

Human Rights Concerns Cast Shadow Over World Cup



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As the competition heats up, so does the controversy over human rights. From the treatment of foreign workers to the rights of the LGBTQ community, the World Cup has shone a spotlight on Qatar. And as our next report shows, players, fans, and politicians don't like everything they see.

The European parliament is calling out Qatar for its track record on human rights and urging authorities to investigate abuse.

It's not OK, and I'm going to state the obvious here, for people to die on building sites in their thousands. It's not OK for people to be jailed for asking for their wages.

Qatari officials dispute the numbers and say conditions have improved, but reports suggest many who worked to build these stadiums ended up dying for them. European politicians passed a nonbinding resolution, saying their families deserve compensation. They also called on Qatar to decriminalize same sex relations, with some sporting the one love arm band. It's a symbol you won't see on the field since FIFA says players who wear one will be punished.

No one needs a championship where even messages as simple as one love are penalized with a yellow card. Dear colleagues, this is just a lost opportunity for soccer and the sad world in which we live today.

German players protested in another way. They told a story in their pre-match photo of being denied a voice.

These are values to which FIFA commits itself in its on statutes. This is more than frustrating from our point of view and also an unprecedented event in the history of the World Cup.

Soccer pubs in Germany and Belgium are shunning the world cup. Viewing events in France and Spain have also been canceled. Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani discounts the criticism. He says it reveals a cultural double standard. The FIFA president echoed that view, accusing western countries of hypocrisy.

I think for what we Europeans have been doing in the last 3,000 years around the world, we should be apologizing for the next 3,000 years before starting to give moral lessons to people.

With so much attention placed on the issue, human rights concerns are almost certain to be top of mind through to the final go and to remain with FIFA for years to come.

Source: (NHK World News)

Now discuss the questions the questions with a partner.

1. Have you been watching the World Cup? If so, other than soccer, what have you heard about the conditions in Qatar?
2. Do you think we should protest the World Cup? Why or why not?
3. What do you think of the opinion of Qatar's Emir and the FIFA president?
4. Like Germany, what other ways do you think players can protest?
5. Do you think Qatar and FIFA should be punished for the deaths of workers during the construction of the World Cup stadiums? What is an adequate punishment? Who has the power to punish them?