

Controversy behind qatar 2022 bid



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Qatar 2022 On 2 December 2010 it was announced that Qatar would host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, after the FIFA Executive Committee voted in a secret ballot in Zurich. The government of Qatar's successful proposal bid defeated four other candidates to stage the 2022 edition of the world's greatest sporting event: Australia, Korea Republic, Japan and the United States of America. Qatar, with a population of 1.69 million people will be the first Arab state to host the World Cup.

Consequently, Qatar is the smallest nation, both by relative population and by area, ever to have been awarded the tournament hosting privilege. The Qatar bid was emphasized as the only one representing the Arab World (which has never hosted a World Cup prior) and positioned their bid as an opportunity to bridge the gap between the Arab World and the West. Their hosting of the 2006 Asian Games as well as the 2011 Asian Cup proved to legitimize their capabilities of hosting the tournament. Further, its superior financial capabilities were evident in their proposals for new stadia and infrastructure.

While the decision on 2 December 2010 brought delight to Qatar, it inversely brought concern and controversy in the West. A number of rival candidates, western groups and media outlets have expressed concern over the suitability of Qatar to host the event, with regard to climatic conditions, interpretations of human rights, press freedom and allegations of corruption.

Climate: Winter World Cup? The World Cup is traditionally held in the northern hemisphere's summer. During this season in Qatar, the temperature can get to 50 °C (122 °F).

The Qatar bid's chief executive, Hassan al-Thawadi has attempted to quell fears of an unbearable environment by stating "heat is not and will not be an issue" and that the 2022 World Cup would benefit from "state-of-the-art air cooling technologies." The Qatar 2022 Bid's official site explains this: "Each of the five stadiums will harness the power of the sun's rays to provide a cool environment for players and fans by converting solar energy into electricity that will then be used to cool both fans and players at the stadiums. When games are not taking place, the solar installations at the stadia will export energy onto the power grid.

During matches, the stadia will draw energy from the grid. This is the basis for the stadiums' carbon-neutrality. Along with the stadiums, we plan to make the cooling technologies we've developed available to other countries in hot climates, so that they too can host major sporting events." This method of cooling techniques is theoretically able to reduce temperatures from 50 to 27 degrees Celsius. The bidding committee also proposes to use such cooling technologies in fan-zones, training pitches and walkways between metro stations and stadiums.

However, the architect in charge of one of the venues has abandoned their project claiming that a more old-fashioned solution would be cheaper and better. Leading firm Populous, which is designing the Sports City stadium in Doha, is trying to persuade Qatari organizers to scrap plans to have air conditioning at the venue. Populous director John Barrow said the system is too expensive and "notoriously unsustainable" for the environment when used on a large scale. Given the debate on the subject, a proposal of hosting a "Winter World Cup" has arisen.

Backed by the likes of Blatter and Platini, the proposal suggests for the tournament to be held in January of 2022, rather than the summer. Blatter has told reporters " Personally, now that the decision has been taken [to have the tournament in Qatar], we must play at the most adequate period to have a successful World Cup and to have a successful World Cup we have to do it when it is best for the actors which means winter. " However, Mr. Blatter has failed to provide a solution on the effect it would have on European domestic leagues which operate in this period.

There is nothing in FIFA's rules to prevent a host changing the time of year when a World Cup is played. It is only tradition that dictates this. And the FIFA executive committee has the authority to change any aspect of the World Cup after the decision is made. Worker's Conditions Given its lack of sporting infrastructure, the Gulf state must build nine football stadiums in the next ten years- and they'll be using primarily migrant labor (over 90% of Qatar's workforce is made up of foreign migrant workers). Trade union activists are now lobbying FIFA to highlight what they say are poor working conditions in Qatar.

International trade unionists say FIFA has the power to impose decent working standards on Qatar and will campaign for the tournament to be moved unless FIFA presses for better conditions. If Qatar is unable to support the tournament on its own, Secretary-General Jerome Valcke has suggested the tournament be shared with neighboring states, such as Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. Alcohol and Homosexuality Qatar is not a dry country. Alcohol can currently be consumed legally in a few clubs, bars, certain hotel restaurants, and the Pearl Island by showing your passport for reporting.

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Hassan Abdulla al Thawadi, chief executive of the Qatar 2022 World Cup bid, said the Muslim state would also permit alcohol consumption during the event. Specific fan-zones will be established where alcohol can be bought. Though legal with a permit, drinking in public is not permitted as Qatar's legal system is based on Sharia law. The selection of Qatar as hosts attracted controversy, as homosexuality is illegal in Qatar. FIFA President Sepp Blatter stated that " we (FIFA) don't want any discrimination. What we want to do is open this game to everybody, and to open it to all cultures, and this is what we are doing in 2022. Corruption: Bribery Scandal Six members of Fifa's executive committee — a quarter of the membership — were accused by Lord Treisman (Chairman of England's bid) of " improper and unethical behaviour" with two members, Issa Hayatou, of Cameroon, and Jacques Anouma, of Ivory Coast, alleged to received \$1. 5 million each in bribes from the Qatar 2022 bid in exchange for their votes. The bribery allegations against Qatar were made in evidence from The Sunday Times and published by the committee. As a result, in November 2010, two ExCo members, Reynald Temarii and Amos Adamu, were banned for one and three years respectively.

Temarii was also fined 5, 000 Swiss Francs, while Adamu was fined 10, 000 Swiss Francs. More corruption allegations emerged in the summer of 2011. In May, ExCo member Chuck Blazer claimed fellow members Mohammed Bin Hammam and Jack Warner offered bribes for votes in the upcoming presidential election. As a result of this scandal, Bin Hammam stood down from the June 2011 presidential election and FIFA later suspended both he

and Jack Warner. Sepp Blatter stood unopposed and won the election with 186 out of 203 votes.

Bin Hammam's suspension had been met with widespread anger in the Middle East- He was subsequently banned for life in July. Warner responded to his suspension by exposing an email by Valcke in which the Secretary-General suggested Qatar had "bought" the right to host 2022 tournament. Valcke defended his statement, insisting he was referring to Qatar using financial muscle to lobby legitimately for votes. "They were a candidate with a very important budget and used it to heavily promote their bid all around the world in a very efficient manner," he said. "I have made no reference to any purchase of votes or similar unethical behaviour. Qatar 2022's bid team said they "categorically deny" any wrongdoing, and asked for clarification from FIFA on the meaning of the Valcke e-mail. Nevertheless, the scandal has raised concerns over \$10 billion of investment and development contracts related to stadiums and hotels for the World Cup in Qatar. Possibility of a Re-Vote Given the developments in corruption and bribery scandals, as well as questions concerning the Qatar's capabilities of hosting the tournament effectively, there is a ground swell of popular support to re-hold the 2022 vote won by Qatar.

Blatter has said that a FIFA inquiry into persistent and increasingly detailed claims of corruption could lead to the Executive Committee (ExCo) making the unprecedented move of rerunning the vote. Blatter also conceded that support for re-running the vote was "circulating around the world". Such a move would be a monumental embarrassment to FIFA but that has to now be

balanced with the equivalent embarrassment of more allegations leaking out.