1,000 depending on size.

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