

Action Replay: What Price the 2022 Football World Cup in Qatar?

Qatar will host the 2022 World Cup, the first Arab nation to do so. Sepp Blatter, the FIFA president has already endorsed the bid and said 'The Arabic world deserves to hold a world cup competition'. Qatar enjoys the support of the Arab league and the event is intended to bridge the gap between the Arab World and the West.

The first five proposed stadiums were unveiled in March 2010. The stadiums will employ cooling technology capable of reducing temperatures within the stadium by up to 20C. All of the five stadium projects launched have been designed by German architect Albert Speer and Partners. The air conditioning in the stadiums for the players and the spectators will be solar powered, carbon neutral and provided by Arup of England. The technology employed is remarkable but the labour required for its installation and the building of the stadiums has caused many deaths to migrant workers. Most of the workers are living in labour camps, enduring squalid conditions.

A Guardian article (25 September 2013) reported that a number of Nepalese migrant workers have faced poor conditions, as companies handling construction work for the 2022 World Cup infrastructure forced them to stay by denying them promised salaries and withholding necessary worker ID permits, making them illegal aliens. The precarious situation the various employers have created have forced the migrant workers to beg for food. Thousands of Nepalese labourers in Qatar face exploitation and abuses that amount to modern-day slavery as defined by the ILO.

During a building binge to pave the way for the Football competition in 2022, Nepalese workers in Qatar have been dying at a rate of one per day. A report released in March 2014 by the International Trade Union Confederation estimated that 4,000 more workers could die as preparations for the World Cup continue.

The barbaric conditions that migrant workers endure, brings sharply into focus, that under capitalism, capital is considered more important than labour. The profits that will flow to the companies involved in the Qatar World Cup, when the games commence, are considered more important than ensuring that proper safety conditions prevail to protect the migrant workers.

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