

Qatar's World Cup is dangerous

NAPAT KONGSAWAD

STAFF WRITER

In four years diplomas can be completed, relationships turn into marriages, presidents can change, but most importantly every four years the world looks to see which country can assemble the best team of ball kickers to throw together in the World Cup. This year's cup has something rotten about it.

Qatar was selected as host back in 2010 in a ceremony that has led to multiple indictments and an FBI investigation. With a new economy rapidly growing from its oil and gas industry, Qatar wanted a coming out event to declare it as a first rate nation in the world. The country had never qualified for a World Cup and would be the smallest country by size to host the tournament.

The voting process came under scrutiny for bribery and corruption. Six time Premier League champion David Beckham (also known as Posh Spice's husband) at the time

called it "unfair," and that it left him a "sick feeling" to see the Cup awarded to Qatar.

Beckham was working on the UK's bid at the time. Flash forward 12 years and Beckham is the face of Qatar's promotion campaign for the World Cup, signing a \$277 million deal to be their culture and tourism ambassador. Facing allegations of corruption against its top members, FIFA investigated themselves and found no wrongdoing.

And while my complaints about ticket and hotel prices seem inconsequential, the tragedy of this World Cup is in the conditions of the men and women that died working for the event. Migrant laborers built up an estimated \$220 billion in construction leading up to the World Cup. Laborers toiled themselves to death in poor living conditions and worksites with extreme desert heat.

The Guardian, in conjunction with the embassies of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, estimate the

death toll of migrant workers in Qatar at over six thousand. Qatar's "kafala" program grants employers unfair control over workers visa status and the Human Rights Watch has documented wage theft as recently as March of this year.

Additionally, there have been documented cases of workers having their passports taken away, with the promise of its return when they complete their work contract. Qatari officials insisted in a Sky Sports "documentary" that only three work related deaths have occurred. With most of these deaths being instead listed as "natural causes." Under Qatari law, workers' families are not entitled to compensation. FIFA have reaffirmed their commitment to safe working conditions and concurred Qatar's death toll.

In a statement to CNN, a FIFA spokesperson claimed "With the very stringent health and safety measures on site enforced by the SC, the frequency of accidents on FIFA

World Cup construction sites has been low when compared to other major construction projects around the world," providing no further evidence.

"Everyone is welcome in Qatar," assures Qatar 2022 CEO Nasser Al-Khater. Al-Khater felt the need to make this statement after being challenged on the country's laws on LGBTQ issues and women's rights. Same sex relations are banned in Qatar, along with public displays of affection and consensual sex before marriage. Marital rape is not.

Human Rights Watch found that LGBTQ people were being detained, beaten and being forced into conversion treatment as conditions for their release. These abuses were found to have taken place as recently as September.

For the first week of November, FIFA had been in talks with Qatari police to seek clarity on how these morality laws would be enforced for fans. In a resounding victory for progressives, FIFA expects there

to be a certain leniency involved regarding fan behavior and we might be allowed to hug each other after all.

British officials are taking no chances over Qatari law enforcement and have sent 15 "supporter engagement officers" to "calm (the situation) down" should the need arise. Qatar denies any reports of discrimination or abuse and called the allegations "unequivocally false."

So as fans dust off their scarves and Qatari police their riot shields, I can't help but fix my eyes on the World Cup

for all the completely wrong reasons. And the most painful thing is that everybody knew about these issues.

From the moment Qatar was selected as host these concerns were raised. But it seems with enough money and gaslighting through the media, you can just buy a World Cup. The sport's governing body and broadcast companies have turned a blind eye. Fans, coaches and players have been told to quietly get on with it. The inevitable World Cup is here.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NYTIMES

Twitter shackled after Musk takeover?

LAILA CASIANO

STAFF WRITER



Laila Casiano is a sophomore multimedia journalism major from Paragould

Twitter is a cesspool of everyone's thoughts and opinions. It's a nuclear waste site containing society's toxic and dirty people, but it's unfortunately entertaining and addictive nonetheless.

A lot of the world's influence and news comes from this app. The most influential, richest and powerful people are on the app. There is so much power in being able to hide behind a username and tweet anything you want

to say. There's even more power when you receive positive attention, especially when you spark the attention of someone more influential than you.

Elon Musk, the richest person in the world, has recently bought Twitter. Elon's reign over the app is nothing to be wary of though, right? Or have the effects of his attempt to make the app more open to "free speech" completely made the notorious cesspool the app is known for into a bigger problem?

Musk has made the decision to let go of a large percentage of Twitter employees, even firing the previous CEO, CFO's and executives, making himself the lead director of the whole site. He has also been overworking and executing harsh labor and work conditions to the small number of employees

left. It's been exposed that many are sleeping at their workplace because of the intense deadlines Musk tasked them with.

At the cost of just \$8 a month, you can pay to keep your verification. This is something that might force people who do have verification to pay since it's not just a status of importance, but also a means to prove validity and getting ahead of bots trying to impersonate you. Though a new incentive for payment may be needed since Musk's takeover has caused the app to lose millions.

All these changes, and even the new ones being announced or implemented, are having people who use this site ask themselves if it's still worth it. Is it still usable? Do you even want to?

I am an avid Twitter user myself. I've had the app for about six years and I have been very aware of the amount of

issues that derived from the app. The uprising of cancel culture, parasocial relationships, people being chronically online or seeing influential people making the worst of decisions.

The balance to this negative side were people who found the app to be easy and accessible enough to get their stories told. Movements were founded, conversations about real issues began (such as mental health, LGBTQIA+, race and religion) and so many more great things were found on the app.

The app was also a center for memes and trends. News was covered quickly and addressed simply.

The app, as a whole, was a harbor of opinions. Good or bad, right or wrong, there was still that balance. Now, the balance has tipped because of Elon Musk.

Elon Musk's future for Twitter is one in which

ensorship doesn't exist. The amount of people who began to say the most insane and racially derogatory things under the guise of "free speech" was surreal. It doesn't make it any better when the lead director of the app has made the decision to suspend the account of anyone who attempts to impersonate him. Even people who have chosen to block him have now been rerouted to have him unblocked.

Twitter is now controlled by a man who knows no bounds. Some would call him ambitious, some would say greedy. I just hope that Musk's promise of bringing back Vine goes rather unsuccessful since TikTok will be its main competitor and the fact that other attempts to revive the app have been, well, unsuccessful.



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THE HERALD

REBECCA ROBINSON: EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
rebecca.robinson@mail.astate.edu

RACHEL RUDD: NEWS EDITOR
heraldnews1921@gmail.com

JACK BOND: OPINION EDITOR
heraldopinion1921@gmail.com

JESSICA MCMILLIAN: PHOTO EDITOR
heraldphoto1921@gmail.com

SANDRA L. COMBS: ADVISER; ADVERTISEMENT SALES
scombs@astate.edu
astateherald@gmail.com

BRAYDEN MORSE: SPORTS EDITOR
heraldsports1921@gmail.com

KARA CAMPBELL: LIFE EDITOR
heraldlife1921@gmail.com

GRAPHIC DESIGN EDITOR
heraldonline1921@gmail.com

THE HERALD OFFICE IS IN ROOM 224 OF THE COMMUNICATIONS/EDUCATION BUILDING.

NEWSROOM: 870-972-3076

AD OFFICE: 870-972-2961

FAX: 870-972-3339

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